

sion. Notwithstanding the interjections of the hon. member, I saw some of the officers in their true colours.

*Leave to Continue.*

**The PREMIER** (Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK—Geraldton) [8.49]: In view of the lateness of the hour, and of the fact that we are breaking all the regulations we have made, I move—

That the hon. member be granted leave to continue his speech at the next sitting.

Motion put and passed.

*House adjourned at 6.50 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

*Tuesday, 31st April, 1912.*

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

### MOTION—PARLIAMENTARY ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

**HON. H. L. ROCHE** (South-East) [11.5]: I move—

That, in the opinion of this House, eight committees should immediately be appointed to inquire into and report upon, and, where advisable, organise for the carrying out of any proposal

(a) referred to such committee by the Minister; or

(b) decided upon by a two-thirds majority of the members present at a meeting of the committee.

Each such committee to be related to one of the eight Cabinet Ministers and its powers to be in respect of the matters connected with his department, and to consist of three members of the Legislative Council and five members of the Legislative Assembly, and be proportionately representative of all parties as nearly as possible. A majority of members of a committee to form a quorum and a meet-

ing of any such committee to be convened by notice signed by any three members of the committee or by the Minister.

I have brought forward this motion with a view to obtaining an expression of opinion on it from members, and with the desire to ascertain whether it appeals wholly or in part to them. It will also serve as an expression of opinion by private members to the Government that we desire Ministers to make greater use of our services in some form or other than has been possible up to the present. It can truly be said of every member of Parliament, certainly of every member of this House, that he is anxious to do more than he is now doing to assist in this time of crisis. The Premier, in the letter he addressed to members, complimented them upon the work they were doing; but I think it must be recognised that, before private members can render effective assistance, they must have some status. Some arrangement must be made to permit of the co-ordination of their efforts. The proposal is one that is only feasible if it meets with the full approval of the Government itself and I hope that approval will be forthcoming. There is no intention in any way to usurp the responsibilities of the Ministers, who would be in complete control; but the proposed committees could, in my opinion, function effectively and usefully in an advisory capacity. At present I understand members representing the North-West of the State hold meetings, and presumably they find those meetings are for the good of the people whom they represent.

Private members could, if these proposed committees were formed, contribute to the welfare of the State along similar lines. The many duties that Ministers have to discharge and the fact that permanent officials of the Public Service are fully engaged, seem to me to militate against the ability of Ministers thoroughly to investigate the problems that arise from time to time. Many of those problems are new; many of them arise as a result of the war and the position in which we find ourselves in consequence. These are the problems that could be investigated by the proposed advisory committees. I do not suggest that publicity should be given to the members of the committee; that is a matter which should be left entirely to the Government. Individual members of the committee should not be

permitted to give publicity to views or ideas of which the Minister concerned does not approve. Certain matters appeal to me as warranting investigation and reports to the Ministers in charge of departments, or to the Government as a whole. I shall mention some of them. There will certainly be others, and there may even be more important ones, which members, if they approve of this principle, may suggest.

One of the matters which, I suggest, at the moment calls for some investigation is the provision of such skilled labour as is still available for shearing next season's wool clip. Another is the consideration of the uses that can be made of local electric power installations in some centres for this purpose, and the resultant saving of fuel. In the agricultural centres, most shearing is done with small plants. There will be a considerable reduction in the number of shearers available. Unless something is done—and it will need to be put in hand promptly—a chaotic condition will arise before we are well into shearing next August and September.

Another problem that might well be investigated and assistance afforded the Minister, is the consideration of measures to ensure a supply of agricultural labour, and also consideration of how, and to what extent, use can be made in agriculture of female labour. I would also like to add another matter, and that is a review of the use that can be made of alien labour which is in many instances at present exploiting the conditions in which we find ourselves. The Federal Government is organising labour battalions, but I think it is doing that more directly in connection with the war effort. If it is undertaking to organise the aliens of whom I speak, for other purposes, then a committee of this Parliament, working under the direction or at the request of the Government, could afford the Minister directly concerned and, through him, the Federal authority, much useful information.

In his letter to members, the Premier suggested certain matters that they might look into and help to further. I find myself, for one, in a rather difficult position. We have no more status than that of a private member of Parliament. We have no authority to encourage people to do certain things, nor any opportunity to co-ordinate our efforts with those of other members. An

instance was brought to my notice recently in connection with the proposed increased production of onions. Western Australia requires, taking the average yield, an increase in the area for the onion crop of about 150 acres. If we, as individuals, go to our own districts and persuade people to grow an additional ten acres or 50 acres, there is no co-ordination, and we may find that when the crop is grown there are 300 or 400 additional acres. We would then have created a marketing problem. That is an aspect to be considered, and emphasises the need for something of this nature to be done.

The question of emergency food supplies is another matter that will bear considerable investigation. I doubt very much whether the emergency supplies of preserved foodstuffs, in country areas at all events, is as satisfactory as the Minister hopes. Consideration of the best means of storing wheat is another point raised by the Premier in his letter. That matter will have to be dealt with, not by us as individuals, but through the Minister, and there will need to be some co-ordination in that direction. Obviously it would be absurd for private members to go into the country areas preaching the gospel of the storing of wheat when we have huge constructional jobs at present in progress at places like Bassendean and Picton. We would have to give a full explanation of that because it is obviously a contradiction of what we are expected to do in regard to the storage of wheat in the country districts away from the coast.

A number of other matters arise but, except for one, I will not deal with them at the moment as I do not wish to delay the House unduly. The one problem I would like to mention at this stage is the consideration of, and recommendation, if possible, as to how better provision could be made for the maintenance and overhauling of the State railway rolling stock, which is at present being worked to capacity. If full loading is to continue, it seems that to effect the proper maintenance of the rolling stock will be impossible. I suggest that if a committee such as I propose were appointed, it might very well investigate the position and possibly recommend that civilian transport on the railways, for a period, should be halved to enable the rolling stock to be withdrawn for maintenance. The use at

present being made of that stock, particularly locomotives, makes me concerned as to what the position might be if we suddenly had an increased demand made on it for military purposes. Whereas the Minister or the department would be faced with difficulties—there would certainly be considerable opposition—if they reduced the civilian transport by 50 per cent., or whatever percentage they thought desirable, if a committee of this House recommended it, those people who might be inclined to complain would be forced to realise that it was an absolute necessity.

I will not delay the House any longer at this juncture. I have moved the motion in the hope of getting an expression of opinion from members to the effect that they would like the Government to avail itself to a considerably greater degree of the services of private members than has been possible to date.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [11.20]: While it is perfectly true that the Government, through the Premier, has expressed a desire to have the assistance and co-operation of members of Parliament, the Government has not had an opportunity to consider the proposal contained in this motion. I am wondering whether the framer of the motion has given it serious consideration because, on analysis it appeals to me as the most revolutionary motion that could be submitted to Parliament.

Hon. H. L. Roche: It is done in the Federal Parliament.

**The CHIEF SECRETARY:** It is not. I do not want the hon. member to think I am opposed to the idea that members should assist the Government in quite a number of matters, but I wish to draw attention to the wording of the motion. It would be possible for four members of Parliament to cause investigation to be made to carry out organising work on their own responsibility. It would take the responsibility out of the hands of Ministers and the Government. Although the hon. member does not suggest that in his remarks—he said the opposite is the idea—that would be the net result if the motion, as printed, was agreed to by the Government.

I think there are many ways in which private members can assist, but I, expressing my own opinion, certainly could not possibly

agree to this motion. The functions of these committees, if appointed, would be to inquire into and report upon and, where advisable, organise for the carrying out of any proposal decided upon by a two-thirds majority of the members present at a meeting of the committee. A committee is to consist of eight members, three members of the Legislative Council and five members of the Legislative Assembly. A majority of eight is five, and a quorum, in the circumstances, would be five, and a majority of a committee would be able to do the things I have mentioned, without reference to the Minister, without regard to the nature of the subject and so on.

For these reasons I am afraid the hon. member has not given the motion the consideration it should have received. While I do not want to enter into details this morning, I suggest that the phases mentioned by the hon. member are undoubtedly matters upon which information could be provided by private members of either House. At the same time I point out that these matters are at present receiving attention from Commonwealth and State departments. There are statutory officers who are dealing with them—officers who have been given a good deal of authority under the National Security Regulations—and where they are operating under those regulations, they have full power to act. Notwithstanding this I feel sure that on the matters being handled by them, there are many points of value that could be brought forward by private members of Parliament who, in some instances, have a peculiarly expert knowledge of the difficulties.

The suggestion was made by Mr. Roche that a private member has no status. I cannot entirely agree with his statement. In my experience a private member has status in his own district that should be of very great advantage. The hon. member pointed out that members representing the North-West are able to meet and give authoritative opinions on many subjects associated with the North and that information is very valuable to the Government; but the same claim cannot lie in other directions. I feel that the Government would be only too pleased to take advantage of the particular knowledge that private members have on many subjects, apart from those mentioned this morning, but the method by which those subjects should be dealt with

is a different matter. Whether the motion is carried or not, it will certainly be considered by the Government, but I assure the hon. member that while the motion stands as printed, I regard it as the very negation of our form of Government, and I think I am right in saying that it would take from Ministers of the Crown, who have been vested with all the authority to deal with matters that come within their jurisdiction, any authority or responsibility they may have in regard to administration.

Hon. H. L. Roche: That was never intended.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course it was not intended, and that is why I say the hon. member has not given sufficient thought to the wording of the motion. The House will deal with the motion as it thinks fit, but in view of the fact that the Premier has notified private members that he is very anxious to have their assistance in many directions, I think that after there has been a discussion, the hon. member would be well advised to withdraw the motion, mainly on account of the wording.

HON J. CORNELL (South) [11.28]: I am not so much concerned about the purport of the motion as I am about the principle involved, and the principle involved is that at this juncture it would be in the interests of the State generally and our part of the prosecution of the war if the Government resorted to the procedure adopted by Mr. R. G. Menzies when he was Prime Minister, carried on by his successor, and continued and enlarged by Mr. Curtin. That is the appointment of Parliamentary committees according to the numerical strength of the two Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament and according to the numerical strength of the parties represented in those Houses.

Whatever may be said against Mr. R. G. Menzies, it cannot be said that the present Federal Government—although it displaced him—turned down that idea. On the other hand, the Government has carried it on and enlarged it. If the Government thinks that these committees are not essential, desirable or necessary, it should not appoint them. That, however, does not take away from the fact that this Parliament may consider and resolve that such special committees are not only necessary but desirable. I think that is what is sought by

the motion. True, every member of Parliament received a communication from the Premier, and their co-operation and assistance, it was said, would be welcome. Who will welcome their co-operation or listen to their suggestions? The war has been in progress since the beginning of September, 1939. No Minister and no departmental head has ever invited me to give an opinion about anything.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Nor has any other member been asked.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Not so far as I know. Unless there was a direction from Parliament that the present situation be altered per medium of these committees, I would not take the chance of receiving a push in the face myself by going along and saying, "I think you ought to do this, that or the other." The Government is in office to do its job, and Parliament can express an opinion as to whether or not that job is being done. Parliament may also say where it thinks some improvement can be effected. I venture to say that when the Premier returns from Canberra he will call a meeting of members of his Party, and lay before them the substance of what he has done, seen and heard. That Party includes certain members in this House. He has adopted that course before. Members of this House who do not belong to the Labour Party will know nothing in regard to that side of the business, and will have to continue looking to the Press for information about what is going on.

Hon. W. J. Mann: They will be left in outer darkness.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That is the position. I understand that the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. C. G. Latham) and the Leader of the National Party (Mr. Ross McDonald) have, so to speak, been seconded to collaborate with the Government. We know that in the Federal arena a war council has been appointed, composed of representatives of parties in the House. We also know that when the Prime Minister makes a statement concerning what the council has considered and discussed, or when the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Fadden) makes a statement on the same subject, that matter becomes public property, but I have yet to learn that anything has emanated from the Leader of the Opposition or the Leader of the National

Party in respect to what has been done by the State Government or what we might expect it to do. Not only has the present Prime Minister adopted the innovation introduced by Mr. Menzies, but he has gone further. That great ramp, uniform taxation, was not an instrument created either by Mr. Menzies or Mr. Padden, but it is an instrument created by the present Federal Government. The taxation committee has for its chairman Professor Mills, who is also chairman of the Federal Grants Commission. Anyone who has studied the matter knows that the two Parliamentary representatives upon the committee are unificationists. Hon. G. W. Miles: Mr. Padden put up the proposal for uniform taxation.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That was an entirely different thing. Two unificationists make up the majority of the members of the committee, although Professor Mills is the chairman. I understand that the Federal Government has adopted the proposal and will doubtless endeavour to put it through.

What is happening in connection with the goldfields industry? The Federal member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Johnson, M.H.R.) was, He made certain statements concerning both employers and employees in the industry, but the State Government did not come into the picture. There was, of course, a protest, but even today we do not know where we are. We learn from this morning's paper that under the leasehold arrangement with the United States of America gold is regarded as of little if any value. In the circular from the Premier, goldfields members are told that they can best serve the interests of the State generally by remaining in their constitencies, and devoting as much time as possible to them. If there is any place in which I could do any good for the industry, it is not in my province, but on the doorstep of the State Government or the Federal Government. I do not know whether it would not be in the best interests of the State if a Parliamentary committee were appointed to-morrow to inquire into and report upon the goldmining industry, its value to the State, the necessity for keeping it going, and its future. The Federal Government has taken the bit in its teeth and said, "We will do this and that."

I am not joining with those people who have panicked on this question. Our answer should be, "Here is the considered opinion of a representative committee of this

Parliament. We have as much right to inquire into and report upon the goldmining industry, its benefit to the State, and the injury that may accrue to the State from anything that may be done to its detriment, as is the Federal Government which has declared that it must go by the board." If we are going to accept all the dicta of the Federal Government and its decisions without qualifications concerning the war effort, we might as well close up the State Parliament. We have a perfect right to say that such and such a decision is stupid. I think we have already discovered how stupid many of the decisions are. For instance, we might well have a Parliamentary committee to inquire into the doings of the Civil Defence Council. I do not know who is responsible for the stupid regulations concerning head-lights of motor cars and with regard to torches outside the black-out area. The regulations in question apply equally to the goldfields as to the rest of the State. It is time Parliament asserted itself.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: The regulations are responsible for a large number of accidents.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes. Parliament is here, and people are asking what good we are doing and why we are here. Of what earthly use are members of Parliament under present conditions? Even in peace time we are hamstrung, and now and then have to wring from the authorities in power announcements as to what is the actual state of affairs. I support the proposal for the appointment of committees, but do not agree entirely with the motion. I have somewhat hastily drawn up an amendment, which, if adopted, would give members a chance to view the situation as they see it, and determine whether or not they should be taken more closely into the confidence of the Government. If the Government is opposed to the idea, and will not do what Parliament thinks it ought to do, we shall, at all events, have shown the people who are asking us what we are doing, or are likely to do, what our wishes are. We shall have indicated to the Government that there is only one way in which we think we can be of assistance, and that is by this means. I therefore move an amendment—

That in line 2 of the word after "House" be struck out with a view to the following words being inserted in lieu:—"It would be in the best interests of the State and the war

effort if the Government gave effect to the procedure adopted by the Commonwealth Government by appointing several Parliamentary committees to inquire into and report upon such matters as may be referred to any of the committees."

I think that will adequately meet the position, and indicate that we are desirous of assisting in this direction. If the Government says, "We do not want your committees," then we shall have a complete answer, should we be asked what we are doing.

**HON. SIR HAL COLEBATCH** (Metropolitan—on amendment) [11.45]: I am entirely in sympathy with the mover of the motion, but as it stands I think it is rather too complicated and goes too much into detail. It would be far better to agree to Mr. Cornell's amendment and affirm the principle. I understand that for some little time past a committee of this Parliament has been acting in regard to the North-West. The committee has, I believe, done very good and necessary work. We must all realise that the position of the North-West and of the settlers living there at present is peculiarly difficult, perhaps more difficult than the position of any other part of the State. In the appointment of the committee relating to the North-West, we have a precedent for taking the action suggested in the amendment. I do not know to what extent that committee has authority. I take it that it is purely a consultative and advisory committee. I am not aware that it is necessary for any of the other committees suggested to have further powers than that.

I do not know whether members took notice of the Gallup poll published in the "West Australian" yesterday. I do not pretend to know anything of the manner in which these polls are conducted, but they are generally accepted as a sort of indication, at all events, of public opinion. In the poll to which I refer, three questions were asked. One was: Is the State Government helpful to the war effort? The second was: Is it harmful to the war effort; and the third: Is it without effect altogether? In Western Australia the voting showed that 20 per cent. of the people—that is one-fifth—believe that the State Government is helpful to the war effort; 28 per cent. are of the opinion that it is a hindrance; and 52 per cent. declared it to have no effect

whatever. I do not know whether that is to be regarded as complimentary to or condemnatory of the Government. Members of the Ministry can no doubt interpret it according to their own inclinations, but I feel sure that there is a very strong opinion throughout Western Australia that the State Government and the State Parliament are not doing as much as they might, and the suggestion in the motion is worthy of consideration.

We have all been asked by the Premier to assist and co-operate, but how are we to do it unless there is some sort of machinery provided, by which we can work? Mr. Cornell has referred to one or two very important matters, particularly the fate of our goldmining industry. It is within the knowledge of many of us—and particularly those like myself who have had some association with the Federal Parliament—that there is a strong element in the party now in power in the Commonwealth that is very anxious to destroy anything in the nature of a backing for currency in order to make it easier to implement the idea of financing the war, public works and social services by Commonwealth Bank credit, whatever that may be. We have to keep that in mind when we are told by Ministers of the proposed closing down of the goldmining industry.

I emphasise the fact that we have not been told of this by the Prime Minister. Circumstances suggest that the Prime Minister probably did not know just what Mr. Johnson was coming here to tell the mining industry, and it has caused in a not necessarily suspicious mind the idea that that element that desires the destruction of what might be called currency stability, would at all events be very indifferent to any ill that might happen to the goldmining industry of Western Australia. Having that fact in mind, I entirely endorse Mr. Cornell's suggestion that the members of this Parliament should have some voice in the matter and should strengthen the hands of the Administration in its resistance to a proposal that I know is entirely condemned by every member of our State Government.

I am also in agreement with Mr. Cornell that a matter like uniform taxation in the form in which it has been suggested, and which is undoubtedly intended as a step towards unification and the destruction of the sovereign power of the States, is a matter

not merely for the Government but for Parliament, and one that might very well be investigated. There are other what might be called smaller matters. I endorse again what Mr. Cornell has said about motor head-lamps and street lights in other than black-out areas. I am sure the Chief Secretary must be aware that since the instructions relating to those matters have been issued, notwithstanding the enormous decrease in the volume of traffic on the roads, there has been an appalling increase in the number of accidents, and a very large increase in the number of fatal accidents. Surely that can be avoided.

The Honorary Minister: It would be advisable for people to keep off the roads.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: If everybody has to keep off the roads, why not have a curfew to compel people to keep in their homes after dark? It is a mistake to suppose that people must not go about their lawful occasions.

The Honorary Minister: Most of the accidents have been caused by people walking on the roads instead of on the footpaths.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: Many have happened to people necessarily crossing streets. I have occasion at times to go out at night, and I find that in crossing St. George's-terrace one has to be extremely careful. I would be the last to make remarks of this kind if I thought there was any need for such provision and that there was any extremity; but there can be no such need. Members of Parliament have the right to investigate these matters, because they are the ones who are condemned when things go wrong. Members of Parliament are intelligent men who have been elected by the people and have a responsibility on their shoulders. Surely a committee of such men would be able to devise a method of road traffic at night time, which would eliminate the present danger and reduce the number of accidents.

Another matter is that to which I referred in a question I put to the Chief Secretary. If I thought that by putting advertisements on the outside of their shops business people were going to cause danger to life or to encourage or help the enemy, I would not raise the point; but I cannot see how such a proceeding can possibly serve either of those purposes, and it is a very grave injustice to small business men to impose this restriction upon them.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: A most ridiculous thing!

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: To a very large extent big business places are arcades leading from street to street and have the same opportunities for display as they have in times of peace, but the small man is prohibited from putting anything outside his shop except his name and the nature of his business. I do not know what right or authority any committee has to impose restrictions of that kind upon business people. As a matter of fact one only has to walk along the street to perceive that the order is being ignored and that people are still painting up, as I consider is quite appropriate, notices in regard to the character and conduct of their businesses in spite of the fact that the Minister said proceedings were to be taken against them.

Hon. J. Cornell: It relieves the drabness if nothing else.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: Yes, and I cannot for the life of me see that it does anybody any possible harm. My own conviction is that the compulsory removal of glass and the substitution of timber was a step in the wrong direction.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And they put it down as capital expenditure, if you please!

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: That is a taxation matter that should be taken into account in considering all these things. How are these provisions going to affect the individual? After all is said and done, the maintenance of the stability of the individual is essential to the war effort. How can people be expected to buy war bonds or war savings certificates if they are going to be embarrassed in their business life every day? We are proud that we have in our midst many soldiers from another part of the world. Those men are naturally inclined to spend a little money, and I think they are inclined to spend it wisely. Why should not the small business man have an opportunity to try to cater for their requirements without having unnecessary restrictions imposed upon him?

Those are only a few indications of the use to which the committee system might be applied. At the root of the matter lies the fact that the public does blame the Government and Parliament for things done wrong and stupidly. I do not think members of Parliament should be required to accept blame unless they have an op-

portunity of sharing responsibility. There was an outcry a little while ago against the method of rationing. Speaking to the statement of the Chief Secretary, I suggested that the right course was for the Commonwealth Government to lay down the basis of rationing, and for the local authorities, which alone have sufficient knowledge of the different circumstances prevailing in different parts of the State, to work out the details. There is another instance in which a committee composed of members of Parliament and Ministers might be of very great service. I support the amendment because I think the motion goes too far and pins us down to details that might be improved upon after the matter was given consideration by the Government.

**HON W. J. MANN** (South-West—on amendment) [11.57]: I agree that they may be in the motion rather more detail than is wise, and for that reason I shall support the amendment. The Minister, when discussing the motion, except for the fact that he considered there was a certain amount of redundancy in the wording, made out a very good case for the principle. He said that the Government recognised that amongst members of both Houses of Parliament there was a good deal of ability and expert knowledge.

[Resolved: That motions be continued.]

**Hon. W. J. MANN:** The Chief Secretary has acknowledged that some members possess expert knowledge the application of which to problems of the State would be of extreme value. If that is the position—I believe it to be quite true—it would seem that the Government has waited for a very long time, and is still negligent in that respect, before availing itself of the benefit of that knowledge. Probably one of the considerations that influenced Mr. Roche in submitting his motion was the fact that, in common with others, he felt that the Government should awaken to the fact that valuable time is being wasted.

It is not necessary for me to direct attention to the various avenues in which the services of members might be used. As a country member I emphasise the fact that frequently there are happenings in rural parts of which the Government has no knowledge, or at best a very imperfect knowledge. On the other hand, private members

see or hear much regarding such matters and are in a position to make suggestions to the Government as to what could best be done and thereby render valuable service from time to time. To cite one instance, not long ago I saw what I thought was a most outrageous state of affairs in connection with a matter affecting a certain Federal department. I made a second trip to the locality in order to make sure of the facts. When I had done so, I passed on the details to what I thought was the right quarter, with the result that in less than a week a very marked improvement was effected and that more satisfactory condition has been maintained ever since. I mention that instance in passing to demonstrate that in my opinion the services of private members should be utilised as far as possible.

It is not always easy for the Government to appreciate how difficulties can best be surmounted, or troubles overcome. I commend Mr. Roche for introducing this topic for discussion and although I cannot see my way clear to support his motion, I shall vote in favour of the amendment. I have this to say to the Minister's credit: I was glad to hear him remark that, irrespective of whether the motion was agreed to or rejected, the issue raised would receive the serious consideration of the Government. The fact that the motion will be carried even in an amended form, as I hope it will be, should serve to strengthen the hands of the Government.

**HON E. H. H. HALL** (Central—on amendment) [12.4]: After listening to the Chief Secretary, I have no doubt that the amendment will be agreed to as it serves to remove the only objection reasonably to be urged against the motion. The discussion so far reminds me that I have in past years frequently pointed out what I regarded as a great defect in our democratic system. My view has been shared by men who know a great deal more about it than I do. I refer to the question of Cabinet dictatorship. Whatever may be said for public submission to such a principle in times of peace, there can be no excuse for it in days of stress such as the present. After saying that, I could content myself by merely adding that the motion should be welcomed by the Government, but there is one other important phase to which I should like to refer.



If ever there was an occasion, quite apart from the world upheaval that is occupying so much attention today, when the State Government should have sought the active assistance and co-operation of every member of Parliament as the representatives of all the people of Western Australia, it was when the dreadfully sudden and ill-considered determination was arrived at to deal a deadly blow at the largest industry in this great undeveloped State of ours. I refer to the reported decision of the Federal Government regarding the future of the goldmining industry. Mr. Cornell stated that the Federal member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. H. V. Johnson, M.H.R.) visited the State but he did not know whether that member when he went to Kalgoorlie to tell his constituents something, did so with the approval of the Prime Minister. I should imagine that the hon. member must have had some grounds for making a statement of that description.

I find it hard to conceive that, Mr. Curtin and Mr. Johnson both being Western Australian representatives, the latter should be in a position to take the constituents in the Kalgoorlie Federal electoral division into his confidence and tell them something of which the Prime Minister had no knowledge. I cannot conceive of anything of that sort having happened. On the other hand, Mr. Curtin, although being the Prime Minister, is only one individual. If, as has been stated this morning, there is some scheme by which it is proposed to eliminate gold from our economic system, I can only suggest that no consideration has been given to the interests of this State. Moreover, there is not even a committee comprised of members of Parliament that could take up such a matter and make a determined stand in opposition to it. You, Mr. President, have been a member of the National Parliament and have been associated with the State Parliament for many years. You must have more knowledge than I possess regarding the Constitutions of both the Commonwealth and the State.

Is it possible for the Commonwealth to do such a damnable thing as that suggested regarding our goldmining industry? Have we no comeback at all? Is there nothing that we as a Parliament can do in association with the Government to stop this very grave injustice? I have heard and read speeches on this topic but in not one did I see any reference to its effect on a lowly but

most important section of the goldmining industry. I refer to those hardy old batlers—the prospectors. It is unthinkable that such an act of injustice should be done to men of that type. I hope everything possible will be done to obviate that possibility.

Reverting to the question of the appointment of Parliamentary committees, there must undoubtedly be many matters that members individually would be loth to take up. I mentioned one subject the other day. I am sure that had there been a committee in existence to whom the matter could have been referred, it would have received attention. I mentioned that many thousands of gallons of petrol have been wasted and had that subject been referred to a committee, that wastage could have been obviated. It could be said, "Well, why did you not go to the heads regarding this matter?" Each member can speak for himself but for my part I would feel justified, although dreadfully sensitive, taking some such action. We listened to a lecture over the air by a well-informed authority who said that one of the weaknesses of democracy today was that we set ourselves out to criticise the Government, and it was time that we got behind our Governments, State and Federal, and gave them a little more support and not quite so much criticism. I believe there is something in that and that we would be working in the interests of the nation if we co-operated a little more and did not have quite so much to say in a critical vein. I have spoken with officers and men and also with experts regarding the petrol question, but the fact remains that nothing has been done.

If a committee representing all shades of political opinion were established, matters could be reported to them for consideration, and recommendations emanating from such bodies would carry more weight because it would be realised that the proposals did not emanate from one section imbued with particular party points of view. Such a committee would give due consideration to the matters referred to it for attention and any action taken would certainly not rebound to its discredit. The principle involved in the motion should be welcome to the Government. Although the committees would operate independently, action could not be taken without Ministerial approval.

By adopting that course we could indicate to the public generally that Parliament was acting.

On many occasions people who obviously labour under a misapprehension, have asked me about this or that matter, and I have had to remind them that I am not responsible. I have often been met with the reply, "But you are a member of the Government." Many people think that membership of Parliament is synonymous with Ministerial office. Often members are blamed quite wrongly for what occurs, the idea being held that they are Ministers of the Crown. Very often it is necessary for a member to take action on the floor of the House in order to secure information, and, to secure his objective, he frequently has to go to great lengths.

Hon. J. Cornell: He often has to exaggerate his case in order to get publicity.

Hon. E. H. HALL: The hon. member knows much more about that phase than I do. Frequently the answers given to our questions have been very unsatisfactory, and we find that individual members cannot secure the consideration for their requirements that should be extended to them. Whatever suggestions were placed before the Government in accordance with the principle underlying the motion, would represent the considered opinions of committees comprising representatives of all shades of political opinion in both Houses. I support the amendment.

**HON C. F. BAXTER** (East—on amendment) [12.16]: The motion and the amendment are brought forward because members of the Chamber have found themselves in the position of not being able to use their experience and abilities to assist in the war effort. I feel that, like myself, every member of the House wishes to do something to aid that effort today. It is quite true that our Premier sent a circular to each member of Parliament dealing with that aspect; but an analysis of the document shows that it asks members to do something they cannot possibly do. I shall not deal with the whole of the circular, but I specially mention that the members to whom it was addressed were asked to go out into their constituencies and attend to matters affecting civil evacuation. I hold that if the Premier ascertained the position in that regard, he would find that

local government authorities have already taken the matter in hand. The circular asked members to go out, with no standing whatever beyond that accorded to members of Parliament, and interfere with what is the business of local authorities. Those authorities, if we did so, would tell us in plain language to mind our own business. And this criticism applies to most of the contents of the circular.

The enemy is at our doors, an enemy whose presence there should have compelled every man and woman and youth in the community to unite in a common effort and stand shoulder to shoulder to defeat that enemy. In peacetime it is open to us to have differences of opinion on many subjects, but at the present juncture there is no room for any differences of opinion whatever. The mover of the motion and also the mover of the amendment have in their minds that a committee should be created to operate under the instructions of a Minister of the Crown. In my opinion, that is not all that should be done. The Prime Minister says that every man and every woman in Australia are now working wholeheartedly in the war effort—which, unfortunately, is not true. All differences that existed in peacetime should have been allowed to go by the board in wartime; but differences of opinion in the political world have not been laid aside. While there is a demand that the people of this country should make a one hundred per cent. effort towards winning the war, apparently party politics are to go on just the same.

The time is long past when the political parties of Australia, Federal and State, should have been amalgamated. Every member of each legislature should have been part and parcel of one united legislative body, instead of doing sectional work as is the case now, when, as we know, there is only one party represented in the Government. We see proof of that every day; and I say that without in any way decrying the party at present in power. We shall never have a one hundred per cent. effort from legislative authorities until all political parties are united and party political differences are entirely buried. That is what is needed, more than the appointment of a committee. Seemingly there is a section of the community that will not agree to what I have stated. Unfortunately that section

will not assent to a superseding of the freedom we have gained, even while the enemy is on our threshold.

I shall not speak at length; indeed, I should not be speaking at all. However, the crisis is vital. One of our great industries, I may say our greatest industry, that of goldmining, is menaced. The Federal member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. H. V. Johnson, M.H.R.), who came over here representing, we understood, the Commonwealth authorities advocated terminating goldmining operations. In this morning's paper we read an astonishing statement from Mr. Dedman supporting the proposal. Consequently Mr. Dedman's action is serious. Victoria undoubtedly is far more powerful in the Federal Parliament than is Western Australia. Goldmining in Victoria is only a small activity as compared with the industry in Western Australia. The intention is that the manpower of goldmining shall be transferred to the Army. For that view a great deal may be said; but there is more to be said for the fact that Australia is not getting one hundred per cent. manpower from all Australian industries.

Under Regulation No. 77, we have the position secured, according to the Prime Minister, as regards Australian industries, and there is to be no interference whatever with war industries. But what do we find? The key industry of Australia is being held up week after week by an element that apparently does not trouble about the war. Yet Western Australia is to be deprived of the manpower of its goldmining industry, while that other industry in the East is to be allowed to do as it likes with respect to supplying a vital need of Australia—the production of coal. Committees are all right; but I contend that if there were no party factions, the trouble in the coal industry would not have lasted one week. Even we have in our mines some disaffection which would not exist if there were united effort on the part of the legislators of Australia. No wonder the Australian people are disgusted! Right through this continent the best results are not being obtained from those men who have been elected to represent the Australian people. We cannot get the best results unless the efforts of all Australians are combined in the fight to save Australia.

Let us first win the war, and then we can deal with other conditions afterwards. I support the amendment in the hope that

some little good may be done. Parliament should not adjourn until such time as we have something definite on two highly important matters—uniform taxation and the goldmining industry. Are we to sit down and let the goldmining industry go? Surely members realise what the closing-down of that industry would mean! It would involve a terrible task to resurrect the industry, no matter what the value of gold may be afterwards.

Again, what is to be done with the enormous assets existing on our goldfields? A few glib words, "We want the manpower," and those assets are to be destroyed! Is the goldmining industry, one of the best industries Australia ever had, and more especially Western Australia, to be destroyed? I trust even now that sanity will prevail in the political world. While we need one hundred per cent. effort from the people, we want one hundred per cent. political effort in order to be successful in the war. I support the amendment.

Amendment (to strike out words) put and passed.

The PRESIDENT: The question now is that the words proposed to be inserted be inserted.

**HON. H. V. PIESSE** (South-East—on amendment) [12.11]: By reason of the late running of the Great Southern train I was, to my regret, an hour late for the opening of this sitting and thus lost the opportunity to hear the remarks of the Chief Secretary, Mr. Cornell and Mr. Roche. I wholeheartedly support the motion, which the passing of the amendment will doubtless improve. In view of the knowledge possessed by members of Parliament, their assistance should certainly prove of great value to both the State and the Federal Governments.

The Chief Secretary: We have rendered such assistance.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: That has been so in the past. A committee of members can get together and take evidence from Government officials here. Only four weeks ago Country Party members came to Perth determined that the State Government should be forced to call this Parliament together. Why were we, as ordinary members of Parliament, so determined on that? Because we could not obtain information other than that available to the ordinary citizen. Our claim is that we, as representatives of our constituents and country organisations en-

deavouring to assist in the war effort, should have the information we need. After having been lectured by three special departmental officers in our party room here, we possessed quite a different view from that which we held previously of the Government's war effort and what was being done relative to our various industries, particularly the primary industries.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the people have been talking about the lack of an organisation for carrying on. I, unfortunately, was prevented from attending on the occasion to which I refer, but from conversations with other members I gather that there is amongst them a feeling that the greatest possible efforts are not being made. We have heard the goldmining industry discussed, and I say without fear of contradiction that a member like yourself, Mr. President, who has seen the goldfields come into fruition and has been in Federal politics as well, and also a member like Mr. Seddon, could certainly furnish extremely helpful information as members of the committee to assist in advising the Government on the important questions affecting goldmining. We should co-opt every brain that we can, because starting on the bottom rung of the ladder we can gradually work up to the top towards the successful prosecution of the war. In this way we can put forth Western Australia's utmost effort for victory and the well-being of humanity. And those are the aims of all of us.

Now let me allude to Mr. Mann, who shows so keen an interest in the production of vegetable crops in his own province. No one knows more about vegetable production than that hon. member does. I myself have made a study of the subject in my own province. Last Saturday I received a telephone call from a Marybrook grower who referred to the fact that certain prices were being offered by the military authorities for vegetables and told me that some farmers were signing up at prices not commensurate with the cost of production. I do not know whether that statement is correct or incorrect. From the review published by the Hawkesbury College, of which I was a student, I learn that the average price offered by the military authorities in New South Wales for vegetables is £2 per ton higher than the average price ruling here. Surely that information should have

been available to our Agricultural Department! We are now asked by the various country organisations to assist in the matter.

Why should our growers be asked to produce vegetables at £2 per ton less than is paid today to the growers in New South Wales? Is it reasonable? We are not now exporting vegetables. I had intended to ask the Minister some questions on this matter, but this debate gives me the opportunity to mention them. On the one hand, the Department of Agriculture may be aware of what is being paid for vegetables in New South Wales, but on the other hand the department may not. Before asking farmers to produce additional quantities of vegetables for supply to the military authorities as well as to the public, surely to goodness the knowledge and information which private Parliamentarians have of this matter could be passed on to the Department of Agriculture.

Private members of this and of another Chamber are experts on various phases of industry. Mr. Wood, for instance, is an expert on wheat farming. Only today he was late for Parliament because he had had to attend a zone meeting in his district dealing with that phase. Members of the proposed advisory committees would not be called upon to act on them every week; but they would be available when required. If the committees were formed, then we, as legislators, would be more contented. We could remain in our electorates and thus prove to be of greater assistance in our war effort. I support the proposition.

**HON. G. B. WOOD** (East—on amendment) [12.32]: I support the motion as amended. I feel that nothing but good will result from it. It cannot possibly do any harm. Like the previous speaker, I believe that members in touch with various industries could be of great assistance to the Government, whether the industry be vegetable growing or wheat growing or a secondary industry. I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government upon arranging for the inspection of the State's various secondary industries on Friday last. Perhaps it is not right for me to refer to that matter when speaking to this motion, but I take the opportunity to thank the Government for what it did in that regard.

Shearing is a big problem that is facing the State today. I venture the opinion that

some members of Parliament know considerably more about that matter than do the officers of the Department of Agriculture, who are not in touch with it. I believe country members could tender sound advice to the Government as to what should be done to facilitate shearing operations this year. A member representing a country constituency assured me that he considered there would be a glut of vegetables in July, yet growers are being urged to produce greater quantities. Even school children throughout the East Province are growing vegetables. In addition, acres of cabbages and other vegetables have been planted out. Consequently, there should be some organisation in this matter.

Farmers who attended a meeting at Quairading yesterday appeared to be perturbed regarding lighting restrictions on motor car head lamps. I was talking recently to a doctor who was very concerned about those restrictions. He said that he would be forced to break the law, as he is sometimes called upon to assist the doctor at York with operations. He assured me that on one or two occasions he had to travel at 60 or 70 miles per hour to get to an urgent case.

The Honorary Minister: And he might have killed half a dozen people on the way.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Not necessarily. He was travelling fast to save life. I am sorry the Minister adopts that attitude. The doctor at York told me that he did the same thing, as he was called upon to proceed to Quairading to assist with operations there. Attention should be devoted to considerations of that description, which affect other people as well as doctors. I ask the Government what harm would be done to the war effort by a person running a car with full lights on from York to Quairading?

The Chief Secretary: The military authorities are responsible for that.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I am aware of that, but country people know how necessary it is sometimes to run cars with lights on. No complaint is made about the blaze of lights in the city or on the road from Perth to Fremantle; that is a different matter altogether. Assistance to the Ministers on these and other matters would do much good.

Amendment (to insert words) put and passed.

**HON. H. L. ROCHE** (South-East—in reply) [12.36]: I shall not detain the House long with my reply. I express my appreciation of the general approval which this proposal has received from members. Its approval is an indication of the feeling of members regarding the position in which they find themselves during the present crisis. They are not able, with the machinery available at the moment, to afford that assistance to the Government and the State which each feels should be rendered. I am not an unqualified believer in coalition or national governments; but, apart from that aspect, we must accept the position as it is. A proposal along the lines suggested by me will not interfere with the responsibility of the Government or the Ministers. On the other hand, it will afford members the opportunity to help in matters regarding which they are possibly better qualified than others to assist. The Chief Secretary took exception to the wording of the motion and I realise there is something to sustain his contention. At the same time, however, I do not think, had it been passed in its original form, that there would have been any danger of business or responsibility being taken out of the hands of Ministers. Actually, the proposed committees could not function without the approval of the Government. The members of such committees would have no means of implementing their decisions unless the Minister concerned or the Government approved of them.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

On motion by Hon. H. L. Roche, resolution transmitted to the Assembly and its concurrence desired therein.

## **MOTION—PRINTING MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.**

*As to State's War Effort.*

Debate resumed from the 16th April on the following motion by the Chief Secretary:—

That the Ministerial Statement be printed.

**HON. J. G. HISLOP** (Metropolitan) [12.40]: I thank the Chief Secretary for allowing me at this stage to continue the debate. I desire, with the consent of the Minister for Civil Defence, to submit to the House a statement of my activities since assuming the role of Director of State

Civil Medical Emergency Services some eight weeks ago. Let me first, however, go back a little. It was in the middle of December that my profession shook itself free of complacency and realised that it had a task to perform in making ready for any possible enemy action. A meeting of the profession was called, and a committee appointed to carry out the organisation considered necessary and to assist in every way other bodies working towards the common end of prevention of civil casualties and the adequate care of any such as might occur.

A plan was formulated and it is materially that which I will place before the House. The members of that committee were Dr. F. W. Carter, Major Cyril Fortune, Dr. S. E. Craig and myself. Its activities were guided by our energetic chairman, Mr. James P. Ainslie, who was responsible for the adoption, as our working plan, of the basis of "if the raid occurs tonight." Under this programme of hustle, the committee sat more or less continuously during the first week or ten days. I recall, on one occasion, adjourning at 1 a.m. for seven hours. We reached a stage when we found that we, as a purely advisory body, could make no progress. Our first step was taken when we were appointed a committee of the Civil Defence Council, but without voice on that council, having to rely upon the hospital and casualty sub-committee for any executive authority.

Some progress was made, but we soon realised again that progress would stop at a certain point. When we failed to make the Civil Defence Council realise the necessity for representation of the medical profession in its deliberations, we approached the Premier. At this time the council was reorganised. I was appointed to represent the profession and was given the post of Director of Civil Medical Emergency Services. Much has been accomplished since then. The task has not been easy, but I can assure members of this Chamber and the public generally that, if a raid occurs tonight, our organisation will function—not perfectly by any manner of means, but one thousand per cent. better than if the raid had occurred eight weeks ago. When I say that my organisation is imperfect, I mean it, and I will mention some of my difficulties, but I can assure members that the injured man will not suffer because of those imperfections. They are now such

that they will but call upon the resources of my profession and may not be apparent except to ourselves. I trust not.

I want members to realise that the Civil Defence (Emergency Powers) Act did not by any means make clear the organisation necessary for the care of the injured. The duty of the warden finished when he laid his injured man upon the floor of the first-aid post. Above this nothing was built. It was this hiatus in the scheme of things that I and the medical sub-committee tried to fill. Hospital accommodation and treatment, and even first-aid post treatment were imagined but not laid down. In many areas I have found the wardens aware of this lack, and they tried to make provision for it and carry the burden themselves. They have been relieved of what was obviously a task for my profession.

I point this out because it must be realised that apart from some arrangements the hospital and casualty sub-committee had made, this whole organisation has had to be built up in the space of a few short weeks. Certain areas had been set aside as first-aid posts. Training in these centres has been intensified and given the realism of war first-aid. I would like here to pay a tribute to the work of Dr. H. R. Nash, who has been tireless in his efforts to teach the real essentials to the first-aid parties and workers at the posts. He has accompanied me to country centres and given all the aid and teaching he could in the time available. His lectures have been appreciated everywhere. He is now a full member of my committee. The choice of a post at North Fremantle is causing me considerable worry, but whilst the choice is being made the post will continue to function in the kindergarten.

Hon. J. Cornell: What about the one at Claremont?

Hon. J. G. HESLOP: One of the most active posts is in the Claremont Training College. Up till yesterday afternoon I thought that post would have to go as the Army required the building. But as the result of some co-operation between the Army and my committee, I am now in a position to state that the Claremont Training College post will continue to carry on in the building in which it has functioned during the last two years.

Hon. J. Cornell: You have done a good job.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I would like to place on record my appreciation of the growing and almost accomplished co-operation between the Army and the medical organisation for civilian services. I am certain that this co-operation will continue, and it will be of tremendous service to both parties in the arrangements they are called upon to make. I wish now to refer to equipment. One of the first things my sub-committee undertook was the survey of the equipment of the first-aid parties. We found the contents of the pouches and haversacks quite unsuitable for the treatment of air raid casualties. A standard list of equipment was drawn up and the extra equipment ensures that all casualties will be adequately cared for. Dressings have been standardised and are now carried in a sterile condition—this sterilisation having been done by many hospital autoclaves, the nurses being only too willing to assist. The treatment of burns has also been standardised so that on arrival at hospitals each case will receive the particular treatment its individuality requires. It has now been arranged that morphia will be given to the injured by the first-aid parties, each party having been instructed in its use and trained in its administration.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is dangerous.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: A suitable container and method of carrying were worked out by the sub-committee. Thus, I can assure the public that morphia will be given to those in pain at the earliest moment, skilfully, in correct amounts and without delay. The equipment of the first aid posts was considerably augmented. This followed as a corollary resulting from the fact that arrangements had been made that in the event of an air raid, without invasion, doctors on part-time military service would be liberated for civilian needs. Each first-aid post was, and will be, manned by a doctor. This arrangement allowed of a much wider scope of activity being undertaken at a first aid post; equipment and training were thus both considerably advanced. Except for some minor details, all this equipment is in each first aid post.

I will now deal with hospitals. A survey was made of the hospitals of the metropolitan area from Midland Junction to Fremantle, and certain parts of certain hospitals were set aside as being required for service should a raid occur. I give a list

of these hospitals and the staffs which will be on duty in them. The idea of this is to assure members that there will be adequate medical staffing arrangements in these hospitals. At Midland Junction St. Andrews and Nurse Baker's hospitals are being used, and Drs. Buttsworth, Beech, Siglin and MacMillan will be on duty. At Belmont, St. John of God Hospital will be used, and will be staffed by Drs. Meagher, Thorburn, Bladen, Peacock and Clarke. At Mt. Lawley it will be St. Anne's Hospital and Drs. Gray, Murphy, Finkelstein, Pearson, Mine, Magnus and Mrs. Mine will comprise the staff. At the Mount Hospital, Perth, there will be Drs. Young, Gollan, Sedgwick, Mrs. Sedgwick, E. D. T. Smith, Hill, Nelson, Barnard, Michaels, Godfrey, and Barker.

At South Perth St. Margaret's Hospital be cared for by Dr. Wilson. At Nedlands Tressilian Hospital will be used and will be staffed by Drs. Bennett, Kershaw and Love. The Children's Hospital in the Perth-Subiaco area will be staffed by the medical superintendent and his normal staff, together with Drs. Crisp, Quinlan, Frank Gill, H. B. Gill, Paton, Tynms and Donald Smith. St. John of God Hospital will have a staff consisting of Drs. Carter, Cohen, Lueraft, O'Neill, Ferguson, Mitchell, Illingworth, Simpson, Lyon-Johnston, Moss and Gawler. At Claremont-Cottesloe Devonleigh Hospital will be staffed by Drs. Callagher and Cuthbert. At East Fremantle, St. Helen's Hospital will be staffed by Drs. Baker and East. At Perth Hospital, in addition to the usual staff, there will be Drs. Ainslie, Juett, Gray, Hislop, Gillespie, Horan, and Syme Johnson. The Fremantle Hospital staff has not yet been re-constituted in its evacuated areas. The men available for service, in addition to the medical superintendent and his staff, will be Drs. Cook, Gibson, Roberts, Radcliffe-Taylor, Rockett and Caldera.

Those manning the first-aid posts will be Dr. M. B. Johnson at North Perth: Dr. E. R. Dermer at East Fremantle: Dr. B. J. Hallion at North Fremantle, Dr. F. B. McCann at Cottesloe—that post may be augmented by Dr. Nash agreeing to give his services—Dr. Mayrhofer at Claremont: Dr. Dorothy Champion at Subiaco: Dr. V. H. Webster at Leederville; Dr. J. Vere Arkle at Lord-street; Dr. K. Pawsey at Victoria Park; Dr. M. S. Bell at Midland Junction and Dr. T. L. Anderson at Como. In addition there are 17 men or women on an un-

attached reserve list upon whom I can call for duty wherever it may be necessary.

It is intended, in the very near future, to make some alterations in the disposition of the medical staff in the hospitals and first-aid posts. These alterations will not hinder the plan, but will provide for easier access to allotted posts and increased efficiency—but I give them as they stand to-day. Equipment has again been standardised and sent to these hospitals, and once more I give an assurance that if a raid occurs tonight they will be able to function. There was some delay in equipping these hospitals but we have benefited by mistakes and are grateful for the delay the enemy has shown in attacking us. We are still short of certain types of equipment, but they are not material and I am making every endeavour to obtain the necessary items, some of which we must obtain from outside the State. There are some items which it seems impossible to obtain, but through the vision of one or more members of my committee and the skill and powers of improvisation of many workers too numerous to mention, we now have them. I would pay special tribute to many metal workers who spend their luncheon hours fulfilling our orders.

Emergency theatres have been provided in many of these hospitals and I am indebted to Mr. F. C. Edmondson and his staff for making a survey and submitting plans for emergency lighting of these theatres. The Public Works Department, with Mr. Jukes in charge, is hurrying this work on; it will be efficient. In each hospital, special wards have been set aside for the treatment of shock. Major Fortune has been very active in the planning of this treatment. To emphasise to the House the degree of co-operation I am receiving, may I point out that my whole scheme of shock treatment depended upon a plentiful supply of oxygen. I had not the cylinders but a request to Mr. Leith Tucker of the Colonial Sugar Refining Coy., Ltd., resulted in 20 large cylinders being placed at my disposal. My oxygen troubles are over.

The nursing staffs of the hospitals have been augmented by the addition of E.S.C's, many of whom have received full-time instruction rendering them valued assistants in time of need. The transfusion service of the Red Cross has entered into our plans with an alacrity for which I must thank

it. To feel that an efficient service of this type is ready to function at any moment gives both the public and me a feeling of added security. Dr. Marion Radcliffe-Taylor has, in the last week or two, made a minute inspection of the equipment in each hospital, its readiness to function, its deficiencies and its needs. This has enabled me to close the chinks in our armour.

*Sitting suspended from 1.0 to 2.15 p.m.*

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Following Dr. Marion Radcliffe-Taylor's survey of hospitals, I have been enabled, as I said, to close the chinks in our armour of equipment in those institutions. I place great emphasis upon the provision of ample stores of anaesthetics, and these have been distributed in such a manner that there need be no fear of even a local shortage, let alone any general shortage. In fact, this can be said of all equipment: ample reserves for any raids that we consider possible at the moment are at my disposal. I do not mean that we have ample for all time, but we have ample for what we have visualised as being immediately possible.

In both city and suburbs workers are making bandages and dressings for me and there are ample to assure supplies for all of us who may be injured. There are such clubs as the Tote Girls' Club building up enormous reserves for me, and every first-aid post or hospital has its teams of workers. I have been appointed by Sir Alan Newton to be chairman of the State Medical Equipment Committee, and as such the stock sheets of the local drug houses have been open to me, and there exists between us the highest degree of co-operation. There have been shortages, but direct contact with Sir Alan Newton has never failed to produce a ready response to the needs of the State and the fulfilment of requirements as far as possible.

May I appeal through this House to the public to refrain from panic buying. There is no need for it. Such buying creates an artificial shortage. I recall that some six weeks ago a country town chemist shop had something over 200 lbs. of cotton wool. To-day there are 20 lbs. Perhaps this followed my activities in that town regarding A.R.P. May I say that 200 lbs. in 200 homes is useless compared with 200 lbs., the whereabouts of which I am aware. It is then a



store upon which I can call. A pound of cotton wool with some gauze will make 10 large dressings—too much for one family—and what is more, there is much less ability to sterilise those dressings in private homes than I can command. There is ample for all. I should say we ought to keep on buying our requirements, but not to stock up our private homes. Our first-aid posts and first-aid parties will be amply catered for.

The Civil Defence Council endorsed my request that the workers in first-aid posts and hospitals should be protected as far as possible. The architectural division of the Public Works Department under Mr. A. E. Clare drew up a plan of sand and timber bunding for each first-aid post and hospital. This plan had special reference to protecting the area in which actual medical work would take place, especially the surgical field and such services as would be required for actual surgical treatment. So far as the hospitals are concerned this work has been almost completed and, in many first-aid posts, is well advanced and functioning. The bunding is of particularly stout construction and will protect the institutions from anything but a direct hit. Not only was the bunding necessary for the protection of the workers, but it was also necessary to ensure that as far as possible the hospitals which we have decided to use in the event of enemy activity would still be able to function after a raid was over.

Transport of the injured worker also came under our notice, as I realise that my organisation would obtain the best results only when all other organisations were functioning with it. It was for this reason that I endeavoured to co-operate with all other sub-committees having the care of the injured man in mind. I desire members to realise that there were and may still be two transport organisations functioning under A.R.P. The first is the wardens' organisation ending on depositing patients at first-aid posts, and the other organisation working from this point onward, carrying the men to hospital and evacuating patients from the first-aid posts to hospitals and from hospitals to homes and so on. Mr. Maguire of Boans Ltd. and Mr. Harris of Foy & Gibson were in charge of this latter organisation under the hospital and casualty sub-committee. I realised, however, that as we increased our scheme of hospital accommodation and protection, so we would in-

crease the task of Mr. Maguire and Mr. Harris. To assist them I called a meeting, with the consent of the Civil Defence Council, of all those interested in transport, with the R.A.C. president, Mr. H. M. Henderson officiating. Following this it was agreed to appoint a full-time organiser of auxiliary ambulance services, and after representations had been made to the R.A.C., it agreed to liberate its secretary, Mr. E. Menmuir, to act for two months on the most generous terms.

May I record with gratitude the ready co-operation, insight, and not only willingness but ability to assist of Mr. R. L. Millen, chairman of the Transport Board. With Mr. Menmuir, Mr. Millen and their assistants operating, I feel I can now cast aside my worries regarding the transport of the injured. Mr. Millen has the power to, and assures me that he will, impress all vehicles required by A.R.P. services. Having a feeling still that so many of our organisations were running along parallel lines, never meeting, yet always having in mind the treatment of the injured man, I suggested to Professor Bayliss, the Chief Warden, the formation of an essential services committee of the Civil Defence Council. The Civil Defence Council agreed, and this committee is now composed of Professor Bayliss (chairman), Mr. Harry Hocking (chairman of the transfusion service of the Red Cross), Mr. Gadsden (Director of Communications), Mr. E. Menmuir (organiser of auxiliary ambulance services), Mr. Gerhard (Chief Officer, Fire Brigades), with Mr. H. V. Reilly as legal adviser, and myself. Thus all services to the injured man represent their problems to each other at regular meetings.

As to the evacuation of hospitals, the board of management of the Perth Hospital, to which I am liaison officer for the honorary medical staff, considered it its duty for obvious reasons to evacuate as many of its patients as possible, and also to leave as many beds as possible ready in case of any emergency. Arrangements were made to refit one ward at the Infectious Diseases Branch and some 50 beds will be accommodated there. Eighty more patients or thereabouts are to be transferred to the Edward Millen Home, the Repatriation Department having granted for the duration of the emergency the use of this building to the Perth Hospital. Its inmates have been

transferred to Wooroloo. This considerably reduces the risk to patients in a building such as the Perth Hospital. The Fremantle Hospital is situated in a target area and its evacuation was ordered by the Civil Defence Council. The evacuation of this hospital has caused me and others many headaches and the plan now adopted is far from ideal. The lower floor of the McCallum block will continue to function as an active hospital, and the outpatients' department will remain until the citizens of the surrounding area evacuate—if they are ever ordered to do so. The remainder of the patients have been or are in process of being evacuated.

Lucknow Hospital, in Queenslea Drive, Claremont, has been taken over for the accommodation of those patients who normally live in the Claremont and North Fremantle areas and look to the Fremantle Hospital for their treatment. Two houses of Christ Church Grammar School have been taken over for the housing of the staff necessary to run the Lucknow Hospital. The remainder of the patients, some 60 in number, will go to Heathcote where a certain number of beds has been set aside for the use of the Fremantle Hospital. This arrangement, unfortunately, does not permit of any increase of beds for the Fremantle area, but simply provides for the evacuation of the Fremantle Hospital patients in the numbers prevailing today. It would, I admit, be desirable to take over Heathcote entirely, but there are many difficulties in the way. The advice of the Inspector General of the Insane is against the total removal of those patients, and it is mainly based on the fact that no one has yet been able to visualise where those patients could be transferred to. Nobody has been able to point out any building or structure which is suitable and to which we could transfer the patients of the Heathcote Reception Home.

This leads me to the point of discussing the provision of beds for possible casualties in the metropolitan area. The Fremantle Hospital will continue to function as an advanced first-aid post or surgical unit, and certain staff will have to remain in that portion of the hospital so designated. St. Helen's Hospital in East Fremantle is being used as one of the A.R.P. hospitals, and is being strengthened as a surgical unit. It will be the first surgical post for any casual-

ties that may occur in the Fremantle area. Owing to the generous action of Mr. Herbert of Bicton, the Bicton A.R.P. committee has been able to offer me further hospital accommodation in that area. This will make a very useful centre of evacuation if ever the need should arise.

A blood bank has been established dependent entirely upon the generosity of Mr. H. J. Locke and will function through the services of the Red Cross. So that in the actual immediate area of possible action, I think we will, temporarily, be fairly well catered for. Further surgical work can, if necessary, be performed at Heathcote, in which there is a surgical unit that is as modern as one could wish. Transfers of these or other patients can be made to allow of the reception of cases at Heathcote. In addition, I have issued, and I hope they have received, a delayed requisition upon the proprietors of the Applecross Hotel. I do not desire to use this building at all, but wish to have it at my disposal should I need it. I could if necessary accommodate 100 patients in that place, and thus I will have at my disposal something like 160 to 180 beds upon the south side of the river.

The Honorary Minister: That may not be enough.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am far from satisfied as to the number of beds I have on the south side of the river. My one constant necessity is to increase that number, and I trust that before long plans will be laid down to enable me to do so. One must look at the picture as a whole. On the other side of the river Devonleigh Hospital will be the first surgical centre. It has been amply protected by bunding along the areas or around the areas which we intend to use. I estimate that 100 beds can be fairly rapidly found in St. John of God Hospital, Subiaco. The management of the Children's Hospital has agreed to make ready within one hour room for 100 beds. The Perth Hospital on the lower floors of the new building, which are rapidly being made possible for the reception of casualties, will receive a larger number than that—I am not certain but I think the number will be between 100 and 200—and we will still have the Fremantle Hospital, if it is there after a raid, and the Perth Hospital if it is there after a raid. At the lowest estimate, I can see space for 500 beds at fairly rapid notice.

The V.A.D. organisation under Lt.-Col. MacKenzie has agreed to form a hospital should our cases have to be evacuated from any of these places, possibly the day after or the second day after treatment, and it can staff and carry a hospital of 75 or possibly 100 beds. That organisation would staff the place entirely, but would expect my organisation to take control again within 10 or 14 days to allow of its being ready to function elsewhere. Such a plan is not at present in operation, but is on paper. Having regard to the fact that any one area may receive more attention than another, thought has been given to the provision of surgical teams. The Royal Automobile Club has given its van to the Civil Defence Council for a period of emergency to use in any manner that may be thought fit. My committee has designed the equipment necessary to convert the van into a mobile surgical unit, and that equipment cost has been placed before the Civil Defence Council this afternoon. I have no doubt the council will agree to the expenditure because as yet it has refused me nothing. Teams of surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and other necessary staff will proceed with the van to any portion of the metropolitan area or country where I consider its services are necessary.

In addition I have visited large internal sectors such as the Fremantle Harbour Trust, where I was received most courteously. In company with Mr. Dumas and Mr. Clare I made an inspection of the problems there. A plan of first-aid posts was submitted to the Trust, and it has agreed to meet the cost, and the work is well in hand under the direction of the Public Works Department. I took the opportunity while members were looking over parts of the Midland Junction Workshops to inspect all the first-aid arrangements there. I was there again yesterday morning and had a long chat with Mr. S. J. Hood, to whom I trust I have been of some assistance. Mr. Hood assures me I have helped him a great deal, and that he will do all in his power to increase the efficiency of what has a possibility of being a very excellent first-aid post. I am sorry my remarks have been so lengthy, but I desired to give details of this work because I think members should be possessed of them.

I have visited Bunbury, Geraldton, Collie and Mundaring, and investigated all the

problems of first aid in those towns. Dr. Nash has accompanied me and given lectures to first-aid posts. Wherever there was doubt about anything we tried to give what advice we thought necessary. The advice may have been wrong because we have not been through air raids, but we have endeavoured to give considered thought to matters that have come before us through making up all these plans. Everywhere I have been people have been most ready to organise or if necessary re-organise first-aid work. I think we can rest assured that in those towns the work, should an air raid occur, will be much more efficient than it would have been some weeks ago. The Civil Defence Council has agreed to the expenditure of money for the bunding of necessary portions of hospitals at Bunbury and Geraldton to be used for the reception of casualties, just as has been the case in the metropolitan area. St. John of God Hospital will be used in Bunbury as the main surgical centre, and cases will afterwards be transferred to St. Clare Hospital, which is some little distance out of Bunbury.

Arrangements have been made there for a considerable number of possible beds, and my mobile unit, if necessary, will be ready to go there to service the town. Arrangements have been made that all doctors in the surrounding areas will, on receipt of a call, come into the area in which trouble has been experienced, and give their services should an air raid occur. In Bunbury Dr. Lawson Smith will act as my deputy and take charge of the medical arrangements associated with A.R.P. work. In Geraldton an air raid post and an advanced surgical unit is being established in the High School. St. John of God Hospital will be used as the main surgical unit and Dr. McAleer has been put in charge as my deputy. In Collie Dr. Coppin is acting on my behalf. It has not been found necessary there to go to the expense of bunding the hospital, which is well out of the centre of any possible enemy activity. All these three hospital equipments have been standardised by my committee and forwarded through the Civil Defence Council. In addition, from each place, from Bunbury Mrs. Lawson Smith; from Geraldton, Sister Carson, and from Collie Sister Comely have been brought to Perth and given training in blood grouping, typing and various ne-

ecessary factors which will allow them more or less to take charge of shock treatment centres in their respective towns. It is anticipated that more of this training will be given to nurses from other areas, but the more vital ones have been taken first.

I have intended for weeks, but each opportunity was stolen from me, but do intend at an early date, to visit Albany, an area which needs considerable attention, to investigate the needs there and if possible supply what is required even to the extent of giving further medical personnel. We have some difficulties which I hope will be rectified in the near future. One of the difficulties we experienced in the country was that nurses who have been trained for valuable service to that community have been called from their work to join the nursing medical service of the Army. I have no doubt that the same co-operation will be evident in this matter as was apparent in other instances when there was conflict with Army requirements. It will be my earnest endeavour within the next 24 hours to see that the senior nursing staffs of country hospitals are granted exemption where possible from military service if required in vital hospital areas.

In order to assure members that still further thought is being given to the protection of public in times of national emergency, I would advise them that an emergency medical service is being formed throughout Australia. Because they are too numerous, I do not intend to afford details of this medical emergency service, of which I have been given, more or less through being appointed executive officer, charge in this State. But all those members of the medical profession not employed on full-time military service will be available for A.R.P. activities. In fact, I can say that I hardly know one in the whole State who is not employed for some of his time on A.R.P. activities, unless he be on full-time military service. The establishment of an emergency medical service will make the position much clearer and will assure the public that no matter what happens there will be a medical organisation whose duty it will be to look after the civilian population.

I think I have said all that is necessary, but I would like all members to realise—and possibly to make the public realise—that I am far from satisfied. I applauded the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Hunter, at

a Civil Defence Council meeting some little time ago. The Commissioner put up a large request and he was asked if he was satisfied. He replied, "Yes, for today." That is the attitude I adopt in this matter. We must be satisfied day by day with what we have got, but never totally satisfied with the whole plan, and I can assure members that I and my committee will not grow complacent. We will never believe we have enough to protect us from any possible enemy action but will continue to endeavour to provide a service that will function.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [2.48]: I am sure that members were very interested in the report given to the House by Dr. Hislop, and I think we will all have a better appreciation of the many difficulties in the way of a reorganisation of services of this kind in a limited time. The details the hon. member has given to this House will also indicate the wonderful co-operation that is forthcoming from practically all sections of the community when just what is required is realised. While I would say that the report that Dr. Hislop has submitted is very satisfactory, I, with others, recognise that from time to time it will be necessary for alterations and additions in certain sections of the organisation to be made. Nevertheless, we can rest assured that the whole subject is receiving the best possible attention, and in view of the very short time that has been at our disposal to deal with some of these matters, we can congratulate ourselves that the stage outlined by Dr. Hislop has been reached.

I referred to that matter because the experience Dr. Hislop has gained is but the experience of others charged with responsibility in connection with our war effort and civil defence generally. It is so easy to criticise but frequently it is extremely difficult to criticise constructively. We know from our own experience as members of Parliament that often quite unjust criticism is offered and it is criticism that will not bear analysis once the actual facts are known. It was for that reason, when I was preparing the statement I gave this House, that I was somewhat in a quandary as to what I should emphasise. Members will recollect that I did emphasise those aspects that, to my way of thinking, affected the civil population of Western Australia in par-

ticular directions. I refer especially to such questions as water supplies, food supplies—both emergency and current—certain civil defence activities, munitions manufacture, and items of that kind which, as I said at the time, do vitally affect the people of this State as apart from the Fighting Forces which are, of course, engaged all the time in the war effort.

I appreciate the manner in which members have received the statement I made. I pointed out as clearly as I could that no doubt there would be many subjects on which information would be desired, but with which it would not be possible to deal in detail. I think that members who did refer to matters that were of a deep significance insofar as our defence is concerned recognise that it would not be possible—perhaps not advisable—that anything should be said of a detailed character. In regard to those matters I am afraid I must do as I said in the first place and, if I refer to them at all, merely make a passing reference. I have in mind one member who said he would like to know a lot of things, and itemised the things he would like to know. Of course he is not alone in that regard. Many people would like to know the same things, and in certain instances some Ministers of this Government would also like to know facts they do not know, because the details have been kept so confidential that they have not been conveyed to members of the Government.

There is another fact I might mention, and that is that there is an entirely different atmosphere today compared with that of a month or six weeks ago. At that time I think we were all convinced that within a few days, or within a month or so, the position would be much more serious than it turned out to be. As a result of the position as we knew it at that time, many things had to be done in a hurry—things that were essential, and which no doubt would have been of great value had it been necessary to take advantage of the arrangements then made. Since that time, what has been accomplished in regard to medical services in connection with the A.R.P.—as pointed out by Dr. Hislop—applies in a number of other directions.

I propose to refer to some of the matters mentioned by members but, as I have pointed out, it would not be possible for me to refer to everything raised by each

member. In his remarks, Mr. Seddon referred to the financial position of this State. Particularly did he refer to the financial policy as affecting the general position of the Commonwealth, and in dealing with State finances he said that we appeared to be carrying on in the same manner as in previous years. He quoted figures indicating a lag in the finances for this year as at the 31st March, compared with those at the 31st March last year. All I want to say in that connection is that the Government is exercising every care to economise in expenditure, consistent with efficiency, in every possible way in order that the utmost financial support may be given to the Commonwealth in its war effort. We are faced, however, with a lot of expenditure that is inescapable, and this expenditure, in many cases as a result of the war, has been considerably increased. It must be patent to every member that that must necessarily be so. We are hopeful that when the end of the financial year arrives we shall have improved on the budgetary position outlined by the Premier when he introduced the Budget into this Parliament.

There are one or two items, however, to which I feel I must refer, and which have a marked effect upon Government expenditure. For example, the basic wage increases last year affected the Budget for only a part of the year, but now have to be met for the whole of this year. The amount is very considerable. The payroll tax, which affected only part of the year, is also payable for the full 12 months. War expenditure relates to the payment of superannuation contributions for men who have enlisted in the overseas services, and certain concessions to soldiers while travelling. Civil defence expenditure insofar as it relates to the protection of Government property and staff is also met from Consolidated Revenue. Those are all items that are inescapable and in the aggregate they amount to a very large sum of money.

As against this increase in expenditure, certain items of revenue are likely to fall. With the reduction of the number of men engaged in goldmining, the profits of gold mines are not so large as they would otherwise have been, and taxation receipts have fallen. Stamp duty is also lower, on account of restriction of business operations, and revenue from the totalisator and sale of betting tickets has also declined. Similarly, the

revenue from entertainments tax has fallen as a direct result of the war. When members speak of the finances as they appear at present, they should take into consideration the extraordinary circumstances confronting the State and the unusual effect those circumstances have upon the ordinary business relationships of the Government. I should imagine it would be very hard to predict with any degree of accuracy just to what extent State finances will be affected, but I have already informed members that the Under Treasurer anticipates that by the end of the financial year the position will be somewhat better than was suggested by the Premier when, in his Budget speech, he estimated the deficit for the year at -£198,000.

In the course of his remarks Sir Hal Colebatch criticised the allocations made to the various States by the Loan Council; more particularly did he stress the large proportion received by New South Wales. He referred to the incidence of the Financial Agreement, and dealt with the proposal by the Commonwealth Government for uniform taxation. Sir Hal said in effect that these factors would bring the States under the dominance of New South Wales. As Sir Hal knows, the procedure adopted by the Loan Council has been altered by the appointment of Sir Harry Brown as Co-ordinator General of Works. Under normal circumstances, each State made an application for the loan funds it required, and in the event of lack of agreement as to the distribution of the money to be made available, the formula as provided for in the Financial Agreement was applied. Very seldom indeed has it been found necessary for that formula to be applied. Usually some means are adopted whereby all the States eventually agree. Some States give away a little while others receive a little more, and thus agreement is reached.

Since the war, however, it has been necessary to preserve as much of the loan funds for the Commonwealth's war purposes as could be made available, and to ensure that this would be done the Loan Council agreed to the appointment of Sir Harry Brown as Co-ordinator General whose duty it is to submit a report to the Council showing how much of the States' loan money was required for works of a defence nature. I think it can be said that almost without exception all loan funds being expended in this State at present are associated in one way or an-

other with the defence of Australia. At the last meeting of the Loan Council the allocation eventually agreed upon was based on the defence requirements of the various States. As much of the work to be done in New South Wales was of a defence value, it was natural that that State should have a substantial share. Indeed, it is safe to say that very little of the loan money made available to the States will be spent on ordinary loan works.

It may be of interest to know that when the report of the Co-ordinator General was received in regard to the distribution of loan funds for this year, New South Wales was set down for a larger share than it finally received. The amount allocated to Western Australia was smaller than the Government sought and was very small because of the fact that few works of a defence value were being carried out here. The Premier, however, made such a vigorous protest that a re-allocation of the funds was made, resulting in an increased allocation to Western Australia and a reduction in the allocation to New South Wales.

In regard to the proposals for the institution of a uniform tax, it is made quite clear in the memorandum issued by the Commonwealth Government that the allocation of the money amongst the States as compensation is based on the average taxation collections of the various States for the two years ended on June, 30, 1941. If New South Wales receives a large amount, it is because the Government of New South Wales has taxed its people heavily, and for the same reason if Victoria receives a small amount, it is because the taxation in that State has been light.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: It will mean that the Victorian taxpayer will advance money for the New South Wales Government to spend.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not agree with the proposals that have been submitted, but as I understand them, the effect will also be that the Victorian taxpayer will contribute a certain amount of money for Western Australia to spend—

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Which is quite wrong.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is what will happen as I understand the proposals, and I have already indicated that I do not agree with those proposals as I understand them at present. As hon. mem-

bers are aware, a special Premiers' Conference is being held this week to deal with this matter and if we are to take notice of what has appeared in the Press this State is not alone in the objections it has raised to the operation of the scheme as originally submitted. The position was apparently described by the Premier when he referred to the scheme as a very big step towards unification without any of the benefits that could reasonably be expected.

During the debate Mr. Dimmitt asked whether the Government had made arrangements for the protection of the records in certain departments. He said he would like to have my assurance that the necessary precautions are being taken. I can give that assurance. A committee has been appointed to co-ordinate the efforts of the various State Government departments in providing for the security of records and documents, and the risk of loss has been minimised by:—

- (a) Removal to a country district or outer suburban area;
- (b) Photographing of records not easily duplicated or which are in such constant use as to make it impracticable to send them to distant centres;
- (c) Retention in a strong room, giving a better measure of protection than the place where the records are usually kept.

Generally speaking I think it can be said that every possible precaution has been taken. Mr. Dimmitt referred to four departments, the records of which have been, or are being, dealt with in the manner I have indicated—with the exception perhaps of the Titles Office, where it has been found impracticable to transfer to other quarters the original certificates of title, numbering 270,000 in all, owing to the frequent reference which has to be made to them. Strengthening work is being undertaken at the Titles Office, and this should afford the desired measure of protection. Certain of the departmental records have been transferred, and these will establish a starting point for reconstruction if that becomes necessary.

Several members have mentioned the confusion which exists regarding evacuation. All are agreed that this is a big problem and one that must be examined from many angles. It is a problem which, no matter how it is tackled, will have far-reaching con-

sequences in the social life of our community if large-scale evacuation does take place.

Hon. J. Cornell: How does 2s. 6d. a day for the keep of an evacuee compare with the basic wage?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member can raise that question at another stage. There again I suggest that some people are inclined to indulge in criticism without taking into account all the relevant facts.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is not a question of relevant facts but a straight-out proposition.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: More than one member was rather anxious to know under whose instructions certain evacuation had taken place. I should have thought that on account of the publicity given to the question they would have known that any orders for evacuation would be the prerogative of the military authorities who alone will decide if and when such evacuation shall take place. Perhaps it is on that account that there has been some misapprehension on the part of many people. It seems to me that no matter how many explanations are made and no matter how much publicity is given in the Press to the facts, some people cannot be convinced that all that is happening at the present time is the preparing of a plan, so that evacuation can be put into operation without delay, and without chaos supervening, in the event of its being considered by the military authorities to be necessary in certain areas. In my own district, for instance, immediately after the canvassers had been around, many persons came to me complaining in some cases that they were having to get out of their houses within 24 hours; in other cases that they were going to have to take in, within the next 24 hours, a number of evacuees—all sorts of complaints of that kind, of which I presume other members have had experience. It was extraordinarily difficult to convince some of those people that all that was being undertaken was the preparation of a plan in the interests of those people, so that if the time should come when compulsory evacuation was necessary, it would be effected with a minimum of disorder.

Hon. J. Cornell: The public does not know today whether evacuation will be

ordered by reason of an air attack or a sea attack.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: My reply in that regard is that it would be highly difficult for anyone to say whether evacuation will be necessary in any area at all. But it should not be hard for Mr. Cornell to visualise that after an air attack it may be necessary to evacuate fairly large areas. That has been done elsewhere. I can well imagine what would happen in some areas on our coast in the event of there being a really severe air raid, and, instead of the enemy succeeding in hitting military objectives by means of a number of near misses, for considerable areas to be reduced to such a condition that it would be impossible for the inhabitants to remain in them.

Hon. J. Cornell: That position would obtain from Fremantle to Midland Junction.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In order to investigate and plan for any probable evacuation, the Government has set up an Evacuation Committee, which was appointed in January last and comprises representatives of various women's organisations, the Transport Board, local governing authorities, Railway Department, Wardens' Organisation, Education Department, British Medical Association; under the chairmanship of Mr. Huelin as Chief Evacuation Officer. Planning for the evacuation of the so-called "target" areas was the first stage of the committee's work. These areas have since been declared by the military authorities, and are situated on the seaward side of the metropolitan area, the population of which comprises nearly 10,000 people.

The point may here be stressed that the decision of the War Council, announced after the last Premiers' conference with the Prime Minister, was that, speaking generally, the public was to stay put; there was to be no question of mass evacuation, and the people from the target areas would simply be evacuated to other portions of the metropolitan area. It has been extraordinarily difficult to complete the planning of a fairly large evacuation and at the same time not to create fear and panic in the minds of large numbers of people. The scheme for these target areas has virtually been completed and it has been presented to the Civil Defence Council, approved by that body, and forwarded to the G.O.C. Only a few details, I understand, remain to be considered.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Is it not a fact that many people have been evacuated from the metropolitan area?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There has been a certain amount of voluntary evacuation, to judge by experience elsewhere. In respect of certain outlying ports, similar official evacuation schemes are being prepared. These in each case are in the hands of local committees, who in turn are in touch with the military authorities; and, as is the case in the metropolitan area, simply provide for the making of plans to meet a contingency which may never arise—this being necessary if confusion is to be avoided in the event of an emergency. The people who have evacuated themselves will mostly return to their own homes, as was the experience in the Old Country. In our case, the local people have gone about the matter of evacuation in a businesslike way, and plans in each case are steadily maturing.

There have from time to time been demands for a much larger evacuation scheme providing for the sending of women and children from the metropolitan area. Such a scheme appeals to the sentiment and to the protective instincts of the community, and is liable to receive wide support. Immediately, however, one contemplates any evacuation which will involve tens of thousands of people, all kinds of difficulties arise. It is overlooked that a large proportion of the economy of the State is based on the metropolitan area, which unfortunately holds more than half the State's population. To try suddenly to reverse that position to any extent, even as an emergency measure, means asking certain parts of rural Western Australia to treble and quadruple their normal population; and to do this one immediately encounters great difficulties in the matter of housing, water, and food supplies.

Various schemes have been suggested by which hutsments should be erected here and there for holding communities of 1,000 to 3,000 mothers and children; but dispassionate examination of such schemes indicated that, for the most part, their acceptance would not be feasible, and that without much preliminary thought and work, and without many safeguards, the last state of such a scheme would be much worse than leaving the persons in their accustomed surroundings. In order to make it a little easier for people who, of their own volition, thought they would be happier in the coun-



try, the Government made concession fares available, and also concession freights in respect of furniture. A considerable number of people have taken advantage of these concessions, and many of the country towns report that they are almost full as a result. This movement has now eased off considerably, and it is probable that unless adverse happenings arise, there will in the next few weeks be a considerable return to the metropolitan area. The Fremantle evacuation scheme has so far been the most urgent work of the committee.

Concerning civil defence, a full statement has been given by the appropriate Minister in another place. Members have been critical of the lighting and other restrictions imposed by the Civil Defence Council. I do not propose to enter into any lengthy discussion on this matter, but to reply to certain specific requests for information. Regarding the brown-out and black-out, these have been ordered by the military authorities, and action is being taken to see that orders under regulations gazetted by the Civil Defence Council are complied with. This also applies to those institutions or departments referred to during the debate. We can expect that all institutions and public bodies will at least comply with the regulations.

Some criticism has been engendered by lack of agreement between the services in the observance of restrictions; and I can say that this has created untold difficulty and adverse comment in various sources. We must recognise the authority of those in charge of defence operations in this State. We try as far as we can to meet the regulations submitted to us from time to time by the military authorities. As regards the black-out and brown-out, the Civil Defence Council is merely endeavouring to carry out what the military authorities decide is necessary.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: And what the military authorities do not carry out themselves.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Some references were made to the Fremantle Harbour. I should have thought members would realise that it was impossible for ships to work in the night unless they had better lighting available than otherwise obtains on the wharf. It is only when ships are working that the waterfront is lit up to the extent some members have referred to. This aspect will be dealt with by the

Premier and the Minister for Civil Defence while in Canberra, where they will make representations to the proper authorities with a view to effecting the desired co-operation between these various services in respect of lighting conditions particularly. Should there be an air-raid warning, the water front could be blacked out effectively today in a few seconds. That is the main thing so far as the harbour is concerned. We hope we will be better off than some other places have been and that we will at least have sufficient warning to permit us to put into operation the system built up by the Civil Defence Council. There are other places beside the harbour front where it is essential that lights shall be available. In the event of a warning being received arrangements have been made to allow a black-out to take place very quickly.

In the course of his remarks Sir Hal Colebatch said he would like to know who was responsible for the edict that had gone forth that all business people were to remove glass from their windows and substitute timber, etc. He said he would like to know if this was singular to Western Australia, and also said in effect that similar action was not being taken elsewhere. As a matter of fact, the Civil Defence Council is responsible for what Sir Hal Colebatch calls the "edict" in regard to removal of glass.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Do I understand that those people who protected their glass with wire-netting are allowed to keep it there?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Civil Defence Council, I think, set out a number of areas in the centre of the city from which the glass must be entirely removed.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Many of the big shops still have the glass and wire-netting.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In some cases modification of that provision has been made. It may affect the position in connection with wire-netting, but the point I am anxious to make is that the Civil Defence Council, in this matter, is acting in accordance with advice it has received from places which have experienced air raids. It believes it is acting on the best advice it can possibly obtain. Only this morning, apparently as a result of what was said in this Chamber last week, I received a wire from the Under Secretary for Civil Defence, who is at present in the East, advising me that

Adelaide and Melbourne are now following suit and insisting on the removal of glass in those cities in the same way as we are here.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Are you going to insist on it in all cases?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am only giving the information that has come to me by telegram this morning. It indicates that we, in Western Australia, instead of lagging behind are setting an example. If we examine any of the regulations issued by the Civil Defence Council we will find that it has very good reasons for having decided to promulgate them. I admit it would be most difficult to get everybody to agree that they are necessary, but someone has to make these decisions and we have given that authority to the Civil Defence Council. I am inclined to think, as a result of what I have seen in Perth, and from what I know has taken place in Fremantle, that the Civil Defence Council is doing a good job, irrespective of any criticism I might have had to offer in the past. No order has been made in regard to the timbering of the windows from which the glass has been removed. The business people are doing that because it is their belief that it is the best course to adopt.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: It is only for their own protection.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, and it is essential in some cases.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: It is not mandatory.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: As a result of certain inquiries I made, the Civil Defence Council advised that in the event of the emergency passing, or the circumstances materially altering, the intention is to revise some of these regulations so as to bring them more into line with the real needs of the situation. But nobody, of course, can prophesy what is likely to happen even 24 hours ahead. As I said before, a month or six weeks ago we had a very different idea about things from that which we have at present. I suppose that state of affairs will continue while the war lasts. Changes take place over which we have no control. Those changes may be here in Australia or in other parts of the world, but they all have a big effect on the steps necessary to be taken, not only in regard to the civil population, but also in regard to the war effort of the fighting services.

Regulation 70 was mentioned by Mr. Dimmitt, who quoted what he termed an anomaly respecting payments required to be met for A.R.P. work by tenants on a monthly or leasehold basis, and those occupying premises under a weekly tenancy. I am informed that the Civil Defence Council is aware of what Mr. Dimmitt points out and that the matter has been receiving its attention as has also the question of A.R.P. expenditure being allowed as a deduction under the Income Tax Assessment Act. That is a matter which, I imagine, will be dealt with at the present Premiers' Conference in the East. If we do eventually have uniform taxation it will be a matter, no doubt, that will be handled by the Federal authorities.

I would like to speak for a moment about comments made by Sir Hal Colebatch and other members regarding the position of the goldmining industry in this State. Much has been said by various members concerning the present uncertain atmosphere pervading the industry, and suggestions as to the utilising of the man-power in that industry for war purposes. Members are no more in the dark than is the Government itself. No information is available from the Commonwealth Government which would clarify the position. We know very little more than what has appeared in the Press.

Hon. Sir Hal. Colebatch: It is a great shame, but I do not blame you!

Hon. G. B. Wood: Do not you think it is time you got some information?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I realise that. Does Mr. Wood think we have not endeavoured to get the information?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The trouble is a division in the Federal Cabinet.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: One of the first things the Premier did was to send a very lengthy telegram, which appeared in the Press. The hon. member must have read what has been said elsewhere in connection with this matter. He, and other members, must recognise that no matter what we think in this State, the Commonwealth Government would not take the steps it apparently has taken unless there were very good reasons for so doing. It is, perhaps, just as well to withhold our criticism until we know more about it. We are fortunate at this juncture in that we are to have during this week no less than four Commonwealth Ministers in Perth. Today, as members know, Mr. Dedman arrived in Perth to

deal with this particular question. He was in the House at lunch time today. I have no doubt that, after he has outlined whatever it is that he is going to deal with, we will have an entirely different idea as to what is really intended. I prefer to withhold any criticism I might have until I know a little more about the matter. The House already knows that the Minister for Mines has gone to Canberra to discuss this and also civil defence matters. He will endeavour to obtain some definite information while he is there. It is most unfortunate that Mr. Dedman should be here while Mr. Panton is in Canberra.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Co-operation!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Minister for Mines will be able to obtain all the information at Canberra it is possible for him to secure here. One member was somewhat critical of the efforts made in this State in regard to the manufacturing of munitions. More than one member alluded to the fact that our munitions factory was still not completed, and I am in accord with those who are criticising the length of time it has taken to bring these works to a state where they can actually manufacture munitions. From inquiries I have made I have learned that this is a matter under the direct control of the Director General of Munitions, Mr. Essington Lewis, and that the Government has made every effort to speed up the establishment of these works. We will have the Minister for Munitions here this week, and members can rest assured that the matter will be dealt with by our own Ministers.

It seems strange to me to read in the paper that the Minister for Munitions, when speaking in Sydney on the 19th April, referred to the work of his department and said that when next year's programme was announced it might be that 100,000 people would be engaged in the munitions industry. He went on to say that within three months it was expected that a munitions annexe would be installed at Broken Hill. Within three months! Our own munitions factory has been under way for something over nine months. On another occasion, a few days previously, the Minister for Munitions said that as part of the Federal Government's decentralisation plan more than £4,000,000 was being spent on 13 munitions projects being placed in country centres in three States. Some had been established

and other establishments were being erected. Victoria benefited by nine of the projects. On one of them £600,000 was spent and on another, £500,000. Seven in New South Wales would cost £350,000 to £590,000, and one important establishment in South Australia would cost £600,000. No mention was made of the one in progress in Western Australia.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Now we can say "Shame"!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Reference was made by Mr. Hamersley to the registering of men employed in the agricultural industry. By interjection I told him that that was not the case and I now confirm my statement.

Hon. V. Hamersley: I am very glad to hear it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The farming industry is exempt from the regulations. There is no necessity for farm labourers to register; employers are permitted to obtain farm labour wherever they can and this applies everywhere. That should allay Mr. Hamersley's apprehensions. Let me also clarify the position of shearers. All shearers of 30 years of age or over are reserved from service and are available for the occupation of shearing.

Several members referred to my remarks about the requirements for the coming year of such commodities as perishable products, potatoes, meat, etc. I think they have shown by their remarks that they realise the seriousness of the situation. Members can rest assured that the position is appreciated by Ministers and departments and that everything possible will be done to effect an improvement as quickly as possible. I know from the discussions I have had with the Minister for Agriculture that he has a very keen appreciation of the difficulties that have developed so suddenly, difficulties brought about mainly as the result of a large influx of various arms of the fighting forces. Seemingly the proposals he has made will have the effect of improving the position, although it will be very difficult to say that anything that may be done this season will be absolutely satisfactory in six months' time. However, members can rest assured that everything possible will be done.

Much concern has been expressed about the restrictions imposed upon our wheat industry. One member wanted to know why

Western Australian had been singled out for a restriction on the area to be planted this season. There again I was under the impression that, in view of the large amount of publicity in the Press, anyone associated with the industry would have had some knowledge of what was happening. I do not want to deal with the matter at any length; the Minister has explained it in another place. Briefly, the position is that when the Minister for Lands attended a conference called to discuss the whole question of wheat production in Australia, he found that certain proposals had been submitted which would have meant a reduction of acreage and production in Western Australia, and would have made the position in this State almost impossible. At the conference he was able to submit a case which in the main was accepted, and eventually it was agreed that the Western Australian production of wheat for this year should be 22,000,000 bushels. The figure that our Minister was advocating, after taking into consideration the question of manpower, etc., was 23,000,000 bushels. Consequently, as a result of the case he put forward, a tremendous improvement resulted.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Long before that conference the Minister for Lands advocated a restriction in the acreage.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Of course he meant throughout Australia and not solely in Western Australia.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. Quite a number of schemes were put forward, and at one stage it appeared as if the Commonwealth authorities, who had advanced millions of money to assist the wheatgrowers, were reaching a stage when they were likely to say, "We are not going to provide any more money, and in view of the uncertain position with which we are faced, whereby we are likely to have 130,000,000 bushels of wheat in storage in Australia, it is necessary that something be done to limit production." The Commonwealth having agreed to a total of 22,000,000 bushels for this State, it became necessary to take some steps by which every wheatgrower would be treated as equitably as possible. It is intended by the Commonwealth that some compensation shall be paid to the wheatgrowers who are not allowed to plant what they otherwise would have planted.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: On what basis?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I understand that the basis has not yet been determined. Mr. Scully has written to the Minister for Lands asking for the benefit of his views, and the Minister is consulting people associated with the industry. Our views, whatever they may be, will be considered by the Commonwealth and I hope some equitable scheme will be arrived at.

This morning Sir Hal Colebatch asked without notice whether I could tell him the authority under which instructions had been given with regard to advertising on the exterior of shops from which the glass had been removed and for which timber had been substituted. The authority is Regulation 71 under the Civil Defence (Emergency Powers) Act, 1940, dated the 19th March. I express my appreciation of the very courteous way in which members have received my remarks. Many other subjects might have been touched on, but I have replied to the more important matters that were mentioned. In view of the fact that the purpose for which the motion was moved has been achieved, I now ask leave of the House to withdraw it.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

## MOTION—LICENSING ACT.

### *As to Restrictions on Liquor Sales.*

Debate resumed from the 16th April on the following motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter (East):—

1, That in the opinion of this House any further liquor restrictions proposed by the State Government should be confined to areas already prescribed, and in these areas—

(a) The closing time be 7 p.m. in lieu of 6 p.m.

(b) No liquor in bottles be supplied from any licensed premises after 4 p.m.

(c) No liquor in bottles or other containers advertising such liquors shall be displayed after 4 p.m.

2, And in addition throughout the State—

(a) For sly grog selling there shall be imprisonment for the first and any subsequent offence without the option of a fine.

(b) That it shall be made an offence for any person to bring into or have in his possession any liquor within the precincts of any public hall where any entertainment is being or about to be held.

(c) And that the provisions of the Licensing Act be rigidly enforced.

**HON. H. SEDDON** (North-East) [3.58]: Incidentally, the motion standing in the name of Mr. Baxter is not of such importance as the fact that the Prime Minister has issued a further regulation under which arrangements have been made that the time during which public houses may be open for the sale of liquor shall be restricted to certain hours.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: No, that came prior to my giving notice of my motion.

Hon. H. SEDDON: There are some circumstances associated with the regulation that Mr. Baxter's motion will not meet. It has required a war to bring home to our people the serious evils that result from excessive indulgence in liquor, as a result of which the Commonwealth Government was compelled to take action. From what I have seen and have been told, I have reason to believe that there has been a distinct improvement in conditions since effect was given to the Prime Minister's decision.

There has been much criticism of the closing of hotels at 6 p.m. Mr. Baxter's suggestion is that the closing time shall be 7 p.m. One of the prominent evils of the traffic is the sale of bottled beer, which is purchased before the hotels close and consumed later in the evening. The proposal that no liquor shall be sold in bottles after 4 p.m. has this objection, that it could be evaded by men buying the liquor before 4 p.m. and waiting until 7 o'clock to take it away. It has been proposed in some quarters to break the continuity of trading hours; that the hotels opening from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and then from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. If the sale of bottled beer is restricted to the earlier period, then the question of taking it away at the closing time of 7 p.m. will not arise. That suggestion has been made to the authorities; but it appears to me the greater evil associated with the liquor traffic arises from the fact that people are obtaining beer and other liquor in bottles and consuming it in the course of the evening, with results that do not reflect credit on the community.

With regard to the excessive drinking now taking place, much might be said as to the cause. One must have a great deal of sympathy for visiting troops, who find themselves in a strange city with a few hours to spare and nowhere to go. A step has, however, been taken in the right direction by certain bodies, which are endeavouring to

provide entertainment and opportunity for these people to make better use of their time. That should be encouraged and I trust the Government will assist the movement, because it appears to me to be all to the good. Much has been said and will be said about the psychology of drink. Many people, for example, consider that drinking is due largely to the fact that people need company. That is why I make the suggestion to which I have just referred. Then there is what is known as the escape attitude; people are worried and think that by drinking they can obtain temporary surcease from their troubles and problems. Some suggestions which have been made I feel we can entirely support. The proposal to reduce the alcoholic content is, in my opinion, most desirable. I think it will effect a considerable improvement in the condition to which the Prime Minister has referred. The reduction in output of 33 per cent. is also a wise step, and will undoubtedly have beneficial effects.

I shall conclude by repeating some remarks made by me when discussing the Ministerial Statement. Unless these regulations are enforced more efficiently than are the provisions of the Licensing Act, they will not be worth the paper they are written on. The administration of the Licensing Act has for many years left a great deal to be desired. It is contended that many of the evils which have arisen are due entirely to the failure adequately to administer the law. For that reason I am inclined to think that the motion will scarcely meet the conditions; it is a question of administration. These regulations must be effectively enforced in order to achieve the results expected of them.

**HON. V. HAMERSLEY** (East) [4.5]: I desire to say a few words on the motion. In my view, the cause of the complaints about the unlimited abuse of liquor consumption and its results is due entirely to the abuse of the law, as stated by Mr. Seddon. The abuse is not actually the result of the law, but is due to the lack of its enforcement. Mr. Baxter drew attention to the sly-grog selling in this State; people were getting behind the law. Many instances have been cited of people purchasing bottled liquor and consuming it after the closing hour of hotels. In my opinion, when the licensing laws were passed, we believed we were doing better than were the Eastern

States by fixing the hours from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., instead of from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. But the fact remains that just before closing time young people had the opportunity to purchase bottles of liquor, which they took either to some friend's house or to some place where an entertainment was proceeding. That has constantly led to endless trouble and rows; and it has interfered with the pleasure of good people. It has also led to much sly-grog selling.

Hon. T. Moore: What about the cocktail parties of the upper classes? Are they not demoralising the public, too?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Yes.

Hon. T. Moore: They have been the leaders.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: No doubt they should be put down. What I say probably applies more to the people who take cocktails than to the people who drink beer. I shall deal with the suggestion put forward that the standard of liquor is responsible for much of the trouble. Our laws provide a standard higher than that which prevails in the Eastern States. It would be much better if the standard were reduced, because a person could drink more liquor and it would not have the result that we have seen in the streets of Perth in recent times.

I am concerned about the rationing of liquor in country districts, which have not benefited to the same extent as has the metropolitan area. People in the country have pursued their ordinary routine; in fact, much less liquor has been sold there because of the decline in population due to the young men joining the forces. Still, country districts are subject to the restriction, notwithstanding that the hotels cater to a large extent for the travelling public. The early closing of hotels has also operated somewhat unfairly to those whose work prevents them from obtaining refreshment. Country people have complained to me that rationing should not apply to them. However, I understand that it applies generally throughout Australia.

The motion suggests that the closing time of hotels should be 7 p.m. I would prefer that it be fixed at 8 p.m.; I think the hours should be from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., thus making up the seven hours suggested by the Prime Minister. That would be more convenient to those who knock off work at a late hour and cannot make the best use of their opportunity to

obtain a drink. Many of such workers do not get their evening meal until 7 o'clock, and it would be much more convenient to the larger part of the community were the hours changed in the way I suggest. I do not wish to move an amendment to the motion. I am satisfied there is much to be said for it, and I sincerely support it.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.12]: If the discussion on this motion has disclosed anything at all, it certainly has served to indicate how difficult it is to get unanimity as to what is necessary. Hardly two members who have spoken to the motion have been in agreement; each has differed in some way or other from the remainder who have contributed to the debate. The present position is governed by a Commonwealth regulation; the latest proposal of the Federal Government, which it was intended should have been in operation a week or two ago, has been postponed pending the meeting of Premiers this week in the Eastern States. I have no doubt that the Commonwealth Government will proceed with its proposal to limit the number of trading hours for hotels throughout the Commonwealth. I cannot imagine any difference being made in the total hours of trade as between State and State, or between various parts of a State. However, if the Commonwealth carries out its original intention, the trading hours will be left to the various States to determine, as long as the hours do not exceed a total of seven; or, if that number is altered, whatever number is fixed.

Quite apart from any opinion that might be expressed by members on the motion, the Commonwealth Government will undoubtedly further restrict liquor trading throughout the Commonwealth. With regard to the closing time of hotels, there is such a big difference of opinion amongst members that it would be very hard indeed to arrive at a time which would not meet with criticism from one section or another. At present, 6 o'clock closing is in operation and there can be no doubt that since the commencement of that closing hour there has been a considerable improvement in the conditions in the metropolitan area.

Hon. Sir Hal. Colbatch: They have been arresting the drunks.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Considerable disability, too!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I might deal with that aspect, too. One of the main complaints raised against 6 o'clock closing is that it does not allow individuals employed until 6 o'clock in the evening to have a drink before they go home. I am inclined to think that too much importance has been attached to the necessity for the individual to have a drink whenever he knocks off work, no matter what time it might be. There are people in Midland Junction who advocate that hotels should be closed after 8 o'clock because certain shift workers come off duty at that hour. There are people in other parts of the State advocating very late hours because shift workers are employed till late at night.

Hon. W. J. Mann: What is the position in Kalgoorlie and Boulder?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They have been able to obtain liquor when they have come off shifts.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: At any time.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No, not at any time. Very nearly, though! This question of 6 o'clock closing seems to have become a sort of slogan with some people, and far more importance appears to be attached to 6 o'clock than there should be. At present, with darkness falling early, I think that 6 o'clock is quite late enough, but I also think that the suggestion of the Civil Defence Council, which is receiving consideration, that shops and factories should close at 5.30 during the winter months, would overcome the difficulty and meet the objection that is raised to the effect that large numbers of people normally employed until 6 o'clock cannot obtain their drink of beer or spirit, as the case may be, when they finish work. There seems to be a big difference of opinion as to whether there should be a two-hour break in the day, or less, or no break at all. Arguments could be adduced in favour of every one of these suggestions. My own opinion at present is that there should be no break at all.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I do not agree.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It will be very hard to get everybody to agree, but my idea is based on experience over the last month or two. If there is a break in the middle of the day it will inevitably be found that when the hotel is closed at half-past one or 2 o'clock, certain people will desire to take further supplies out with

them. Experience has shown that such supplies are consumed in the streets with the result that we have the conditions about which complaint has been made. It would not matter whether a hotel closed at one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight or nine o'clock. We would still have to put up with that condition of affairs. Looking at the matter by and large, my impression is that if there are to be limited trading hours, they should be for one period.

With regard to the question of prohibiting the sale of liquor in bottles after 4 p.m. there can be no doubt that the sale of bottled liquor has been very badly abused and that has been one of the main causes of some of the trouble we have experienced. There is a lot to be said for the suggestion that there should be no sale of bottled liquor after a given hour. It seems to me that what should be the time limit after which no bottled beer should be sold depends on what are the hours of trading.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: When you say beer you mean liquor generally, do you not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: One can quite understand there being a number of different ideas on that particular point. The motion next refers to prohibiting the display of liquor in bottles after four p.m., but the mover of the motion has admitted that proposal to be impracticable. The next paragraph deals with sly grog selling and requests that imprisonment shall be inflicted for the first and subsequent offences without the option of a fine. Members spoke in support of the proposal, and there may be something in the argument. I am not going to say that even that would be absolutely effective. I do say, however, that I entirely disagree with the members who have referred to the administration of the Licensing Act in this State in adverse terms that were very strong in some instances. I believe that the Licensing Act in this State is administered better than the Licensing Act in any other part of the Commonwealth.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do you say that the sale of liquor is in accordance with the Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I say that the Act is administered in this State better than in other States.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: That is not saying very much, is it?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It may not be, but it is sufficient for me to take exception to some of the statements that have

been made. It is quite easy to criticise and say that certain things should be done, but it is not always easy to do them. So far as sly grog selling is concerned there is nothing more tricky and nobody could be more astute than those engaged in this particular calling. I want to congratulate our police on their efforts in regard to putting down sly grog sales in Western Australia.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I do not.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member does not know so much about it as I do.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I know a lot about it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Our police force has done remarkable work in that direction in the last year or two. Do not forget, when discussing this question, that we have not a policeman for every hotel or every sly-grog shop, and do not forget that some of the things we are complaining about are not offences. Where offences have been committed the police have been very successful in recent times.

Hon. H. Seddon: With regard to hours the police are a law to themselves, quite regardless of the Licensing Act.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member might have that impression.

Hon. H. Seddon: You have only to read the Act to see that is so.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is no need for me to read the Act. I know it sufficiently.

Hon. H. Seddon: Then you know that what I say is correct.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It must be apparent to those who have been criticising the Police Department in regard to sly-grog selling that unless evidence is available it is no use taking a case to Court, and it is no use members saying they know this and they know the other. I have had a number of members tell me that they knew this and they knew that, but they have not been able to give me a lead to go on and have not been able to substantiate their statements. In one or two instances they have not been game to do so when it was possible.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You want private citizens to do police work for you, do you?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No, I am pointing out that we have not a policeman for every hotel.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We know that, but you have a police force to carry out the laws of the land, which they do not do.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We have policeman who do it very successfully.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Some of them, yes!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The next part of the motion states—

(b) That it shall be made an offence for any person to bring into or have in his possession any liquor within the precincts of any public hall where any entertainment is being or about to be held.

I suppose that nothing has given more trouble in recent times than the consumption of liquor in places of public entertainment, but there again I must remind members that at present it is not an offence.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You can make it one.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, provided we are prepared to amend our Act to that extent. While there is such a divergence of opinion in regard to what should be done, serious consideration has been given to what can be done. It is a fact that we look to our police to administer the law to the best of their ability and it is also a fact, as pointed out by Mr. Seddon, that in some parts of the country the policeman is the man responsible for the observance or otherwise of the law. I do not think there can be too many legitimate complaints against the police generally in that regard. We have considered this question and contend that 6 o'clock closing has made a big improvement in conditions in recent times. However, we are not wedded to that hour. When the Premier returns from the Eastern States, after having heard what Premiers are proposing to do in other States of the Commonwealth, we shall probably give consideration to the hour at present stipulated, and in order to comply with the desires of the Commonwealth Government will possibly find it desirable to provide for varying hours in different parts of the State. We shall not, however, be able to get away from whatever total number of hours are decided on as being the hours for liquor trading.

Talking about the administration of the liquor laws and the fact that we rely on the police to administer them, gives me an opportunity to state that since the commencement of the war tremendous duties have been thrust on the police force of this



State, and it has not been possible, with the existing personnel, to undertake everything with which the force has been expected to cope. Unfortunately, we are not able to obtain properly trained policemen at a few moments' notice. We are augmenting our strength to an extent that will make it easier at any rate to carry out the many duties thrust upon the Police Department as a result of the war situation. I would like to issue a warning to some of those people who have been exploiting the present position, that we do not propose to be very lenient in regard to matters of this kind. So far as it is possible for the police to supervise the application of the regulations governing the liquor trade, or in any other respect, they will do their duty to the best of their ability. I believe the lounge trade within the last six months has developed in many hotels to such an extent that it has become one of the main causes of the trouble.

Hon. T. Moore: That is a disgraceful phase.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course it is not an offence for a person to have a drink in a lounge.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: No, not unless he or she is under 21 years of age and that is the trouble.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. With a view to meeting that position the Government is appointing an additional number of women police.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Apart from that, the identification cards will be a help.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes; one would almost think that Mr. Baxter had overheard a conversation between those responsible for the administration of these regulations before he tabled his motion. This tends to show that there is at any rate a large measure of agreement between Mr. Baxter, myself and others responsible for this phase of our activities.

Hon. T. Moore: Great men think alike.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am inclined to think that the increased activities of the police officers will bring about a considerable improvement. Members can rest assured that the department will do its best in all the circumstances. References have been made to the large number of convictions obtained for drunkenness during the

last few weeks. The number of convictions has certainly been larger than recorded at any previous date for a similar period. That is accounted for by the fact that in peace time the police have been content to advise individuals under the influence of liquor to go home rather than to place them under arrest. That course was generally pursued unless the intoxicated individual was inclined to be quarrelsome. Today people under the influence are charged with drunkenness.

In the past the police have carried out a tremendous lot of good work in a reasonable way, but today circumstances are different. I imagine that what has taken place will lead to an appreciable improvement in the liquor trade. There are not many who exploit the business, but there are undoubtedly a few and I think those few would be well advised to take notice of the warning I have issued. The authorities will pay every attention possible to the policing of the regulations and see that they are carried out.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Will that apply to the goldfields?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If there is a limitation of seven hours applied to the trade, Kalgoorlie will be directly affected.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: For seven days a week?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know that the regulations say anything about application for seven days a week. We had better wait and see what they specify. Whatever is specified will be carried out. From my remarks, it will be understood that I do not agree entirely with the motion before the House. I cannot agree that restrictions should apply only to the metropolitan area, particularly in view of the limitation of hours. I agree there is ground for different closing hours being fixed in different parts of the State and that some restriction should be placed on the sale of liquor in bottles. On the other hand, as I have already indicated, the whole question will receive the attention of the Government when the Premier returns from the Eastern States.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 4.35 p.m.*