

with advantage. I refer to Cave House which was partly demolished by fire. That building should be re-erected, when it would produce revenue for the Government and be the means of employing a certain amount of labour.

Mr. Sleeman: Why do not the Government use the insurance money?

Hon. P. Collier: As soon as they finish Yanehep that work will be done.

Mr. BARNARD: Quite a lot of money has been spent there, while Cave House has been neglected. I hope if the Government do decide to rebuild that establishment they will cut out the clause which compels a contractor to employ sustenance labourers. Although it is desirable that work should be given to sustenance people, the clause operates very harshly in other directions. A contractor is not allowed to employ his own son, although the lad may be out of work. In my district there is a man who has a son, and a nephew he has kept from boyhood. Because of this clause he is not allowed to employ either of those young fellows on the small contract he has secured.

Mr. Kenneally: There will be room for you over here yet.

Mr. BARNARD: I do not think the hon. member would care to have me. A lot has been said by two members about the timber industry. I am sorry the member for Nelson is not here to-night, for we might have had a little cross fire and have had things livened up. A certain amount of reforestation is going on in my electorate. Timber is being cut down on some good land, which should be used for something besides the growing of pines. I agree that some timber should be protected, but the use of that commodity seems to be going out. Most of the modern buildings are being erected without timber, except when it is used for scaffold poles.

Miss Holman: Do you ever see the floors of buildings?

Mr. BARNARD: Some of them are of cement.

Miss Holman: Have you seen the parquet floors, say, of the Economic, and have you seen any furniture in the shops?

Mr. BARNARD: I am referring to modern buildings. Sometimes in the heart of a forest one will see cement structures instead of wooden ones. Where timber is plentiful it should be used for all bridges, culverts and drains. Reference has been made to

schools. In my district, which is a wet one, many of the school buildings do not include shelter sheds. Between 30 and 40 children at lunch time or at play time have no place to go for shelter. Something should be done to make good that deficiency. Local residents have offered to build shelters if they are supplied with the timber, but owing to lack of funds apparently even that cannot be done. No doubt money is short, and we have to put up with many disabilities. I hope that later on money will be available for these necessary works. I trust that effect will be given to the report of the Royal Commission on group settlement, and that the same consideration will be given to those who are on the land as is extended to the unemployed. Reference has been made to the importance of the goldmining industry to Western Australia, to the number of persons employed in it, and to the need for developing it in every possible way. I know that at one time gold practically saved Western Australia, and helped to save other portions of the Commonwealth. Now it is to receive a certain amount of consideration. I think we should not neglect what will eventually prove to be absolutely the backbone of Western Australia, and that is the farming industry.

On motion by Mr. Coverley, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.31 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 1st September, 1932.

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

QUESTION—HARBOURS, DREDGING.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Works: 1. What was the average annual cost over the past ten financial years of

maintenance-dredging the harbours of Fremantle, Bunbury, Geraldton and Albany, the figures for each port to be given separately, and the term "maintenance-dredging" to be taken as meaning such dredging as is necessary to free the harbours from sand or other siltage? 2, What is the anticipated cost of the same work at the same ports for the current year?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The information desired is contained in the following table:—

Name of Harbour.	Average annual cost for 10 years ended 30-6-1932.	Estimated cost for year ending 30-6-1933.
Albany	£ 90	NH
Bunbury	6,085	5,000
*Fremantle	3,812	7,000
Geraldton	42	NH

* Expenditure from Fremantle Harbour Trust's Funds.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [4.38]: I have listened with interest to the criticisms—sprinkled with a few apologies and congratulations from members on the Ministerial side—that have been offered during this debate.

The Premier: It is easy to criticise. Perhaps you can do better.

Mr. COVERLEY: I agree with the Premier that it is quite easy to criticise, but I do not think I shall be accused of unduly criticising either in private or in public life. I hope that my protest on behalf of that part of the State which I represent will not be regarded as mere criticism of the present Government. In any case, I refuse to let this debate close without entering my protest against the administration that has been meted out to the people of the North, possibly because they have not in this Chamber the numbers to command the respect to which they are entitled from the Government. The Governor's Speech has, in my opinion, two outstanding features. First, there is a deficit of £1,557,896—a record for Western Australia, and another record attachable to the present Government. Secondly, there is the neglect of the north-

ern portion of the State. Those two peculiar features are traceable to the hon. gentleman who formerly held, and now holds the leading position in this House, as Treasurer. During the last year of his first Treasurership he had a deficit of £405,351, and at the end of that year had accumulated deficits totalling £5,910,916. His deficits even during good times do not compare quite favourably with the deficit for the financial year which has just closed. This time he has created a greater record than ever. The only mention which the hon. gentleman made of the North-West at the close of his first Premiership was to the effect that large areas were being alienated for oil prospecting. Those concessions were granted under the most ruinous conditions in the world; no other country would have authorised such conditions.

The Premier: What ought to have been done?

Mr. COVERLEY: On this occasion, when oil concessions were granted—

The Premier: We are tired of all this nonsense.

Mr. COVERLEY: There is no nonsense about it. The Premier, in granting concessions to prospecting syndicates, should at least have done what has been done in other countries—imposed conditions ensuring that the shareholders' money would be properly expended.

The Premier: Do you know what ought to be done about the present position?

Mr. COVERLEY: The people in the North say that the Premier showed himself prepared to grant concessions without placing any restrictions whatever upon the syndicates or companies in the way of having supervision by a geologist over the boring.

The Premier: Was that yesterday?

Mr. COVERLEY: No. I am comparing the Premier's neglect of the North in 1923 with his neglect of that part of the State in 1932. I shall not be led astray by the Premier's interjections. Before I sit down, I shall draw attention to the needs and complaints of my electorate. The Premier only wastes time by interjecting. The Governor's Speech contains no explanation of the record deficit that has been created. I should not complain if the whole of the North-West received as much sympathetic administration as does any single electorate in the remainder of the State; but the North does not receive that at present.

Mr. Sampson: Were you satisfied with the administration of the North between 1923 and 1930?

Mr. COVERLEY: The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson), when holding a responsible position in a previous Ministry, was just as hard to the North, and neglected it just as badly as did other Ministers.

Mr. Sampson: The administration of the North was not then a function of my office.

Mr. COVERLEY: The hon. member, at any rate, was then Chief Secretary, controlling Harbour and Light, Fisheries, Aborigines and State Shipping—in fact, all the departments concerned with the North.

Mr. Sampson: Those departments were well administered.

Mr. COVERLEY: The Governor's Speech as presented to this House apologises for the deficit by the fact that unemployment relief and exchange together account for £1,264,054 out of a gross shortage of £1,557,896. All members will agree that the Premier has had to deal with a greater unemployment problem than any previous Western Australian Premier—another record. While he gives this House reasons why the deficit is not greater than it actually is, he forgets to furnish any explanation why he has not carried out his electioneering promises of work for all, no increase in taxation, and so forth. Another matter to which the hon. gentleman has refrained from alluding is the increased revenue that he has secured through the hospital tax, the increased stamp tax, and the higher income tax, as well as through heavier imposts in other directions. There is also the increased grant from the Commonwealth. The hospital tax, in fact, has benefited the revenue to the extent of £198,720.

The Minister for Lands: You have stretched that a bit. The hospital tax produced only some £133,000 for the year.

Mr. COVERLEY: Let me examine the figures given by the Minister. Replying to a question in this Chamber, the Minister for Health stated that the Treasury received £64,835 from hospital tax during 1931, and £133,885 during 1932; a total of £198,720.

The Minister for Lands: Those figures cover a year and a half.

Mr. COVERLEY: Let us grant that the period covered is two years. Where did the Government get the money from? Prior to the introduction of the tax, it had to be found from revenue. Yet the Minister still says

that revenue has not benefited as the result of the tax.

The Minister for Lands: I have never made any such statement.

Hon. A. McCallum: Some of the Ministers have.

The Minister for Lands: I have stated that the tax relieved the Treasury.

Hon. A. McCallum: The Chief Secretary made such a statement when in the North-West.

Mr. COVERLEY: Is the Minister not yet convinced that the Treasury benefited to the extent of £198,720?

The Minister for Lands: Not in one year.

Mr. COVERLEY: According to his own figures, the Treasurer in 1929 had to find £67,125, and in 1930, which was prior to the passing of the hospital tax, £68,146, or a total for the two years of £135,271. There was an increased return from the hospital tax, over and above what was paid into revenue, of £64,000. Apart from the figures supplied by the Minister, there is another £22,000 collected from the amusement tax, and that added to the £198,720 gives us a total of £220,270. The stamp tax contributed a further £12,000, and the increased grant from the Commonwealth of £200,000 extra gives a total of £410,270.

The Minister for Lands: But the payment of that extra £200,000 did not have effect until after the figures you have quoted.

Mr. COVERLEY: The explanation by the Government that the outlay on account of unemployment relief account was the largest contributory factor in the deficit is very lame and sick when we deduct the £410,000 from the £643,000. I was somewhat surprised at the remarks of the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo). I agreed with him in his pleadings to the Government to foster overseas trade with the Near East, but I imagined he would not have allowed the debate to close without entering his protest against the unsympathetic, unfair and unjust treatment meted out by the Government to the northern parts of the State. For the benefit of the member for Gascoyne, I would inform him that there is already a small market available locally for people along the North-West coast who desire to produce eggs, poultry and so forth. Apart from the market available in the townships, the boats trading along the coast will also furnish an additional demand. That trade is not catered for because under conditions that obtain at present, it is impossible, except at Carnar-

von, for any person who desires to embark upon that business to get as much as five acres of garden land along the coast. Within the last two years I know of several applications made for garden areas in the Onslow, Roebourne and Wyndham districts, but each was refused.

The Minister for Agriculture: Were the lots situated in the Aborigines' reserve?

Mr. COVERLEY: No; the land formed part of pastoral leases. As the Minister may well know, as a spokesman for the primary producers, a man desiring to secure five or ten acres of land on a pastoral lease is regarded as a menace. Influence is brought to bear that usually results in the Government refusing applications of that description, irrespective of what advantage might accrue from the granting of them. I certainly protest against the Government's unfair and unjust administration in the North. I will instance the unemployment relief provided for people in the northern areas. Those unfortunates are sadly neglected in my district. According to the statements made to members during the course of the debate, the Government have spent £643,000 on unemployment relief. I draw the attention of hon. members to the small amounts spent in the northern portion of the State during the last two years. In the Gascoyne district the magnificent sum of £464 was spent; in Roebourne, £220; in Pilbara, £260, and in the Kimberley district, £1,250. I wonder at any hon. member who represents a northern constituency refraining from adverse comment with regard to those figures.

Mr. Angelo: But that is in respect only of unemployment.

Mr. COVERLEY: It does not matter whether it was spent on part time, full time or sustenance work.

Mr. Angelo: The people in my district have helped the unemployed in addition to that, and do not look only to the Government for assistance.

Mr. Raphael: You must represent affluent people.

Mr. Angelo: No; we want to be fair.

Mr. COVERLEY: So far, I have made no reference to what the local authorities have done in relieving unemployment in the northern parts of the State. I want to make it quite clear that there is no section of the community bigger-hearted or more prepared to help sympathetically those in need of employment than the residents of the North-

West. My protest is against the Government for spending hundreds of thousands of pounds in the southern parts of the State, and being unprepared to spend more than £460 in an electorate like Gascoyne.

Mr. Raphael: The Government are not spending too much in the metropolitan area; the "cockeys" are getting the lot.

Mr. COVERLEY: In each of the northern electorates, the residents are confronted with what they regard as a big unemployed problem, although infinitesimal compared with that obtaining in the metropolitan or in centres more densely populated. The position has become so acute in the pastoral industry that those in control cannot proceed further with additional developmental work. Thus, those who are out of work have to depend on what can be done for them by the local road board or the Government, to tide them over an exceedingly critical period. One would think that the Government would at least take into consideration the fact that the men I have in mind have gone far away from civilisation in search of work. They have not loitered around the metropolitan area. There must be some good in a man who will go so far away in an endeavour to procure work, and that should secure for him sympathetic consideration when the Government are allocating funds for relief works. I have grievances to voice with regard to water supply and other matters to an extent greater than should members whose constituents live in the southern areas where the climatic conditions and the rainfall combine to make existence much more pleasant. The Government's programme of work for the current year was published in the Press, and I find that some of the allocations include the following:—

Geraldton, £36,000; Goldfields Water Supply, branch mains, £115,000; Waroona, £500; Harvey, £61,000; Bridgetown, £2,000; Brookton, £2,000; North Mollerin, £2,500; Gabbiding Rock, £5,000; Hollerton Tank, £2,500.

That expenditure, representing £171,500, is provided for people who live in parts of the State where it rains for nine months, and then winter sets in! The Minister for Works may sit in his seat and smile as much as he likes; he may say that Hall's Creek and Broome are all right, and do not require water supplies. We could shift the smile off the Minister's face if he could be induced to pay a visit to the North-West where he might have to put in some time at

isolated places, without the possibility of a drink.

Mr. Angelo: I do not think that would be possible!

Mr. COVERLEY: I have made requests to the Government for paltry amounts like £100 for water supplies in northern townships. The Government should realise the necessity for work of that description. I know that the Minister for Lands at least realises the position, and if it were left to his discretion, I know the money would be made available. In view of my experience of the Premier in his capacity as Treasurer, I am forced to blame him for the disabilities that some of my constituents labour under at present with regard to water supply requirements. Serious consideration should be given to this question by the Government. Then again the water supplies along the stock routes require attention. The work of looking after the wells is subsidised by the Government, but the money made available is not sufficient to enable the local authorities to effect necessary repairs. Most of the wells on the stock route are timbered and on account of drift sands and white ants portions of the timbering fall in occasionally. Year after year the local authorities have to face expenditure for replacements, and one of the boards have endeavoured to replace the timber with cement, attending to one well a year in the hope that at some future time the whole of the wells will be lined with cement. The Government could at least spend a few extra pounds in assisting operations in the northern parts of the State. The Government buildings such as courthouses, schools, teachers' quarters, jetties and so on are in a state of disrepair; in fact, all activities have ceased. If the inactivity continues for any lengthy period, the Minister will find, in the event of a decision being arrived at to commence operations once more in the northern areas, he will be confronted with the necessity to spend much more money than would be required if a few hundreds of pounds were spent annually on maintenance work. The fact that the Treasurer finds himself so short of cash probably prompted the first attack to be made on the North-West. I hope my suggestion will appeal to the Minister for Works. One of his first actions was to recall all the engineers from the North-West, and at present there are no engineers there. Administration of that description breeds

discontent among the people in far distant centres, particularly when they know that not one engineer has been left in the North. The Minister for Works, before making this definite allocation of money, should take into consideration those outposts of settlement and reinstate at least one engineer for the North-West, and put at his disposal a few pounds for maintenance work on public buildings and stock route wells. I hope the Minister will also take into consideration the other water supplies and see that at least an equitable amount of money is made available for those supplies in the northern towns. The Forests Department has on its programme £15,000 for the relief of unemployed and £18,000 for reforestation, or a total amount of £33,000. But there is not a bob for the protection of the sandalwood industry in the North-West. We have up there sandalwood of very special quality, so excellent that the Government saw fit to place restrictions on the exportation of that wood and reserve it for the purpose of distillation in Western Australia. Year after year many thousands of sandalwood suckers there are destroyed by floods or fires, and I think the Minister should consider the spending of a few hundred pounds in the protection of the industry. I want to remind the Minister for Forests, who is also Minister for Mines, that we have heard very little of sustenance to prospectors in the North-West. I am surprised at the attitude of the Government as a whole, and of the Minister for Mines in particular, who has a very extensive knowledge of the gold mining industry, that he should be so little interested in the prospecting for minerals, particularly gold, in the North-West. For the gold mining industry is the only industry which at the moment is increasing in value. As members know, the price of gold has greatly increased, while, judging from what we hear in this Chamber, every other primary industry in the State is in a parlous condition.

The Minister for Lands: That is the reason why they require assistance.

Mr. COVERLEY: I do not object to members trying to get assistance for the industries in which they are interested. But while the other primary industries have gone back, the gold mining industry alone has gone ahead, both as to quantity of gold won and as to the price of that gold.

Mr. Marshall: It is the only product for which we can find a ready market.

Mr. COVERLEY: The Australian Government saw fit to send, at the expense of the taxpayers, representatives all over the world to try to find markets for our primary products, with the exception of gold. We have in the Kimberleys probably bigger possibilities from a gold mining point of view than exist in the more closely settled areas. Kimberley was the alma mater of goldfields in Western Australia. Forty odd years ago there was a hurried prospect made but, on account of the difficulties of transport and the general isolation, the prospectors had to leave that area for more congenial localities such as Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie. From that day onwards Kimberley has never had a decent prospect made, but only one or two hurried searches. Conditions up there, of course, are very different from those in the more settled areas; the transport difficulties are much greater and food supplies cost much more. In consequence, the ordinary prospector who has only a few pounds cannot get sufficient food supplies to last him in the field for any lengthy period. He gets out 50 or 60 miles from Hall's Creek and runs short of food supplies, and so has to return to purchase further supplies with the little gold he has won while away. The Government could do a lot worse than increase the assistance to prospectors in the Hall's Creek district. There are in that district a good few prospectors but, as I say, their trouble is that they can never get sufficient food supplies to permit of their remaining out in the field for a usefully long period. I suggest to the Minister for Mines, who introduced assistance for prospectors in that district, that he should give them at least three months' sustenance in advance, so that they can stop out in the field for three months instead of having to come back to the town at the end of three weeks. There is one good thing the Minister has done: Sustenance at the rate of 7s. per week was conceded, but members will realise that that was of little or no value in the Hall's Creek district. The Minister did increase the amount by 3s., making the sustenance allowance 10s. per week. The pity is that the Minister cannot give the prospectors £1 per week, and pay them three months in advance.

The Minister for Mines: How long is it since you thought of that?

Mr. COVERLEY: Over two years ago, when I wrote to you about it and received your courteous reply.

The Minister for Mines: You know we are practically doing that to-day.

Mr. COVERLEY: I have not heard of it in the North-West. There are two propositions I would put up to the Minister, one to increase the sustenance to £1 per week, and the other that he should pay the prospectors three months in advance. If the Minister will agree to grant those concessions to the prospectors, to increase the amount to £1 per week and to give them three months in advance, I will have no more to say on the subject. The pastoral industry, like most other primary industries, is in a parlous condition. However, I do not intend to touch on that at any length, because the Government have appointed an advisory committee, and I am sure the House will await with interest the outcome of that innovation. Personally, I think it must at least result in some good being done. There is one thing I should like the Government, particularly the Minister for Works, to take into consideration: I think the Minister may be introducing amendments to the Traffic Act and the Road Districts Act during the session. If that be his intention, I should like him to consider the advisability of amending the Road Districts Act to the end that the local authorities shall be permitted to exempt certain leases from taxation under the Road Districts Act, or under the Health Act, or both. I make that suggestion for the reason that there are in Kimberley many pastoral areas not served by any road, not even by a proposed road. Nevertheless, the leases in those areas have to pay road board rates and taxes and also health rates. I cannot imagine anything more ridiculous than health rates being charged on leases 200 or 300 miles away from a town. Again, there are along the coast between Derby and Wyndham many places, north of the Leopold Ranges, where there is no road whatever, and all the transport is by lugger to the Port George Mission or to Broome.

The Minister for Lands: Are you in favour of the abolition of the local authorities up there?

Mr. COVERLEY: No, not at all. I hope that if the Minister should bring down an amendment of the Road Districts Act he will keep in mind what I say and find some means of permitting the local authorities to grant exemption to those people to whom I have referred.

The Minister for Works: The local authorities have never made any request for that.

Mr. COVERLEY: That does not make it wrong that the request should now be made. The road boards are there to collect as much in rates and taxes as they can, but it is not right to impose those taxes on people situated along the coast between Derby and Wyndham. There are many people up there, pastoralists, who seldom use any road, and settlers who are growing peanuts along the coast and never touch a road at all, but go by lugger to Broome. As a matter of fact, there are no roads to their properties. Yet one of them, Mr. Merry, pays road board rates to the Wyndham Road Board, while the only port at which he does business is Broome. Why he should have to pay road rates and health rates to the Wyndham Road Board is beyond my understanding. It is little wonder that no road board has applied to the Minister for permission to grant exemption from taxation, because that would mean a loss of revenue to the board.

Mr. Marshall: They are not likely to ask the Minister, but it is our job to see that it is done.

Mr. COVERLEY: I guarantee they would not.

The Minister for Works: The road boards have just held a conference.

Mr. COVERLEY: But what representation would Wyndham have there?

Mr. Marshall: The Act should be amended to give the ratepayers some say.

Mr. COVERLEY: I have perused the report of the Royal Commission on pleuropneumonia. I understand the position fairly well and I have discussed the matter with the Minister controlling the department. On the evidence taken by the Royal Commission I must support the Minister's restrictions so far as they have gone, but I would like the Minister to give some indication of what the department intend to do to assist the people who are being severely hampered by the restrictions. I do not suppose the department intend to impose such restrictions without offering some alternative. Is anything being done to assist the people to overcome the difficulties by which they are beset? On behalf of the people of the North I wish to thank the Minister for Lands for having visited

that part of the State and for the consideration he has given us since his visit. The people in those outback districts can get no redress for their grievances. They have received such little attention, particularly from the present Government, that they appreciate the visits of the Minister for Lands and the Chief Secretary.

Mr. Raphael: They had a good holiday out of it.

Mr. COVERLEY: I appeal to the Minister for Lands to use his influence with the Premier and his colleagues to secure a re-allocation of the money to be expended and earmark a few thousand pounds for water supplies and other necessary works in the North.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [5.18]: I should like all members of this House to range themselves behind the Labour Party in protesting against the attack by the Federal Government on old age pensions. It behoves the people of Western Australia and of Australia to voice the strongest possible protest against this degrading attempt by the Federal Government, led by the Labour rat, Lyons, to rob the old people—people who cannot defend themselves—of the few paltry shillings granted them by way of pensions. Many things have been done by the present so-called Nationalist Government, but this is the worst thing they could have done. I am opposed to any reduction of salaries or emoluments, because I am firmly of opinion that action of that kind will not get the country out of its difficulties. The Federal Government are going to rob the old men and women of 14 per cent. of the amount allotted to them, and while they talk a lot about equality of sacrifice, they are going to reduce their own allowances by only five per cent. This is a filthy act on the part of the Federal Government and I hope it will rebound on the head of the man who suggested it. The Federal Government also propose the abolition of the gold bonus. I am with my leader in objecting to the grabbing propensities of the Commonwealth. If that sort of thing is going to continue and if there is going to be no redress, the sooner we get out of Federation, the better. I am not a secessionist, but I am satisfied that Western Australia is not getting the fair deal to which it is entitled. The gold bonus has been in operation for only a short period and the suggestion that it should be cut out, while the sugar ramp, the greatest disgrace

ever perpetrated, continues, should evoke the strongest possible protest. My electorate, though small in area, has quality to commend it. Its wants are few, but they have been unheeded by the Government. The Minister for Works has evidently realised the mistake he made on taking office in stopping the reclamation works at the Causeway. The great scheme initiated by the member for South Fremantle in conjunction with Mr. Stileman, would have been of immense benefit, not only to Victoria Park, but to the whole State. The widening of the Causeway would have provided efficient means of ingress to and egress from the city. We are frequently reminded that times are bad, but the Minister could have curtailed expenditure and continued operations on a smaller scale, instead of wasting the money already spent by stopping the work. I am of opinion that the Minister did not appreciate the need for a new causeway. I cannot understand why the Perth City Council, who were contributing £1,000 a year to the scheme, should have been told to keep their money. Evidently the Minister took the view that because the Labour Party had started the work, he would finish it and finish it quickly. The delay by the Government in extending the Victoria Park tramline has been the cause of many accidents. Ministers, both Labour and Nationalist, have admitted to deputations for years past that not only considerations of safety, but the needs of the people demanded that the line should be extended. The opportunity for undertaking the extension was never more favourable. The Government have labour to burn. All that they would have to provide are the rails, and I feel sure that they could find the money for that purpose. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) gave the House the other night his remedy for our difficulties. I understood him to say that if we allowed the goods required by the cockies to be imported duty free, and if we capitalised their liabilities, we would be taking a long step towards overcoming our difficulties. I expected the hon. member to suggest also a revaluation of workers' homes and a capitalisation of their liabilities. If concessions of the kind are given to one section of the community, they should be given to other sections. If the hon. member had suggested a writing down of the workers' liabilities, as well as of the farmers' liabilities, his remarks would have contained some sense and would have manifested sincerity. Last year the

Government remitted the payment of land tax by farmers, but at the same time they have played a little trick on workers by revaluing their land. During the last three months the unimproved value of land in Victoria Park has been increased 100 per cent.

The Minister for Lands: Too many sales have been effected.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Practically no sales of land have been effected during the last 12 months. If any sales have taken place, prices have shown a drop of 50 per cent. It is quite wrong for the Government to increase valuations by 100 per cent. in times like the present. We are told that the land had not been revalued for seven years, but the valuations on which people are being taxed represent those of peak years. People should not be burdened with higher taxation of this kind in such a critical time. I appreciate that Country Party members probably dominated the Government and insisted on the abolition of the land tax paid by farmers, but the tax has now been tacked on to the workers, who have to pay the piper. I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister for Works an instance of neglect by one of his departments. Recently I asked him a question regarding the application of the factories legislation to certain furniture and woodwork factories in the metropolitan area. One of those establishments is located practically opposite my place of business, and I can say that the Act is not being administered by the officials as it should be. The workmen are almost choked with dust, but the factories inspectors, in making their visits, simply go into the office, talk to the boss for five minutes, and then are satisfied that the men are getting a fair deal. Seeing that I brought the matter under the notice of the Minister by way of a question in the House, he should have ensured that the inspectors did their duty and administered the Act. I hope that it will not be necessary to reiterate my complaint, but that the Minister will attend to the job he is paid to do. I wish to say a few words in support of the remarks by the member for Leederville (Mr. Panton). It is not often that he brings forward anything with which I agree. I wish to refer to the despicable action of a city councillor in spending money made available through the Lord Mayor's Fund to further his own political aims and gains.

Mr. Patrick: We have had all that.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The hon. member can now have some more. The ex-Lord Mayor of Perth formed these different committees, and stipulated that only councillors should receive the money for distribution amongst the relief committees. The particular councillor referred to by the member for Leederville has been procuring money from the fund, and expending it to further his own ends. I hope the Minister in charge of unemployment will bear in mind the complaint that has been made, and will use such influence as he has to bring about co-ordination between the Government department concerned and these relief committees.

The Minister for Lands: You got your relief money to spend.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I am supporting the remarks of the member for Leederville.

The Minister for Lands: What are you going to do about yours?

Mr. RAPHAEL: Ours is all right. I hope the Minister will see whether something can be done to put the Leederville relief committee on a proper basis.

The Minister for Lands: I will ask him to start with the Victoria Park committee.

Mr. RAPHAEL: That is quite in order.

The Minister for Lands: Only Leederville is wrong.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I should like to refer to an oversight on the part of the Minister for Health and to his lack of kindness of heart. The Labour Government, realising that there were many children whose parents were in indigent circumstances and could not afford to have their youngsters' teeth attended to by private dentists, decided to start a dental clinic, and by that means make people understand that teeth constituted one of the main causes of ill-health in children. In pursuance of that idea they created a dental clinic to provide for the care of children's teeth. In 1926 the Government began this work by appointing a dental practitioner, and two years later two more dentists were added to the clinic. During the three years that the present Government have been in office, nothing whatever has been done to further this very necessary undertaking. The three dentists who are now on the staff have the teeth of thousands of State school children to attend to, and also attend orphanages, the Old Men's Home, the Hospital for Insane, and other institutions. How can they possibly be expected to cover so much ground? The

Minister should at once create additional members to the dental staff.

The Minister for Lands: I cannot create them.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister could not create anything. His mind would not allow him to do so. I hope, however, he will employ other dentists so that this work may cover a more comprehensive sphere.

The Minister for Lands: That is better.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Children between the ages of six and eight are at present treated free. Teeth do not usually finish erupting until a child is 11 or 12 years of age, and sometimes the teeth are not through until the child reaches the age of 13 years. I hope the Government will realise the seriousness of the position, and will give special attention to the matter at an early date. The Dental Act has not been amended for ten years. I hope in the near future some effort will be made to remove the anomalies that exist in it. In order to practice, dentists are forced to pay £2 2s. a year as registration fee. If a man has not paid this money to the Dental Board by the 31st January in each year, he is wiped off the list as a registered practitioner. A man can be fined so much for each month his payment is overdue, and the total amount of the fine may run into a considerable sum. The board have a credit balance of over £1,400. If this money were being used for some useful purpose, such as to subsidise the Dental Hospital, I should have no objection to the accumulation of this fund, but it is wrong that all that money should be allowed to lie idle when so much requires to be done. I believe the Dental Hospital is doing good work, but the Government have interfered with it by reducing the amount of the subsidy.

The Minister for Lands: Now then, you had better be careful.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The subsidy was cut down by 20 per cent. when the Financial Emergency Act came into force.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Who put the Act into operation?

Mr. RAPHAEL: The present Government. I have been told that it was the Attorney General's Act. The Government were granting a subsidy of £900 a year, but according to newspaper reports they found it necessary to reduce the emoluments that were being paid, and the institution accordingly suffered the 20 per cent. reduction.

No doubt many institutions exist which should be assisted by the State, but this particular one is the most important and one most deserving of support.

The Minister for Lands: Are you speaking on its behalf this afternoon?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I cannot help it if the Minister's mentality will not allow him to understand on whose behalf I am speaking. Many people cannot afford to pay for dental attention. Owing to the lack of funds, the Dental Hospital now has to charge more than the patients can afford to pay. It is wrong to cut down the subsidy and deprive people of the help they should be getting. I wish also to refer to what I would call the Ottawa farce. We on this side of the House appreciate the good work that was done in some instances by the Scullin Government. We know that the adverse trade balance of £32,000,000 was within a short time converted into a favourable balance of £30,000,000. This was a gigantic effort on the part of the Scullin Administration, and worthy of our commendation. It was the Bruce Administration that put us in our present position, through over-borrowing and unwise expenditure. We are now told that Mr. Bruce, who got us into this terrible mess, will get us out of it again. We hear that Australia is going to receive a preference of 3d. a bushel on wheat. What price shall we have to pay for that? If Russia resumes her dumping tactics, what shall we get out of it? What is this small preference going to cost us in the matter of our trade balance? I wish to say a little with regard to the Frankland River dispute, and the rotten deal the Government have meted out to the men. I first got into touch with these workers at a deputation which came to this House, with a view to seeing whether the conditions could not be altered at Frankland River and Mt. Barker. Unfortunately, there is no Cabinet Minister controlling unemployment only. If our wishes had been granted, and a Minister appointed to deal with unemployment, men would not be begging for food to-day. When the men first went to the job, they were offered £2 a week for clearing. After a certain amount of agitation on their part, the officers in control decided that £2 was not sufficient, and they raised the figure to £6 10s. an acre. Some of the men who went to this job could not have made a living if the rate

had been £60 an acre. I wish to quote the case of a returned Imperial soldier. His shoulder had been shattered, his jaw had been shattered, he suffered from malaria, and had to walk 47 miles in sandshoes. He was no more fit to clear country than he was to chop firewood. To send a man of that type down there and tell him he has to earn the money that the Government decide to pay, or starve, is something damnable. That man was no more fit to do work of the kind that was expected of him than perhaps the Minister himself. As a matter of fact it would have done the Minister a lot of good to change places with that man for a week or two. The Minister would then have appreciated what the men of Frankland River were going through. The price charged the men down there for food is much above city rates.

The Minister for Lands: What does it cost them per week?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I will quote a few prices. Eggs, 1s. 3d. a dozen.

Mr. Sampson: That's cheap.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Cheap all right for the hon. member who receives £10 16s. a week but not cheap for men getting 25s. a week. Bread, 4d. a loaf; we pay 3d. for it here.

The Minister for Lands: You pay 4d.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do nothing of the sort; I pay 3d.

The Minister for Lands: Mt. Barker is recognised as one of the cheapest places in the State in which to live.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Then the Minister thinks that by sending these men away he is actually sending them to where they will be on a good wicket. The men had to buy food under rotten conditions.

The Minister for Lands: Let us have some more of the prices that they had to pay.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister can go through the whole list if he likes; I have the list here. Cheese, 1s. a lb. How much do we pay for it in Perth?

The Minister for Lands: Not less than that.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister's mentality is low to-day; he is trying to be witty at the expense of the downtrodden. Those men got into communication with the Minister, and he did not have the courtesy to reply to their telegram. If he had adopted the right attitude and got into

touch with the men, they would not be in the city streets to-day begging for food. The Government have not the people behind them in their attitude towards the unemployed. I have been in touch with many of these unfortunate men, and I have been to two of their meetings, and I can definitely say that they are not being led by Communists. It is the men themselves who are fighting for a livelihood. They are men who fought for their country, and they would be poor old things if they did not fight for better conditions than those offered by the Government. There is not much more that I want to say.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is not much that you have said.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have said more than the Minister has ever said in this House—the most silent Minister we have had or ever will have here. I appreciate what the Attorney General has done for the school at Victoria Park, and I thank him.

The Minister for Lands: You did not say that when speaking on the Supply Bill.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Since that debate the Minister has actually done what he had promised to do.

The Minister for Lands: As a matter of fact tenders were being called when you were speaking on the Supply Bill.

Mr. Marshall: Who is making this speech?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I thank the Attorney General, and I hope the Minister for Health will do his share by acceding to the request for dental attention at the same school.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mt. Hawthorn) [5.53]: This, the second and final session of the fourteenth Parliament, is stripped for action. There is a restiveness on the part of Ministers who are not prepared to give any information in reply to criticism levelled at them. They have been let off lightly during the past year or two, but during the present session they cannot expect to escape the criticism that they deserve. Personally I was not elected as an apologist for the Government, and I do not intend to congratulate them on their remissness. It is the business of the Opposition, when the Government are remiss, to call attention to the fact. Consequently during the present session we shall only be doing our duty to the country if we direct atten-

tion to their neglect in many directions. There appears to be an idea at the back of the minds of some members of the Government that we are criticising them as individuals and not as Ministers. I might quote a suitable illustration by a tradesman who said, "Tell a man he is a good fellow personally, but that if he were a bad tradesman he would get the sack all the same." We can say to the Government, "We have nothing against the Ministers as individuals; our complaint is that they are bad tradesmen, that they have not done the job they have undertaken." All the criticism that has been offered in respect of the promises the Government made has met with the reply, "What would you have done?" That is rather a negative attitude to be adopted by men who have undertaken a job and who themselves set the terms of the contract. The Government made a promise to the people of the State and immediately we endeavour to hold them to that promise they consider it a complete reply when they say "What did you do in 1929?" It seems to me that the opinions of the Minister for Railways have permeated those of all his colleagues. As far back as 1911, when he was Premier, and the late Frank Wilson offered some criticism of the then Leader of the Government, Mr. Scaddan's complete reply was, "What did you do in 1907?" He did not then attempt to justify his position, and to-day when his attention is called to the laxity of the present Government in respect of a particular question, we get the reply, "Why did you not do it in 1929?" The answer to that is that the conditions to-day are entirely different from what they were before the present Government took office, and what was quite a permissible policy, that would then have been approved by the people of the State, will certainly not apply in this year, 1932. With respect to promises, the Government have given us a good lead. It seems to me that if you make promises that it is possible to carry out, the people will hold you to them, and all that the Government have to do when facing the country is to make promises that are incapable of being carried out and then when challenged merely point out that it was impossible to fulfil them. The record of promises of employment is so ridiculous that the Government do not even remember the definite promises they made. With regard to the Governor's Speech, we find at the tail end of it what appears to be a speculative

matter—the reference to “Elections.” The member for Nelson (M. J. H. Smith) had something to say about it the other evening, and other members on the Government side have made certain declarations in respect of the Government’s policy—and I do not know whether we can consider those declarations to be official—that there is to be introduced a Redistribution of Seats Bill. According to the member for Nelson a Redistribution Bill is warranted, and greater representation should be given to the country and less to the metropolitan area. I do not know whether the Government adhere to that view as expressed by the member for Nelson. I do not know whether that view is official, whether it has been gleaned at party meetings, whether the hon. member is breaking the news to the Western Australian people in order to relieve the Government of the responsibility. It means, I suppose, that later the Government will declare that pressure has been brought to bear upon them by dissatisfied residents of the country districts. Criticisms and suggestions have been offered with regard to this Parliament, but for that matter they apply to previous Parliaments. It is urged that there should be a reduction of members. If there is any public demand for electoral legislation, it applies not so much to redistribution of seats as to reduction of members. People declare that there are too many members. The suggestion from the country districts is not that there should be reduction of members generally, but that there should be reduction in the number of members representing the metropolitan area. It is well that we should see where we are. At present, I assume, we consider this to be a democratic country.

Mr. Marshall: What?

Mr. MILLINGTON: A democratic country, I repeat. The present parliamentary representation, however, is democracy with variations. The idea that every vote should have the same value does not obtain in Western Australia. I agree that our enormous area has practically everything to do with the variations which have taken place in representation. In the metropolitan area there are constituencies on a representation basis of 6,000 electors; in the agricultural districts the basis is 4,000, and in the mining and pastoral districts only 2,000. As regards the North-West we do not trouble about any quota at all. We simply say, “There is that vast area; somehow it has been allotted four

seats; let it remain so.” The last Redistribution of Seats Act left the North untouched. Although the democratic principle pervades our electoral law, the fact remains that we have agreed to these variations. I am wondering whether there is in the world any other country with a democratic system of representation and yet with variations of such great extent. I am wondering whether the variations in Western Australia have simply arisen as the result of local conditions. This State having got away from the democratic principle that each vote should have the same value, now, it seems, there is to be a further encroachment on the representation of the metropolitan area. That thickly populated portion of the State is to have a decreased representation, and the difference is to be given to the country districts, which from a democratic point of view are already over-represented. When people say, as they do say, that there is no justification for 50 members in this Assembly, the reason is not far to seek. That position of affairs springs from the enormous territory of Western Australia. The metropolitan area, having half the population of the State, is given 17 members out of a total of 50. Roughly, one-third of the members here represent half of the people, and two-thirds represent the other half. Such a concession to country districts I regard as unprecedented. I know of no other country where such quotas as ours are the express law of the land. The concession having been given, those who have been granted this departure from democratic principle have now determined that more should be asked from those who have acted so generously. I shall resist any such proposal.

The Minister for Works: What about waiting until you are asked to agree to it?

Mr. MILLINGTON: Not one Minister has corrected the statements made on this subject by the member for Nelson. With the exception of the Premier, not one Minister has yet spoken on the Address-in-reply. Therefore we have to try to imagine what is in the minds of Ministers. When a definite statement of policy, such as it is, has been made, and the word “Elections” appears in the Governor’s Speech, are not we entitled to ask what is the meaning of those things? In anticipation I say to advocates inside and outside this House of re-allocation of members, and also to advocates of reduction of the present membership, that under a really democratic system the fact of

17 members representing half the population, namely the population of the metropolitan area, would mean, on that quota, a total membership of 33 for the entire State of Western Australia. Therefore I consider that those who received generous concessions under the last Redistribution of Seats Act should rest well content with consideration being given to the effect of distance from seat of government, areas of electorates, and such difficulties as long or difficult transport to the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Works: All those matters were taken into consideration.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes. I am not aware that any member of the Opposition of that period took serious objection to the extremely fair redistribution proposed by the last Government.

The Minister for Works: We opposed it.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The then Leader of the Opposition, the present Premier, accepted it with open arms.

The Minister for Works: The Country Party opposed it.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Here we find a section of the Government, the Country Party section, dissenting. Whereas the present Premier was prepared at the time to take a fair view, we now find that the Country Party section of the Government is making certain demands. It is said that exception was taken by the Country Party to the last redistribution. I venture to say that the last Redistribution of Seats Bill is the only measure of the kind ever passed, in any State, without the word "gerrymandering" being used.

Mr. Brown: If you represented a country district, you would not speak like that.

Mr. MILLINGTON: There was at the time no suggestion that the basis proposed was unfair, or that the quotas proposed were unjust to any section of the community.

The Minister for Works: It was very unfair that the Labour Party should have four members for pocket boroughs.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I now see that there is something behind the word "Elections" in the Governor's Speech.

The Minister for Works: That is your imagination.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Western Australian people had better wake up. Nationalist members on the other side of the Chamber had better discover whether the people in the metropolitan area do not consider that already they have been over-

generous regarding quotas for electorates. The last Redistribution of Seats Act declares that if a man lives far away from the metropolitan area, his vote is of more value than the vote of a resident of the metropolitan area. If the Government really desire to deal with electoral anomalies, I refer them to a glaring anomaly. In connection with the last redistribution Bill there were many sobbs over the disparity between the numbers of voters in certain electorates. I have not seen any complaint in the Press concerning what I am about to state, but the fact remains that in the Metropolitan-Suburban Province of the Council there are 27,000 voters on the roll, whereas for the North Province there are 600 or 700—I have not the exact figures available at the moment. Those 600 or 700 voters elect three members of the Legislative Council, and the 27,000 voters also elect three members. It has not been suggested by the Government that the word "Elections" in the Governor's Speech has any reference to that glaring anomaly. Probably the Country Party are not interested or concerned to know that 600 or 700 voters in a country district have as much power as 27,000 voters in the metropolitan area. I do not know whether there is to be a contest of country interests against town interests. I do not know that there ought to be such a contest. But we have to bear in mind that all laws enacted by Parliament apply also to the people in the metropolitan area. If questions of taxation arise and there is a preponderating vote representing country interests, naturally the city people will know that certain interests are over-represented in Parliament, and that city people will have to depend not on voting strength but on the generosity of those whose view is that even under existing conditions the country districts are under-represented. I agree that from the point of view of difficulty of transport and as regards making known the requirements of a district, country residents should have fuller representation than city dwellers. In the Commonwealth Parliament that difficulty is overcome by special representation. The Federal Parliament includes a member specially looking after country interests—I refer to the representative of the Northern Territory. I have not much complaint to make as to the present representation; but if the existing disparity is to be accentuated, if the proposal is to make representation still more anomalous by getting away from the prin-

ciple laid down in the existing law, I shall take strong exception. And so, I believe, will the people of the metropolitan area. If any attempt is made to tinker with existing quotas, something will be said as to the representation of the metropolitan area.

Mr. Marshall: Talk about secession from the Commonwealth! The goldfields and the North-West should secede from this State. We never did get a fair deal.

Mr. Brown: You would lose your job.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I was discussing what might be involved in the word "Elections" in the Governor's Speech, and pointed out that although we had agreed to a variation of democratic principles, we did not desire to go to the extent of creating a caricature of democracy. Apparently that is what members, particularly those associated with the Country Party, desire. An attempt has been made to show that metropolitan and other interests are antagonistic. They are not, and country districts have been given a particularly fair deal. In addition, I would point out to members of the Country Party that in respect of representation, they have eight or nine members on the floor of the House—we are never quite sure just how many—out of a total membership of 50, and half the portfolios in the Ministry.

Hon. P. Collier: More than half.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes, they have now four-sevenths. When they suggest a variation in favour of the country districts, they should bear in mind that with their comparatively insignificant numerical representation on the floor of the House, they already have sufficient power to control the Government, if I may be permitted to put it that way. In addition, they have suggested increased representation for country districts, to be provided at the expense of metropolitan electors. They suggested that ways and means could be adopted to secure additional representation at the expense of districts just as entitled to representation as the farming areas. It must be remembered that the districts they represent are not the only country districts in Western Australia. In fact, some of the seats held by Country Party members are for electorates comparatively close to the city—merely suburban constituencies. I

would instance Swan. I assume from interjections by Ministers, and it is merely by way of interjection that we can get any indication of the Government's policy—

The Minister for Works: Surely you would not regard an interjection as an indication of Government policy.

Mr. MILLINGTON: From those interjections, I assume that reference was made to the representation of goldfields pastoral districts. If that was the intention, their policy, under this heading, appears to be, in the minds of Country Party members, largely a matter of geography. If it suits them, they base their demands on the score of distance from the seat of Government. If that does not suit them, they discover some other factor upon which to base their claims. Had there been a straight out declaration of policy, such as we are entitled to expect in the Governor's Speech, we would know exactly where we were. In the absence of some such specific declaration, we are required to discover what is in the minds of Ministers. There is no indication in the Speech itself. It is true that it represents a species of stocktaking and all industries are referred to, but all that it amounts to is that extracts have been taken from departmental officers' reports. Therefore, those references are comparatively unimportant, although they deal with important matters. They do not suggest anything regarding the policy of the Government, nor have we any such indication until we come to the paragraph relating to legislation. All the information we are given under that heading is that we will give consideration to measures dealing with the re-enactment of emergency legislation, bulk handling, transport, whatever that may mean, control of lotteries, modification of imprisonment for debt and, lastly, that cryptic word "elections." I shall leave it at that. I assume that someone in authority other than the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith), will tell us what that word means and that, other than by interjections, Ministers will have something to say regarding the policy of the Government. Surely they are not ashamed of their policy and can tell us what is meant regarding the reference to "elections." I do not think it fair to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, to include in his Speech, crossword puzzles such as I have referred to. He is entitled to be asked to

read a straightforward declaration of policy and should not be called upon to include inuendoes, such as appear in the Speech this year. Since we have to indulge in guesswork to ascertain what is to be done respecting matters of importance to the State, it is necessary to draw attention to the phases I have dealt with. Because in certain quarters there has been what may be regarded as a demand for a reconstruction of the State Constitution with regard to Parliamentary representation, it would simplify matters and satisfy the public if we had a straightforward declaration of Government policy. In view of that demand, it might be of advantage to remember what has happened in Queensland, which is rather an up-to-date State, unafraid of moving with the times. In that State the Legislative Council was abolished as the first move. In view of the demands in the present times of stress, we have decided to do away with frill and in Queensland, bearing that in mind, they elected the Smith Government. What better would hon. members desire than that? They did away with the enormous and unnecessary Upper House.—

The Minister for Works: What did the electors say when the referendum was held?

Mr. MILLINGTON: The electors saw fit to re-elect a party that did away with the Legislative Council.

The Minister for Works: But what did the electors say when the referendum was taken? You talk about democracy. The people desired to retain the Council, but a democratic Government did away with it.

Mr. MILLINGTON: It has been asserted that everything done in this House is influenced by the view that would be taken of the legislation by the Legislative Council, and that we are largely governed in our actions by what may take place in the Upper Chamber. I do not think that is so. Governments and members of Parliament in this State are not concerned so much with what may be done in another place as they are influenced by the fact that Governments and members alike are responsible for their own actions. That is the safeguard the people have, and what greater safeguard could be desired? The people have the right to elect members and those who appoint a Government are directly responsible to the people themselves. It is not due to the fact that we have a Legislative Council that the Lower House acts as has been suggested. It is not due to the fact that the Legislative

Council is supposed to safeguard the people against hasty or unwise legislation, but to the fact that we are a responsible Chamber and that we have a responsible Government. The aspect of responsibility to the electors is the only check that is necessary, and that is why the bi-cameral system is quite unnecessary in this State. If the people desire to go on paying for two Houses of Parliament in Western Australia and two Houses in the Federal political arena, well and good. As to the suggestion that there should be a decreased number of members to do away with present evils said to be associated with Governments and legislation under existing conditions, the slight difference in expenditure involved would be of no consequence at all. I believe there is greater safety for the people in the number of members we have to-day, namely, 50. The need for that number in Western Australia is due entirely to the fact that the country districts have twice the representation that we have for city interests. I am glad that the Premier is present because I believe we shall now have some interpretation placed upon that mystic word "elections."

The Premier: All in good time.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I would repeat the Premier's words, if it were not for the fact that Government supporters have been throwing out dark hints. In the circumstances, it will make for the peace of mind of members—

The Premier: You do not seem very disturbed.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Since the Government seem anxious that we shall not give any offence to anyone in the criticism we have to make, they should take us fully into their confidence, and I believe the Premier will do so at the first opportunity.

The Premier: I cannot do so until you sit down.

Mr. MILLINGTON: If I thought the Premier would make a declaration of policy on these matters, I would sit down at once.

The Premier: Try it.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I have an idea that the Premier has already made all the declarations he intends to make on the Address-in-reply and, in the circumstances, I had better continue my pursuit of knowledge, under difficulties.

The Premier: You do not seem to be supplied with your usual material.

Mr. MILLINGTON: No, that is the difficulty. There is certainly need for imagina-

tion in dealing with the Governor's Speech this year.

The Premier: That applies to much in this world.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Usually Speeches delivered by the Governor at the opening of Parliament are most explicit. In the latest instance the Government have been most careful and discreet in their pronouncements. I do not propose to speak at any great length regarding Government departments, but I shall deal with one or two, particularly with one branch controlled by the Child Welfare Department. The other day I asked a question as to the policy of the Government respecting boy migrants going to the Fairbridge Farm School. In normal times, when migration was the settled policy we did subsidise the Fairbridge Farm School, but the position is now entirely altered and, instead of wanting population, we would rather favour an emigration policy.

The Premier: You subsidised the school when in control.

Mr. MILLINGTON: That is so, but it is no excuse for the Government to point to what happened years ago, when things were prosperous. Does the Premier suggest that the present conditions are similar to the conditions of 1928? If the Minister controlling the department were not so overloaded with a multiplicity of departments, he would know what was going on. I do not believe he did know until I called attention to it by that question as to whether the Government were still subsidising the Fairbridge Farm School. The question was a very pertinent one in view of the difficulty we have in placing our own boys in industry just now. Yet the Government are carrying on the ridiculous policy of subsidising boys from the Old Country.

The Premier: You did it.

The Minister for Lands: And you know that the English people have entered into agreements on the strength of it.

Mr. MILLINGTON: It was right when we did it, but the conditions have greatly changed since then. Yet we have the Government encouraging by subsidy the migration of youngsters from the Old Land, and at the same time endeavouring to place Western Australian boys in industry. I draw attention to this to show the need for close scrutiny of what is being done in the de-

partment. Does the Premier propose to continue this policy of subsidising migrants?

The Premier: Would you continue it?

Mr. MILLINGTON: That is not the question. The Government have taken on the job and are responsible. When we were in office we administered that department wisely and capably, according to the times, and each Minister knew what was taking place in his department. In those days no Minister required to have his attention drawn to what was going on in his department. Now that the mistake has been pointed out, the Premier is going to defend their errors as he would defend their inheritance.

The Premier: Could you not discuss the Douglas credit system?

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes, we could, if the Premier could understand it. But I do not see it mentioned in the Governor's Speech, and so the discussion would not be admitted.

The Premier: The Fairbridge Farm School is not in the Speech.

Mr. MILLINGTON: On several occasions I have complained of the reduction in the amount being paid by the Child Welfare Department to widows and their dependants. Last session we asked a question as to whether the amount had been reduced, and the reply was that it had not. Since then I have had an unsatisfactory reply from the department, not to the effect that the rate had been reduced, but simply that the new rate, 7s., was sufficient. We want to know definitely from the Government whether they have decreased the amount from 9s. to 7s. We want to know that definitely, for at present the position is covered up by an admixture of the Child Welfare Department and unemployment relief administration. I know of one man who does not come under the unemployment relief scheme, for he is a pensioner. Yet the amount paid to his family has been reduced from 9s. to 7s. The public are entitled to know the position clearly. If the Government will say that they think 7s. is sufficient, we shall know where we are, but I contend it is not right to cover up the matter under a merging of two departments. The amount of 9s. was fixed upon as the result of the experience of successive Governments, all of whom

agreed to consider it to be the absolute minimum to be paid to widows and their dependants. In the Speech there are non-contentious matters relating to the various industries, pastoral, dairying, fruit, mining, etc. I sometimes think the advent of gold mining in this State was the advent also of many of our difficulties. In the old days, when our currency consisted of kangaroo and 'possum skins and sandalwood, we were perhaps better off and happier. That was before the advent of the 'tother-sider, which demoralised the old settler. Now that we have a gold standard we are forever arguing about currencies, questions which easily settled themselves in the old days. I mention gold mining because I see in the Speech a recognition that this is the one bright spot in our industrial life, and consequently is fostered by the Government. The goldfields representatives are justly claiming that it should have even greater recognition. When we are asked to supply ideas as to what should be done to stimulate industry, I think myself we should have a more complete organisation in all our industries than we have. Although there is the utmost difficulty now in finding profitable markets for our exports, that is no reason why we should slacken down. Indeed the unsatisfactory prices constitute an added reason why we should endeavour to devise better ways and means of running our industries. During good times when prices were high these problems solved themselves, but now that we are passing through a difficult period there is greater need for the application of scientific methods to the conduct of our industries. We might have been a nice quiet pastoral State, but of course the rest of the world would not permit that. There is the general hurry and bustle to which we must submit, and therefore we find ourselves, a primary producing State, up against other primary producing countries, and unless we keep abreast of the times we have no prospect of holding our markets, particularly in view of the competition with other lands. Some countries are ahead of us in their methods, their scientific development, machinery and organisation. I refer to such countries as the United States. Other countries with which we have to compete are countries of cheap labour. We must devise ways and means to continue our industries, and in these times we find the difficulty great. Whereas in good times it would have

been possible to revise our methods and remodel our system, there is the utmost difficulty to-day when credit is short and depression prevails. But that is no excuse why we should not endeavour to put our industries on a firm basis. People are disposed to blame the Government for the present position. All Governments have failed; Governments in this and in other countries, but private enterprise has also failed, not only here but throughout the world. Private enterprise is complaining that the Governments are responsible, but private enterprise will have to discover a way out for itself. Governments do not control industry, and instead of those in control of industry continually blaming the Government, they had better realise that, having reached the present impasse, they must work their way out. It does not better the position at all to blame Governments. Some people blame systems, and think they have discovered an easy way out by suggesting an alteration of the whole system. There may be truth in that, but it would take time to alter the system. Even if we did so, we would be only a small factor in the scheme of things. For the time being we shall have to make the best of conditions, always with the idea of getting together the representatives of the various industries, such governing bodies as we have, and such spheres of influence as can be utilised to assist in reviving the industries upon which we depend. With this object I have a suggestion to make to the Government. They have asked what we would do. All the industries I have mentioned are in a pretty bad way. Particularly so is the pastoral industry. Only a rise in prices can assist that industry. Of all the industries in Western Australia, I believe that the pastoral industry, for methods adopted, is in advance of any other primary industry.

Mr. Patrick: It has a pretty low wool average.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I am speaking of what has been done to place the industry on a proper basis. For many years the breed of sheep has received the attention of pastoralists. Fortunes have been spent to improve the breed of sheep and the quality of wool. Although we are behind the world in other things, we are not only abreast, but ahead of the world in wool production. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Church) could

tell us what has been done during the last half-century for the improvement of wool growing. Of fine wool, I believe we produce half the world's requirements. I do not suggest that my proposal would have great influence on wool growing. The pastoral industry will have to wait for an improvement in the market. I do not know of any way in which improvement could be made in the cost of producing wool, except to relieve the pastoralists of portion of the burden of interest. At the time of the New South Wales election I was speaking to a pastoralist from beyond Carnarvon, and he told me he was rather disposed to favour some of the ideas of Mr. Lang. He said, "I am not a Labourite; I am a Nationalist. but I have been engaged in the pastoral industry for 20 years, and when I look back, I find I have been working for the banks the whole time. All that my place has produced has been interest. In the good times I pay; in the bad times they stand to me for a while, but as soon as I am able to produce wool of any value, it is demanded by the banks." I believe that the pastoral leases throughout the North-West are over-capitalised and that the pastoralists are suffering from that to-day. That matter is being readjusted, and there will have to be a considerable writing-down of prices and a considerable reduction of interest if the industry is to exist. I leave it to those engaged in the industry to say whether the big load they have had to bear in recent years has not been the interest burden on their holdings because of the high capitalisation. Since the industry has to exist, and since it is more important than the payment of high rates of interest, if one is to go, we say the industry shall live and the interest rates must conform to the level of what the industry can pay. The same holds good regarding dairying. We think we have established the dairying industry. We attempted to do so in a desperate hurry. I do not think that 2 per cent. of those engaged in dairying on a butter-fat basis can pay their way. I propose to ask a question later as to the number of group settlers who have had their capitalisation written down—it has been written down 50 per cent.—and who are now in a position to pay interest on the reduced amount. I assume that not 2 per cent. can pay the interest on the present capitalisation, particu-

larly with butter fat at 1s. or 1s. 1d., and particularly having regard to the class of stock they are carrying. Through establishing the industry in a desperate hurry, we got the culls from everywhere, whereas it is essential that herds be well bred before dairymen have a possibility of holding their own. It is a rare thing to find anywhere in Western Australia a herd that is satisfactory. Despite all that may be said, it will be a number of years before herds of the right quality and grade are built up in this State. In the Eastern States where the most economical methods were practised, and where dairying was built up under sweated conditions and by child labour and in particularly good country, very fine herds have been established over a long period of years.

The Minister for Agriculture: We have some of the best studs in Australia.

Mr. MILLINGTON: But it is impossible to buy thousands of cows in a year and to get the best. Dairymen who have been established in the metropolitan area for a number of years say that the stock they sold were the culls, and they found their way to the South-West. That was years ago. We certainly did not get the best stock from the Eastern States, and in any event the imported cattle had to be acclimatised. It was impossible to supply the sudden demand to establish the industry in such a desperate hurry. Through trying to rush the industry, it has been built up on an unsound basis. In the first place the holdings cost double what they should have cost because of the method of clearing adopted, and in the second place, the all-important factor, the dairy herd is not up to standard, and will not be for many years. Considering that we have reached the export stage and will have to compete in the world's market, the only possible prospect we have of advancement in the dairying industry is to grade up the herds considerably. We can talk, advertise and boost, but until we get cows of suitable grade, we shall not make much headway. People complain of being evicted from group holdings. Let me give an instance. A man was evicted, and he was full of complaints. I asked him for the facts. His total income was £96. His capitalisation was about £1,500, and he had 60 acres under pasture. Each year he had to use 1¼ cwt. of super. per acre, which I assume would cost about 6s. He had to pro-

vide that, keep a large family, pay interest on the capital cost and build up his herd on £96, and he had been on the holding for many years. He is off it now. It is rare to find anyone who is making a reasonably satisfactory income from dairying. When they have complained about being evicted I have said, "How long do you think Western Australia is going to stand behind this industry and finance men who are going behind? It is not a matter of this Government, but of this country being behind it. If you can show there is a prospect of effecting an improvement this year, or next year, there would probably be something in a policy of that sort." They cannot, however, show any signs of an improvement in the near future or any advancement in present prices. The majority of the settlers have not sufficient cows to keep them. It is rare to find a man with more than 10 or 12 cows. If they have only that number they cannot possibly keep themselves, and this State will have to keep not only them but the cows as well. When we are skiting about the development of our dairying industry, I say that this is the position in which we find it. Ways and means must be discovered to improve the position, and we should spend less time in talking about having produced 10½ million pounds of butter. Butter has to be produced at a price at which it can profitably be put upon the market and not at the expense of the State.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do you suggest we should stop production?

Mr. MILLINGTON: The main dairy farmer in this country is the Agricultural Bank. If that institution had been given a free hand, instead of being saddled with a demoralised scheme of group settlement, it might have done something. The group settlement scheme has all the evils—if any—of socialism, coupled with all the evils of capitalism. The evils were put there. The settlers had not sufficient responsibility to cause them to realise that they must make good or get out. They leaned on the Government. Right throughout the groups there are those who will take no responsibility. When they are in difficulties they say to the Government, "What are you going to do about it?" They are looking to someone else to help them out of their difficulties. This is our dairying industry to which reference was made in the Speech. We have a long way to go before conditions are put on a satisfactory basis. Western Australia as a

State is conducting the industry, and losing a great deal of money each year. Those in charge of the Agricultural Bank have that responsibility and that obligation to face, and they are most difficult. The fruit industry is one of those which is reasonably satisfactory, except that we have no market, such as jam factories, for our surplus fruit.

The Minister for Lands: You would not say that about our apples?

Mr. MILLINGTON: The export trade is certainly satisfactory. The people who are engaged in the industry follow up-to-date methods, and are a credit not only to it but to themselves. The time has come when the people as a whole, instead of relying upon Governments, should form themselves into an organisation. This should be in the nature of a State-wide industrial organisation. Everybody in it would represent a co-ordinated force, and would see by what means it was possible to revive industry outside of ordinary Government control. Some time ago the trades unions associated themselves with the Chamber of Manufactures and formed a local products league. This dealt not only with manufactured goods but with all the products of Western Australia. The league did make headway. A certain amount of advertising was also done. There was an attempt to popularise Western Australian products, whether primary or secondary. Whereas in times past there was a prejudice against local articles, I believe today there is a prejudice in favour of them. The great difficulty I experience is that in some respects the quality is not as good as it should be. Where the quality is good we are assured by the big distributors that 100 per cent. of local products is being sold by them. This holds good in respect to biscuit manufacturers. Pickles and preserves have also become popular. What can we do to extend the local market for our secondary products? The scope of the league, its objects, and system of control could be extended and be made to apply to all Western Australian industries. Those men who have been successful are, I think, prepared to place their brains at the disposal of Western Australia. My experience in mining was that when the manager was a good man he made the mine. In other cases a good mine was spoilt by bad management. Following on the report of Mr. Kingsley Thomas, the Royal Commissioner, the suggestion was made some time ago that the mines should

amalgamate in respect to the treatment of their ore, and to an extent, though not exactly on the lines recommended, this idea has been carried out on the Eastern Goldfields. There is a general idea on the part of people to assist each other. I believe the co-operative spirit is abroad. Men realise that if they would progress themselves, the industry in which they are engaged must also make progress, and that if the State is to advance the various industries in it must also advance. We have reached the stage when each must assist the other to the utmost. If there is any way to promote the interests of our industrial methods, it is the duty of every section of every industry in the State to adopt that way. I therefore propose that various interests should be represented on a body such as I have suggested. This might be called a local products league. The Government should carry out the necessary organisation and, in order to spread the scheme all over the State, should work through the local governing bodies. These local authorities have a legal standing. They employ permanent officials, have the necessary staffs and the housing, and the necessary organisation. They could be used to a greater extent than is the case to-day, and I propose that they should be co-opted into the scheme. There should be represented on the league the Chambers of Commerce, the Chamber of Manufacturers, the Trade Unions, the Pastoralists' Association, the Primary Producers' Association, the Chamber of Mines, the Chartered Banks, the Royal Agricultural Society and affiliated bodies, the Stock Breeders' Association and the Press of Western Australia. All these interests should join in the formation of a league. The organisation would not be a super-Government but an industrial one appointed to co-operate with the worthy object of reviving industry generally within the State. In each district we would have a body made up of the associations I have mentioned, each having its own sphere of influence. It would also be necessary to have a central authority, in a sense acting in control of the subsidiary bodies. Each branch would in turn be entrusted with the duty of paying special attention to the particular industry of the district. In the case of wheat growing it would mean that not only would the farmers be entrusted

with the responsibility of promoting better farming methods, but of endeavouring to secure for the industry such assistance as might be necessary to assist in its development. The branch would be possessed of local knowledge, and the local organisation would be able to secure the proper co-operation of all interests. In the farming areas the organisation would include not only the farmers but all those who are dependent upon him, not only in the district but in the towns and the city as well. Everyone connected with the organisation would have a direct interest in improving the methods applied to farming and advancing the interests of that industry. We must pay special attention to improved methods as they should be applied to all our industries. What was good enough two or three years ago is not good enough to-day. I suggest that a skeleton scheme should be drawn up for the co-ordination of the powers and forces to which I have referred, so that all interests may be banded together with the common object of developing our industries. The organisation would be industrial and not political; it would not be representative of the people but representative of the particular interests concerned. Those who made up the organisation would be devoting attention to their own business. For a time it might act in an advisory capacity only, but if it proved effective it could be clothed with supervisory authority. Many of the mistakes which Governments have made have been due to the absence of the necessary local knowledge. I propose that the local knowledge represented by this State-wide organisation should be made available to the Government from every district and from every industry. The idea is well worthy of investigation. A conference could be called of the various interests concerned and the scheme discussed. It is admitted that private enterprise has failed. If that be so, then it is for private enterprise to devise ways and means of getting out of its difficulties. It has a better chance of effecting its own salvation than by depending upon the Government. If people were able to help themselves in the way suggested, they would be given a sense of responsibility that, I am sorry to say, is sadly lacking to-day in many industries. I think it is admitted on both sides of the House that there is an anxiety that

our industries should be revived. No matter which Government may be in office, that is the one thing that matters and most deeply concerns the people of the State. I notice there is a disposition on the part of Ministers to object to criticism from this side of the House. In the course of my remarks I have not levelled any criticism at the Government with the thought that I am any better than Ministers are, or with the idea of setting myself up as being any better than members on the opposite side of the House. That is not the idea at all. I have a rooted objection to the man who poses as superior to others. We all object to the "Holier than thou" type. The criticism we level at the Government has not any such object. Still, if ever there was a time in the history of Western Australia when the Government had to be kept up to their work, it is now. Unfortunately, the Government show a tendency to slack. They say, "Because such and such a thing was good enough years ago, it is good enough now." The Government should realise that it is their duty to overcome the present difficulties. They cannot slack on the job now because something was not done when an entirely different set of circumstances existed; they cannot use that as an argument why nothing need be done to-day. The Government must wake up to the fact that there is now greater need for vigilance, that they must exercise some imagination, that like other forces and interests in this State they must awaken to a sense of their responsibilities. When they have done that, they will be able to preach to other forces and interests what should be done by them. Up to date the Government have not shown the activity they should.

The Minister for Works: In what way?

Mr. MILLINGTON: This side has repeatedly pointed out that the great problem of unemployment in itself warrants the attention of a full-time Minister. The Government have plenty of spare men, and I do not suggest that any of them has not sufficient ability to control a department. Nevertheless, the Government have handed over to one Minister half a dozen most important departments. That being so, it is perfectly understandable that outsiders ask why there are so many Ministers. There does not exist a man who can give adequate attention to all the departments confided to the care of one Minister. It is a great compliment to the Minister in question; but it is not fair to the Western Australian people, who expect that Ministers shall control and direct all

the various departments. That is one thing. Then there is the organising of Western Australian industries, which warrants another full-time Minister. We have the same man in control of unemployment and of industry—two vital matters—and also of railways and mines. The mining industry demands special attention. How is one Minister to put the necessary energy into all these departments, even though he has great capacity? The Government snugly sit back, giving the impression that they are doing all that is necessary. For anything that goes wrong, they blame the times. Their final, knock-out argument is, "What would you do?" That is the finish. The reply is that the Government have taken on the job of administering this country, and that therefore it is not for Ministers to say to a private member, "What would you do?" It is for me to say that as the Government have assumed the responsibility, I shall use my best efforts to hold them up to it. They undertook that responsibility with a full knowledge of prevailing conditions. They made promises which I may describe as most alarming. Undoubtedly they showed enterprise and imagination at that time. They are now expected to reproduce some of that form. If there is to be the same confidence in the Government on our part as there is on the part of Ministers, there must be activity and a lead. The Government ought not to ask me what I would do, or ask outsiders what they would do. The Government are expected to have a policy. The people have the right to demand a lead from the Government. If it is true that Governments have led the people into all these difficulties, the people are quite right to demand that the Government should lead them out of those difficulties. But it seems that any suggestions offered are simply discarded. The Government appear to be afflicted with the fell disease of self-complacency. Victims of that disease are all but irreclaimable. If a man feels that he is not all he should be, there is hope for him; but the present Government seem to feel that they have done all right and need not reply to criticism. Those shrewd heads sit back and say, "We will do nothing; we will let the other fellow talk; we are on the box seat." They will find themselves shifted from that box seat. Here I am reminded of what took place at Northam between two great debaters, Sir Hal Colebatch and Mr. John Curtin. The latter appeared to have

Sir Hal cornered, and at last asked him what he as a representative of the public proposed at this time. A Labour Government was in control of the Commonwealth. To Mr. Curtin's question, Sir Hal Colebatch gave this amazing answer: "I would change the Government." The debate had been on intricate monetary proposals, farming finance, and so forth. The conference had sat all the afternoon, but the one proposal Sir Hal had to offer in reply to Mr. Curtin's question was: "In addition to what I have already told you, I will say that if the Australian people really want to get out of their difficulties they must change the Government."

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [8.37]: Much has already been said in the course of the debate, but unquestionably a Parliamentary discussion of this nature is important to the people. Outsiders, especially those who now have but a small supply of this world's goods and are in a sad plight, look to us to put forward a solution of the difficulties confronting Western Australia like the rest of the world. That position is due to a variety of causes. We know that the difficulty has been accentuated by the war in which Australia was engaged some years ago. We are now experiencing the same destitution, misery and want as have been experienced after every war. For instance, following the Napoleonic wars there were widespread destitution and misery; price levels fell, and men marched on the capital cities. Much the same situation exists to-day. Throughout the world, price levels have fallen below the cost of production; and armies of men are marching on the capitals, for what? To demand a place in the sun, to demand some consideration as human beings, to demand participation in the wealth produced by the community. That participation is now denied to millions of human beings. Australia is also faced with a huge public debt such as affected other nations after earlier wars. Australia's difficulties are largely due to the enormous amount of money spent on war purposes, no less than £710,000,000. On account of that tremendous sum Australia has paid £206,000,000 by way of interest and sinking fund. Another £85,000,000 has gone in pensions, and £127,000,000 in repatriation and so forth. From war expenditure Australia has

a net debt remaining of £282,000,000. On that balance the Australian people have to find annually £15,000,000 for interest. In addition, an amount of £15,000,000 has to be found for repatriation and cognate purposes. Those are indeed heavy commitments. Time and again it has been urged here, and also in the Commonwealth Parliament, that some relief from war payments should be granted to Australia, similar to that granted by Britain to various other nations. Over half the debts of France and Italy to Britain have been wiped out. In the case of the Balkan States such debts have been wiped out entirely. Then there is the cancellation of South Africa's and Canada's war debts to Britain. But Australia has had no abatement of her war debt. Overtures to that end have been made, but so far without appreciable success. Abolition of war debts is a vital question throughout the world. If those debts are not wiped out, the nations cannot trade, and cannot function as civilised communities, for the simple reason that those debts overburden the world. At the recent reparations conference no decision was reached regarding debt abolition. Apparently everything now depends upon the presidential election in the United States of America. That election over, a conference is to be called to discuss the monetary and economic questions of the world. Whether or not such a conference is called in the near future, something will have to be done soon, so that the nations can trade again, so that commercial activities may be stimulated, so that the thousands upon thousands at present unemployed will be able to join those still in employment to produce goods for others to consume, in return for reasonable payment. In Europe millions are on the verge of starvation. They have no purchasing power to buy Australian goods, which Australian producers desire to sell. Our staple products, such as wheat, wool and meat, are essential to European people, who, however, because of their impoverished situation and the rotten economic conditions prevailing, are unable to purchase our commodities. It shows how the international situation affects us, when we are in a similar plight simply because the nations of Europe are unable to purchase our products at reasonable prices. Those difficulties, therefore, are apparent in this country. Side by side with that question

is that of disarmament. The other day the Minister for Defence, Sir George Pearce, made a statement indicating his anxiety to get in touch with the Imperial authorities with a view to spending more money on defence. That would be a fatuous proposal, having regard to present-day economic conditions. Instead of anxiety for preparedness for war, we should be more concerned about the disarmament of nations. The Federal Attorney General, Mr. Latham, attended the Disarmament Conference in Europe, but he was not able, during the course of his speech in Perth on his return to Australia, to hold out any hope of unanimity regarding the reduction of armaments, although that is a question vital to people throughout the world. Unless appreciable steps are taken towards a reduction of armaments, we shall not be far off another world cataclysm, and that will mean the undoing of civilisation. Everyone in the community should have his attention focussed upon the securing of peace and disarmament. Although we represent but a small unit in world affairs, we can, by means of essential propaganda, help to foster public opinion against any increase of armaments as a means towards securing international peace. The problem is important from the standpoint of the rehabilitation of our civilisation. Society has almost broken down because of the financial burden, largely due to the war. As a result, thousands of our people are in distress and in want. Many who a few years ago were in comfortable circumstances are to-day reduced almost to penury. Everything possible should be done to foster a healthy public opinion in favour of disarmament and the abolition of reparations. During the war period, the Labour Party held a conference in Perth at which it was urged that no indemnities should be paid in respect of the war. The opinions expressed then were sound. We have seen the effect of reparations, and of the huge burden of interest on the debts of the nations. I trust that when the world conference is held in January or February next, some tangible result will be accomplished. The interest question is of great importance to the nations of the world. The burden to-day is almost overwhelming. The national debt of Australia amounts to £1,100,000,000, and the interest payments on that total represent £57,000,000 per annum. That means that over £1,000,000 has to be found every week for the payment of interest, about half of

which is due to internal bondholders. If there could be some substantial reduction in the interest payments, immediate relief would be afforded the financial resources of the Commonwealth. Unless that relief can be extended—and if prices for our commodities continue as at present—it simply means that Australia cannot afford to pay her interest bill, and will be compelled to default. The national income has fallen from £650,000,000 two years ago to about £400,000,000 to-day. Fixed money claims on that income in respect of bonds, long-term loans and so forth, represent £110,000,000. Two years ago the fixed money claims on our national income represented 16 per cent. whereas to-day they represent approximately 30 per cent. That is a very substantial draw upon our national income. It is unquestionable that interest demands to-day amount to usury. The rates charged are excessive and many of our citizens who, when they were in more comfortable circumstances, bought homes or undertook other financial obligations, now find that they cannot meet their commitments because their incomes have so appreciably decreased, if they have not vanished altogether.

Mr. Marshall: Interest rates were always too high.

Mr. HEGNEY: That is so. In olden times the charging of interest was denounced as amounting to usury, and as immoral. In modern times the practice is regarded as moral, although both here and elsewhere the rates charged have been excessive.

Mr. Marshall: Not only is interest regarded as moral, but as sacred, not to be attacked.

Mr. HEGNEY: Our people are in such a predicament that they cannot pay their interest commitments, and interest rates must be revised. When the Financial Emergency Act was introduced, it was proposed that the banks should simultaneously reduce their interest rates. We know those institutions have been extremely tardy in effecting that reduction. On the contrary, we remember the almost indecent haste shown in the application of the provisions of the Act to wages and working conditions. The legislation was made retrospective in its application to wages, but the Government seemed to funk action against the banks, and certainly did not act as peremptorily as they did regarding the wage-earners. The interest bill on the public debt per head of the population of Australia to-

day is £8 7s. While the public debt for Australia is £170 18s. 7d. per head, the debt per head in Western Australia is £171 19s. 3d. That is a heavy load hanging over the head of every man, woman and child in this State. It is excessive, and we cannot carry that burden much longer. As to the financial position generally, the Scullin Government proposed a scheme of monetary reform with the object of stimulating industry and raising internal price levels. Eventually the Government were defeated. On the other hand we find that those who opposed that policy are to-day advocating it. A few days ago a report appeared in the "Daily News" setting out that Mr. Bruce, when speaking at Ottawa, stated explicitly that in Australia there were two schools of thought regarding the best methods to be adopted in tackling the problem. He said that one urged a further reduction in the cost of production, while the other contended we could go no further and would have to secure relief in other directions, such as an increase in world price levels. Mr. Bruce subscribed to the latter opinion. He pointed out that it was remarkable how docile the people had been in accepting the reductions of the past two years, and that it would be unwise to go further in reduction of their standards. He urged that an attempt should be made by the world economic conference, that will be held shortly, to raise price levels. We have seen the effects of the deflation policy in Australia, and in other countries, and to-day millions are out of work. Many millions have suffered wage reductions. The primary producers have been reduced to the verge of starvation because they cannot sell their products at reasonable and profitable prices. In Australia the bondholders and others having money claims on the community have made infinitesimal sacrifices compared with those made by the wage-earners and primary producers. Wage deflation has been the policy, and Mr. Bruce and others have pointed out that if further reductions are made, there must be a reduction of capital and interest charges. To my mind that should have been done in the first place. But those who have invested money in bonds and other securities find to-day that the purchasing power of their investments is considerably higher than it was originally. The wage-earners and the producers are not in that position. Having entered into commit-

ments when their purchasing power was considerably greater, people now find that they cannot meet their commitments although the capital charges against them remain as they were three, or perhaps five, years ago. There is no question but that if something is not done along the lines I suggest, the position will be still more serious. With reference to monetary reform, it must be admitted that to-day everyone seems to set himself up as a financial expert, but even those who speak with some authority have voiced a wide divergence of opinions. That applies to bankers and economists throughout the world. The more radical of them admit that the monetary system has failed and that it has broken down under stress of economic conditions, as a result of which, reform of the monetary system has become essential. A few months ago anybody advocating that was looked upon as an extreme radical, but to-day even the most conservative are urging a monetary reform policy. When the Federal Labour Government proposed to export £10,000,000 overseas to meet certain debts falling due in London, we were told that it would set up a general fear of the soundness of the note issue. But almost the first act of the Lyons Government on coming into power was to export that £10,000,000 overseas to meet obligations. Actually they were acting wisely and in the interests of Australia, but the fact remains that when the same thing was proposed by the Labour Government it was denounced by the Press and bitterly opposed by the Senate, although advised by the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank. There is very little gold remaining in Australia to-day, and the backing behind our currency notes is only about £12,000,000. Yet when the Labour Government proposed to send away our gold it was said they were undermining the very foundations of our monetary system, and that the policy was altogether unsound. Nevertheless, the selfsame policy has been pursued in large measure ever since. For instance, inflation has been consistently practised, at all events to the extent that the Commonwealth Bank has financed the deficits of the various Governments. Yet when Mr. Theodore proposed to raise £6,000,000 for the farmers, and £12,000,000 for the unemployed, the policy was denounced as being unsound. Only a few months ago Mr. Lyons put up the same proposals at the Premiers' Conference at Canberra, and they were endorsed and approved. There has been much criticism of

the gold standard, which is not acting as the basis of our currency as an international unit to-day, because it has been commandeered by America and France while the rest of the nations are starving for gold. This has upset everything, because it was the basis of our currency during the past decade or so. Recently I read in the Press opinions expressed by the secretary of the London Chamber of Commerce, Mr. A. de V. Leigh, in Ottawa on the 10th August. He said—

The idea that a nation could only expand its currency when it acquired gold, and must contract its currency when it lost gold was a threadbare fiction. The London Chamber of Commerce Monetary Committee proposed that currency should be based on all commodities as represented by eligible commercial bills, and the ratio of financial credit should be controlled by a central bank in each country. He favoured a new monetary system depriving any one country of power to destroy the world purchasing-power by taking payments for its sales in gold instead of goods and services. All exchanges should be fixed by a clearing house of the central banks of the world. "Have we an honest measure of value," asked Mr. Leigh, "when a debt contracted twelve years ago now requires three and a half times its original commodity value to discharge it, apart from the increased commodity value of the annual interest? The master measure is the measure of money, and if that is unjust or unstable it is a farce to maintain just or stable measures of weight and capacity."

Mr. North: That sounds like Douglas.

Mr. HEGNEY: It expresses clearly what I have been trying to say this evening. What that gentleman propounds is the very policy that Mr. Lang propounded in Sydney, namely, that our basis of values should be a commodity basis. Then there would not be the discrepancies in values that exist to-day. The introduction of machines into industry has supplanted large reservoirs of labour. Various classes of workers in all industries have been replaced by improved machinery. We can remember the time when shipwrights worked on wooden boats, built their ships of wood, but eventually they were displaced by the builders of steel ships. For many generations there was internecine strife between the two, but the wooden ships had to go, while the steel ships remained. Under the present economic system the worker displaced from industry is of no more concern to the owner of the industry or of the machines, who owns the means of livelihood, and so the worker has to walk the land until he can find some other employment. If he cannot get the

right to work, he has to starve. This displacement of the workers by machines is of the utmost importance to the workers. In all industries labour is being affected by improved machinery, and the time is coming when the workers will have to take international action to see that the machine, which to-day is owned by the employer, shall be owned by the community in the interests of the people. If that be not done, and if the employer continues to have no concern for the worker displaced by the machine, that worker will have no place in the sun. Yet everybody who comes into this world ought to have a place in the sun, and opportunity for a reasonable and decent existence; he ought to be able to enjoy the gifts of Nature around him, and to produce sufficient for his needs and the requirements of his family. Under existing conditions all that is denied to him. In Australia there are thousands of workers 50 or 60 years of age who have worked a lifetime in the various industries. Yet at the end of that period they own very little of this world's goods. They have reared families and in some instances they own the houses in which they live, but apart from that very few of them are endowed with this world's goods. Yet since they work in the industries to produce the real wealth of the community, in future they will have to insist that they get a more reasonable distribution of the wealth produced. I read with interest the other day a newspaper interview given by Mr. Frank P. Watson, a European buyer for Richard Allen & Co. He disembarked at Fremantle from the liner "Barrabool," and this is the report of the interview he gave—

Mr. Watson said that he had been overwhelmed during his tour of Europe by the amazing increase of mechanisation. Invention superseded invention with amazing rapidity, and the displacement of labour by machinery in Europe had outstripped the nations' ability to absorb man power.

"In England," he said, "21 per cent. of the employable people cannot be absorbed, and yet the railways are to be electrified. The change-over will give temporary work to a number of electricians and permanent work to others, but eventually 20 per cent. of the railway workers now employed will be without a job. On the underground railways in London one rarely sees a porter now. Tickets are bought from a machine, and one goes down to the platform on an automatic escalator, and buys a packet of

cigarettes or perhaps a handkerchief from an automatic contrivance. The train arrives, and the doors automatically open. On departure they all close when the driver presses a button. At one time the underground railways were alive with porters and attendants.

"Automatic kinemas are being erected in Paris. There are no ticket sellers, collectors and attendants, but only a supervisor and an operator. Upon entering you put two francs in a slot and pass through a turnstile. Each seat is outlined in light, and there are no steps. While I was in England a Lancashire cotton weaving mill with 800 looms employed 200 operatives, but a Japanese invention, an automatic loom, was being introduced by which the same size mill could be worked with 12 operatives."

That meant the displacement of 188 operatives.

Mr. Kenneally: Yet the Government policy here is to get people to work longer hours.

Mr. HEGNEY: The report continues—

"And what is the remedy?" Mr. Watson was asked.

"Frankly, I cannot conceive one," he replied. "Up to now the mechanical evolution has been so gradual that workers displaced by improved machinery could be easily absorbed, but that it is not so to-day. The machine of our own creation has now overtaken and threatens to devour us. Three generations of pressing a button or pulling a lever will create a race physically deficient and mentally degenerate compared with the fitness of the real 'hewers of wood' from which we sprang."

Those are the observations of a man who has recently visited Europe. But the point I want to make is that most of the machinery improvements are invented by workers in industry. Eventually the improved machines displace thousands of workers, who get no benefit whatever from the invention because they are put aside and have to walk the land looking for employment. Under the existing system the workers do not own the machines, but the time must come when there will have to be a better organisation of the economics of society, so that the workers doing the production work in the community shall get a reasonable share of that production. The Commissioner of Railways is applying to the Arbitration Court to have the hours of labour increased from 44 to 48 per week. That is to apply to employees of the railways, tramways and other concerns under the Commissioner's control. I consider it a retrograde step for the Government to countenance a policy of that kind. Even in the Railway Department there has been a great

improvement in the machinery used. The Midland Junction Workshops are amongst the most up-to-date in the Commonwealth. I have visited most of them and worked in a good many of them, and I say without fear of contradiction that the machine shop and the organisation of the various shops at Midland Junction are as up-to-date as any in Australia. It has been proved that the men employed in the Workshops showed a greater output for the 44-hour than for the 48-hour week. To apply for an increase of hours is rather belated. Rather than seek to increase hours, the Government should be endeavouring to reduce them even below what they are to-day. The tendency of the world should be to reduce hours of labour to 30 per week and devise means to increase the purchasing power of the people so that they will be able to buy the goods produced. To revert to the old conditions is simply attempting to retard the progress that has been made by the workers. The progress already made, however, will eventually be continued. We must either go forward or backward. Progress has been temporarily arrested, but the time is coming when the conditions of the workers will have to be improved and a substantial reduction will have to be made in the hours of labour if employment is to be found for the people. The Government should seriously reconsider that phase of their policy; it is not a sound one. The time has passed when arguments could be advanced for an increase in hours. It is patent that machinery has displaced labour, and the fact that so many workers are walking the streets in idleness should lead us to bend our energies to placing as many workers in industry as possible. Under the existing system, the men are getting good results. It was proved in the industry in which I worked that, when the hours were reduced from 48 to 44, the output increased by 3 per cent.

Mr. Piesse: Would not a reduction of hours mean a reduction of wages?

Mr. HEGNEY: No, the wages remained the same. Workers must be paid the basic wage with margins for skill.

Mr. Kenneally: Invention reduces the cost. Would the member for Katanning want it both ways?

Mr. HEGNEY: Under the reduced hours, the output at any rate did not suffer. The Government's policy is a retrograde one and I hope it will be reversed. There has been a move in Australia to secure the abolition

of the Arbitration Court. So far the Governments have withstood that cry. Not long ago I listened to the pastoralists' case in the Arbitration Court. They were applying for a suspension of awards. Chief Judge Dethridge pointed out to the advocate that the wages cost to the industry was negligible. I think it amounted to about a halfpenny per bale. Even if the men worked for no wages at all, the effect on the industry would be infinitesimal. Yet the pastoralists carry on their propaganda in order to get wages reduced to the lowest possible level.

Mr. Marshall: The cost of wages is about one-seventieth of a penny per pound of wool.

Mr. HEGNEY: Because of the economic distress prevailing, determined attempts are being made to get the hours of labour increased and to break down conditions which are only reasonable for men working in industries. It has been urged that arbitration decisions should be uniform throughout Australia. There are differences in living costs in the various States that would have to be taken into consideration, but this move is only propaganda on the part of the Employers' Federation. When the basic wage was higher in one part of Australia than in other parts, there was no agitation by the employers in the lower-paid States to have the rates increased to the higher level, but immediately the basic wage in one State is found to be higher than the Federal award, propaganda is carried on to get a levelling down. This is unfair to the workers on the basic wage and should not be tolerated by the community. Even if a uniform basic wage were adopted throughout the Commonwealth, consideration would have to be given to the system of child endowment in New South Wales. In that State wages are fixed for a man, his wife and one child, while for each additional child there is an endowment of 5s. per week. The Bruce-Page Government appointed a Commission to inquire into a system of child endowment for the Commonwealth. Mr. O'Halloran, an eminent Sydney barrister, was chairman of the Commission, who made exhaustive inquiries throughout Australia. Majority and minority reports were presented. The majority report was unfavourable to the scheme, but the minority report, signed by Mr. Curtin, Mrs. Muscio, and one other member, recommended a system of child endowment on the basis of 5s. a week. It would have involved a sum of £8,000,000 a year to finance the scheme. In this country there

are thousands of men for whom there is no child endowment. The basic wage is fixed for a man, his wife and the average number of children, and any man who has more than two children has to bear the extra encumbrance. There is not much chance of getting a child endowment scheme now, but I hope it will come so that the injustice now being done to men rearing large families will be removed. The Commonwealth Government have taken a retrograde step in proposing a reduction of old age pensions from 17s. 6d. to 15s. a week. The rate of the pension was reduced from 20s. to 17s. 6d. by a Labour Government, but had they remained in power I doubt whether they would have approved of a reduction to 15s.

Mr. Withers: They were forced by the banks to make that reduction.

Mr. HEGNEY: Yes. Fifteen shillings is altogether incommensurate with the needs of old people in this country. Many of them have worked for a lifetime producing wealth, and they are now to be made to suffer because of the financial stress. An attack has been made on old age pensioners rather than on people who should bear the burden. A number of deputations have waited on the Prime Minister, Mr. Lyons, to urge that the Federal land tax should be reduced. He stated that he was going to save money on old age pensions this year and that possibly next year relief would be given to land owners in the shape of a reduction of Federal land tax. Reference has been made to the suggestion that there should be a reduction of members of Parliament. I would agree to a reduction of the number by 30. If one-half of the Legislature were chopped off, the efficiency of Parliament would not be diminished. Queensland has only one House and I doubt whether the legislation introduced by the Moore Government suffered in the absence of a second Chamber. Yet we are told it is necessary to maintain the Upper House. This House can do all that is necessary. If a measure for that constitutional reform were introduced, I would support it.

Mr. Panton: You are an optimist.

Mr. HEGNEY: Touching matters of local interest, there is a proposal to build a bridge across the Swan river. Many years ago, when the late Mr. Robinson was a Minister, he had to fight an election, and the present Minister for Railways resigned his seat and contested the Canning seat. That

election was fought on the question of constructing bridges across the Swan. I have been informed that it was proposed during the election to build bridges at no fewer than seven places. That was many years ago, but I am pleased that the Minister for Works has at last proposed the construction of a bridge across the river. Interested road boards have conferred on the matter and they are not haggling over the question of site. They left that to the determination of the engineers and the Town Planning Commissioner. The bridge should be placed where it will give the best service to the community for the next 25 years. That will be of real service to Western Australia. It is urgently necessary that we should have a number of crossings over the Swan River. During the last 35 years no new crossings have been made although the population has increased considerably in the meantime. I will give the Minister all the support I can to further the project. The question of finance is the burning one. He has announced the method by which he proposes to finance this scheme. He was taken to task a couple of weeks ago for having announced the fact that he had a nest egg of about £22,000 in a fund. That money could be spent profitably on the construction of a bridge. If the Bill he brings down becomes law, and the money is made available, I hope the work will be put in hand immediately. There is a matter of considerable importance to the people who are served by the Beaufort-street tram service. Beyond the head of the line there is a large population, but no bus competition with the tramways. Numbers of persons have to walk a considerable distance to catch the tram at the Dundas-street terminus. It is incumbent upon the tramway department to extend the route at least another third of a mile. If they are not prepared to do that, they should allow other transport facilities to come into the business. I hope, however, the tramline will be extended, because the Beaufort-street service is very efficient and up-to-date. This line, which is in the electorate of the Minister for Railways, should be duplicated, and the system of loop lines should be abolished. Hundreds of local residents desire the service to be continued, but would like it to be extended. I hope the Minister will give serious consideration to this necessary work.

MR. PATRICK (Greenough) [9.33]: I do not intend to speak for long because I think the sooner we get down to business the better. Members opposite have offered a good deal of criticism concerning the conduct of the Government. This criticism has been rather of an evasive nature. We have heard a good deal about monetary reform. The point is, what would the Opposition do if they had a similar set of circumstances to contend with?

Mr. Panton: We will tell you that in March.

MR. PATRICK: If the Opposition have any solution of the problem to offer, it is their duty to bring it forward now.

Mr. Raphael: We have given you half a dozen but you will not accept them.

MR. PATRICK: It is not within the compass of this House to effect any reform in the monetary system. That has nothing to do with us.

Mr. Marshall: It is within the sphere of the Government to take action against it.

MR. PATRICK: We cannot revise the monetary system, but we can see that the best possible use is made of the money at our disposal. That alone is within our control. Suggestions have been made for getting assistance from the Mother country in the wiping off of our loans. It is a fair thing to ask for a reduction in interest, but not to suggest writing off our loans. If another loan is put before the British people, I am sure there will be a reduction in interest. I have no great sympathy for the arguments advanced by the member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) and others that Great Britain should give us the assistance she has given to other countries. The member for East Perth (Mr. Kennecally) thinks we should shut out the products of Great Britain because wages there are lower than they are here. That means asking much poorer taxpayers than we have here to carry part of our burden. Why should we throw everything upon the people of Great Britain? They are carrying just as big a debt per head of the population as are the people of Australia. The only difference is that the debt they are carrying of some eight thousand million pounds had been blown into the air, whereas for a great proportion of the debt represented by money we have borrowed

we have public works, railways and other assets.

Mr. Raphael: The Peel Estate is a great asset, and something to look back upon.

Mr. PATRICK: I do not know whether the hon. member is trying to make a speech. A good deal has been said about inflation. The troubles of this country are due largely to the inflation practised during the years when everything was booming.

Mr. Willecock: And now everything is down.

Mr. PATRICK: I do not want to appear to be one of those who are wise after the event. In 1924 I was foolish enough to submit myself as a candidate for Parliament. I should like to quote a few remarks I made on that occasion.

Mr. Marshall: You were defeated then.

Mr. PATRICK: And I expected to be. I said that the gravest question was the financial position; yet we were told that the corner had been turned and that everybody was prosperous. This was at the end of the present Premier's last administration. I pointed out that we had spent over £11,000,000 in the last four years from loan funds and would spend over £4,000,000 more that year. We were renewing at six per cent. loans borrowed at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Our population was not increasing relatively to our expenditure, neither was our production. Everything in the garden was not lovely. Production was certainly increasing, but the greatest increase had been in values. We had had eight good years in the wheat belt, and prices had been beyond the pre-war level, and yet we could not balance our books. It was easy with loan money to create an artificial prosperity. I did not anticipate, when the Government went out of office, that we would have another Government which would put up a world's record for a population of the size of ours. I refer to the record expenditure of borrowed money.

Mr. Panton: That is the first time we have been credited with doing anything.

Mr. PATRICK: The Labour Government put up a record for the expenditure of borrowed money, and thus created artificial prosperity. During those six years we received record prices for our produce. I need only quote the price for wool during that time, which ranged from 24.1d., 25.2d., 17.7d., 18d., 20.4d. to 17.6d., an average

of nearly 20½d. per lb. With a bountiful revenue and plenty of borrowed money we still went to the bad. And yet the Leader of the Opposition boasted that his deficit during those six years only averaged £158,000 a year. If during that period we had created a surplus fund we would not be in our present trouble. Let us take the industrial concerns of this country. Apart from two which have become classics, the Swan Brewery and the "West Australian" Newspaper Company, most of our biggest wholesale and retail concerns are losing money. One of the biggest wholesale houses in Australia is losing at the rate of £30,000 or £40,000 a year. If reserves had not been built up in good times, that concern would have been on the rocks long ago. If the Government had built up reserves in good times, we would have passed more lightly through our present trouble. Whilst the Leader of the Opposition was speaking I interjected that the price of wheat then was 3s. 10d. a bushel. The member for Geraldton and the member for Mt. Magnet seemed to query that statement. I therefore rang up the wheat pool later on, and found that on the 1st March, 1930, wheat in London was 41s. 6d. a quarter, with no exchange influence in favour of it. Only 12 months later the price was 20s. 6d. On the 1st March the price of wheat at siding was 3s. 11d. a bushel, on the 5th March it was 3s. 10d., and on the 31st March of the election year it was 3s. 11d. The Leader of the Opposition said he had made no promises. He showed that he possessed a very good knowledge of the times we were approaching, but his knowledge referred only to loan moneys. He knew it would be difficult in the future to borrow money. With all his political prescience he could not have anticipated that wheat which was worth 3s. 11d. a bushel should, a few months later, have resulted in a loss to the State of over £5,000,000. Had wheat remained at 3s. 11d. a bushel, it would have brought in an additional amount of over £5,000,000 to Western Australia. Undoubtedly during the big boom period the national income was inflated out of all proportion to the increase in population. To show that, I need only quote Customs and Excise revenue, which in 1915 was £14,880,000, and in 1919, after the war, had risen to £17,426,000, and in 1929 was £41,058,000. Other Federal taxation rose from £2,000,000

in 1915 to £15,000,000 in 1929. State taxation, of all the States, rose from £7,000,000 in 1915 to £12,000,000 in 1919, and to £32,000,000 in 1929. Compare these huge increases in taxation with the meagre increases in our population. In 1915 the population of the Commonwealth was 4,900,000; in 1919 it was 5,400,000, and in 1929 it was 6,400,000. Then take the tremendous increases in the public debt: in 1914 the total debt was £339,000,000, in 1919 it was £705,000,000, and in 1930 it was £1,117,000,000. Undoubtedly we have had a good time, but now we have to pay for it. I take it that there would inevitably have been a crash in Australia, irrespective of the present low prices, if we had continued to carry on as we were doing. It would have been impossible for Australia to borrow and pay her way even at the former high prices of her products. During the time when borrowed money was so plentiful, large armies of men were undoubtedly employed on non-productive work, such as roads. Immediately upon the collapse of the boom, those men were thrown on the labour market. There has been talk about the necessity for maintaining high wages in order to support the spending power of the people. There is a fallacy in the argument about reduced spending power. The reduced spending power represents the total income of the country, and the total income of the country is not increased by being placed in fewer hands. To show this one need only instance New South Wales, the richest State of the Commonwealth. The Lang Government kept up wages in New South Wales, with the result that the richest State in the Commonwealth, even though not paying the interest on its debt, had more unemployed than any other Australian State, and received more Commonwealth money than any other State.

Mr. Marshall: It has the biggest population of the States. Give the figures on the percentage of the population.

Mr. PATRICK: New South Wales has 2,500,000 people out of Australia's total population of 6,500,000; and New South Wales has a floating debt of £37,000,000, not much less than half the total floating debt of the whole of Australia. Within the last few months New South Wales has received £3,000,000 of money raised by the Loan Council, as compared with £820,000 received by Victoria. Over a certain period, of £154,000 distributed in weekly sustenance in Australia, New South Wales was paying out

£94,000. That is pretty conclusive evidence that spending power cannot be increased by keeping up rates of wages if the earning capacity is not there.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: But you reduce the spending power if you keep numbers of men unemployed.

Mr. PATRICK: If we are to distribute the money in fewer hands, the only means of maintaining the unemployed is to impose an unemployment tax on those who are employed. The tax must be sufficiently high to enable the proceeds to keep those who are out of employment.

Mr. Raphael: What about a bachelor tax?

Mr. PATRICK: A very good idea.

Mr. Raphael: You would be paying that.

Mr. PATRICK: Take the question of the basic wage. When the first basic wage was declared, things were booming; and Mr. President Dwyer stated that if an industry could not pay its way, all that could be done was to transfer the men engaged in it to some other industry. Applying that dictum to the farming industry, what would be the position of that industry to-day if it were compelled to pay the present basic wage? There is no more reason why men should work for nothing on farms than that they should work for nothing in, say, the base metal industries, which have all had to be closed down as unprofitable.

Mr. Raphael: Most cockies waste money when they get it.

Mr. PATRICK: This country has no more right to tell the farmer to work for nothing than to tell the miner to work for nothing.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. PATRICK: Last session we were told that the farmer was in a different position from the ordinary wages man, because the farmer, even though working for a low remuneration, was building up an asset. I do not think that can be said to-day. At present the farmer's assets are worth very little indeed.

Mr. Raphael: He spent his money on tractors and motor cars.

Mr. PATRICK: Last year we had a peculiar argument from the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) regarding the sons of farmers.

Mr. Marshall: The member for Mt. Magnet will have another peculiar argument after he reads your speech.

Mr. PATRICK: The hon. member said that the sons of farmers were prepared to work for practically no remuneration be-

cause they had something to look forward to. There is nothing great for them to look forward to nowadays. In my opinion, the only way in which a farmer can keep his sons on the farm is to pay them a reasonable wage. If the farm cannot stand that, they have no right to be on it.

Mr. Raphael: But you do not believe in paying a reasonable wage to outside workers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PATRICK: A farmer's son is just as much entitled to a reasonable wage when working on a farm as when working on a mine or anywhere else. Farming is the country's most important industry, and the farm worker should be on as good conditions as, and probably on a better wage than, any other worker. The farming industry is the most essential of all to Western Australia. Now I turn to the question of the tariff, on which the member for East Perth (Mr. Kennelly) touched. It seems that the hon. member and his Leader are slightly at variance. Last session the Leader of the Opposition stated—

If the Commonwealth Government makes it unprofitable to export Australian products, by inflicting high tariffs, it is acting in a detrimental way to every State in the Commonwealth.

The member for East Perth apparently takes an entirely different view from that of his Leader. The hon. member raised an interesting question. It appears that in this State there is an unholy alliance between the trade unions and the Chamber of Manufactures to try to maintain duties. During the election which returned Mr. Scullin as Prime Minister, the New South Wales Chamber of Manufactures were behind him all they knew, because they were aware that he would put on high duties. The New South Wales manufacturers, however, are beginning to take a tumble to themselves, because a statement published by them contains the following passage:—

We may maintain the wages and conditions of the city worker, and persist in extravagance in the public services, and make the farmer pay for it. We have been doing that for years. For every sort of machine and for every sort of service which the farmer has had to buy, he has had to pay the Australian high-standard price. For everything he has had to sell abroad, he has got the world's low-standard price. In consequence he has never made a decent wage, save when markets have been exceptionally high, and to-day probably half his class is insolvent.

That is a statement put out by the New South Wales Chamber of Manufactures. Undoubtedly the Chamber found that when the Scullin Government imposed high duties and embargoes, the manufacturers, instead of being able to dispose of their products, encountered a slump in the exporting industries of the country. When Mr. Forde, the Minister for Customs in the Scullin Government, introduced the system of embargoes, it was put forward as the Scullin Government's cure for unemployment. Mr. Forde contended that shutting-out products from abroad meant that there would be no more unemployment in Australia. We have heard a good deal about the Premiers' Plan. The Premiers' Plan is no remedy for our present discontents, primarily because the recommendations in the report put up by the experts to the Premiers were not carried out. Among the recommendations was one for a drastic reduction in the tariff. That was not adopted. There is at present a fairly high rate of exchange, which is equivalent to a protective duty. If a plan had been adopted of reducing the tariff as the exchange rose, manufacturers would have been in just as good a position, and the export industries would have been able to sell their goods at more reasonable prices. Now the manufacturing industries are also getting the full benefit of that protection. Next as to the industries of Australia having been saved by the system of embargoes. We are told that that was the result of shutting out imports. I propose to quote one or two articles on which there were no embargoes. Motor cars, for instance, could come in just as freely as before. In 1928 motor cars to the value of £10,600,000 were imported, and in 1930 the value was £1,005,000. That reduction was effected without any embargo. The reason for the reduction of imports was the cutting-off of loan moneys. In that way the spending power of the people was reduced. Then take the articles benzine and kerosene. In 1928 their importation represented £8,000,000. In 1930 the importation into Australia had fallen to £4,700,000. And there was no embargo on benzine and kerosene. Now I will take an article of which the use per head in Australia is greater than in any other country in the world. There was no embargo on the importation of tea into Australia. In 1928 the value of tea imported into Australia was £3,500,000, and in 1930 the value had fallen to £2,246,000.

Mr. Raphael: Why do you not quote some of the things Australia can produce?

Mr. PATRICK: If it is necessary, I can quote a country where there were no embargoes. The total decline in imports into Australia amounted to 51 per cent., and in New Zealand the decline was almost exactly the same, without any embargoes whatever.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: If the embargoes did not do any good, they did no harm.

Mr. PATRICK: They did a great deal of harm.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Apparently New Zealand succeeded without them.

Mr. PATRICK: The embargoes did a great deal of harm because the position is that Australia requires a certain quantity of exports abroad to pay interest on her debts. There was a small surplus of exports over the amount of that interest. What we did by putting on embargoes and higher duties was to say to the exporters, "With the little amount of money that is available, we will allow you to buy a few goods at the highest possible prices."

The Minister for Lands: The embargoes closed some markets against us.

Mr. PATRICK: There is another point. I have no objection to buying goods of Australian manufacture, but I have the greatest objection to paying three or four times their proper value.

Mr. Kenneally: You would rather give the trade to the Japs.

Mr. PATRICK: Take the position of exporting interests compared with manufacturing interests. In almost every country of the world the price of manufactured goods has fallen to almost the same extent as the diminished returns from private industries. But in Australia the difference is still more marked. Take the year 1911 with the basis at 100, and compared with returns at that time, wool to-day stands at 87, wheat at 91, and non-rural industries at 178. That will indicate what prices we have to pay. Consider the position regarding the price of wool. The value of a bale of wool to-day is about the same as that of a suit of clothes. There must be something wrong when such conditions prevail. We have been told that there have been tremendous improvements in the last few years. One of the greatest difficulties in Australia is that owing to the high prices of manufactured goods, there is no adequate consumption. Consider the position of woollen goods. Thirty years ago, I

was selling "rags," as we termed woollen goods, in a town nearly 600 miles from Perth. I think the member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) will agree that immense strides have been made in the standards of machinery since those days. Despite that fact, 30 years ago we were selling men's hosiery at almost half the price charged in Perth to-day. The system we have created in Australia has been to make the cost of the manufactured article from raw materials available within the country, so great as to make those articles almost luxury goods.

Mr. Kenneally: You have adopted a system of exporting our goods to make them of any value.

Mr. PATRICK: The explanation of the manufacturers was that the cost of the raw materials had been made so great that they were forced to increase the prices of the manufactured article. Nowadays when the prices charged for wool are so small, the manufacturers say that the cost of the raw material makes no difference. If there is any valid argument in their contention, then a sales tax on wool of 3d. or 4d. a lb. is justifiable to raise the prices payable to the producers. With regard to the policy of protection, the country districts and pastoral areas are faced with a serious problem in dealing with the rabbit pest. Yet we are told that we are required to make Australia's greatest national industries pay by using wire netting at an exorbitant cost, that must be paid for the sake of employing a few men within the Commonwealth.

Mr. Kenneally: The employment of men is a small item, in your opinion?

Mr. PATRICK: If wire netting were available at a reasonable price, and wire and galvanised tubing could be procured at a reasonable outlay, there would be much more work carried out in the country districts than there is to-day. We are told that the Government are marking time regarding maintenance work on rolling stock and buildings, which are not kept in proper condition. That is what is going on throughout the country districts. No one is doing any fencing. The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) referred to increased freight charges on wire netting and wire. Who is doing any fencing in the country to-day, if he can avoid it? The increased freight to the extent of a few shillings per ton is nothing to the pounds we have to pay owing to increased duties. On my property, much water supply work

should be carried out, and 2-inch piping is necessary. We have been patching up the old pipes with cement, and will continue to do so until prices are more reasonable.

Mr. Kenneally: You will have the coolies soon.

Mr. PATRICK: Given reasonable prices for our requirements, there would be much more work carried out in the country districts to-day.

Mr. Raphael: The Minister for Lands would sooner introduce Maltese than coolies.

Mr. PATRICK: I suggest to the member for East Perth that what I have said indicates that something is wrong in Australia. The other day an interesting little booklet was supplied to members by the Broken Hill Proprietary Co., Ltd., giving a history of their operations in Australia. From that booklet I find that the metallic content of Broken Hill iron and steel was 69.5 per cent. as against Yorkshire products, 30 per cent.; Lake Superior, 50 to 55 per cent., and Luxemburg and Alsace-Lorraine, 36 per cent. Yet although a sister dominion, Canada, pays 25 per cent. more in wages than does Australia, and has to import a lot of her raw material, she can sell steel at half the price charged in the Commonwealth. There is something entirely wrong there. The result of Australia's protectionist policy has been that one of the biggest machinery manufacturers in the Commonwealth has erected a plant in Canada because he can buy his raw material cheaper there. I can give the member for East Perth another instance. Last year I bought a harvester part which was a rough casting weighing 7 lbs., costing 24s.

Mr. Sleeman: Who was the maker?

Mr. PATRICK: The biggest machinery manufacturer in Australia, Mr. McKay. From one of the leading engineering firms in America I take the following prices for castings:—Ordinary iron casting, 5 to 15 cents; a lb., the latter price being for small and intricate work; brass and bronze castings, 30 to 60 cents; aluminium, 40 to 70 cents. Thus we have to pay in Australia for rough castings more than is charged in America for aluminium castings. There is something seriously wrong, and it is up to Opposition members—I say that because there are no finer workmen than the Australians—to discover the solution. One of the great troubles with the world to-day is the narrow nationalism that has grown

up since the war. Every country, by means of high tariffs aimed against other countries, has adopted that policy. France used to be a big importer of Australian wheat. She imports no wheat to-day, and we are told that though wheat is a cheap commodity, the people have not the money with which to buy it. Despite that, wheat in France to-day is bringing the equivalent of 7s. or 8s. a bushel, whereas it can be purchased elsewhere at 3s. a bushel. The result of that system of narrow nationalism is that the whole trade of the world is hung up and half the shipping of the world is rotting in ports. Only when trade is allowed to flow freely shall we have a solution of our problems.

Mr. Kenneally: Now we are getting at it—free trade!

Mr. PATRICK: The Premier submitted an argument the other evening with which I disagreed. The same topic was elaborated by the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith). The Premier said that Western Australia would become prosperous only when we imported more than we exported.

The Premier: I did not say anything of the sort.

Mr. PATRICK: I think so. The member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith) said that prosperity in Australia ran in cycles. Of course we know that every debtor country should have an excess of exports over imports, while every creditor country should have an excess of imports over exports, because then revenue is flowing in from all sources. One of the great troubles of the world to-day is that the United States of America, a creditor country, should have a tremendous excess of imports, but is actually trying to block those imports. The farming industry in Western Australia is in a deplorable condition, and probably it will be necessary to have combined Federal and State legislation to protect the farmers' interests. Moreover, interest rates will have to come down. I do not think the banks have moved as rapidly in that direction as they should have done. When the boom was on, the banks were just as extravagant as were the Governments, and it was then no uncommon sight to see bank managers trying to thrust money on to the farmers. Now, when the prices of all primary products are down, the banks should be prepared to

take a substantial cut in their interest. Probably it will be necessary also to have combined Federal and State legislation to protect the assets of the farmer. A board should be appointed to write down the farmers' debts and fund the balance over a period. Such a compromise would save the farmers' life work, and would assist his creditors for they would get more under that system than by forcing him into the Bankruptcy Court.

Mr. Raphael: What about the workers? Have you no thought for them?

Mr. PATRICK: There can be no lasting relief for the workers until our primary industries are put on a sound foundation. We should have mortgage banks instead of the present overdraft system, for overdrafts can be called up at a moment's notice, whereas the farmer, if he were dealing with a mortgage bank, would know exactly where he stood. In the past we have attacked our problems from the wrong end. I do not know whether members opposite have ever attempted to beat out a bush fire. Generally we see a new chum rush in and try to beat out a fire at the nearest point. The only successful way is to begin at the right end, at the source of the fire. That is what we have to do in regard to our problems. We must put the primary industries on a sound basis first, after which the secondary industries will be found to be in a much sounder condition than they are to-day. To show that the farmers' problems are not confined to Australia, I wish to read what was said by a leading British farmer, a man who is not only a competent farmer, but is gifted with native shrewdness, as will be surmised from his name, which is McDougall. In a recent article, Mr. McDougall said—

We ask for a living wage. Have the townspeople ever thought, when they are eating their food, of the misery which is entailed by selling it at less than the cost of production. Just think, every time you eat, of the poor fellows that produced your food, the underpaid worker, and the harassed farmer racked with anxiety, and facing debts which threaten to engulf him. At the moment you can take advantage of our difficulties and squeeze us; but you cannot go on for ever, getting good food produced on those terms.

So the position there is almost exactly the same as ours. A question of unusual interest touched upon in the Governor's Speech is that of bulk handling. Back

in 1908 I wrote a paper on this question for what was then known as the Northern Development League, with headquarters in Geraldton. That paper was published in the "Western Mail," but I have never seen it since. I mention this, for it shows I was taking an interest in the question even then. I am trying to get hold of that paper, for I am sure I would find it interesting. At this juncture I have but two things to say about bulk handling. One is that it should be a State-wide scheme applying to Albany, Bunbury and Geraldton as well as to Fremantle, and the other is that it should be controlled by the farmers, who are the men paying for it. I should like to give the Government a point as to the collection of taxation, a method by which they might raise a little more money without increasing the present tax. It is generally believed that taxation has been evaded. Two or three years ago I read an article by Mr. Thomas Bath, once a member of this House, pointing out that thousands of men in this country, especially single men, earning more than the exemption of £100, were evading the payment of income tax. In South Australia the income tax is collected through the employers by means of stamps. When in Adelaide, I walked into a stationer's shop and purchased for a penny one of the regulation income tax stamp books. The employer has to deduct the amount paid, which has to be endorsed at the end of the year by the Taxation Department. That is a very cheap method of collecting the taxation.

Mr. Kenneally: Like the hospital tax.

Mr. PATRICK: Yes, except that in South Australia the income tax imposed is 1s. in the pound, and the exemption is only £100. The Government of South Australia propose to take the administration of income taxation entirely away from the Taxation Department and do it through the Treasury. Like the member for Mt. Hawthorn (Mr. Millington), I am disappointed at the vague reference in the Speech to elections. I should like to have seen something more definite. The last redistribution of seats was a very unfair one, and I was surprised at the member for Hannans (Hon. S. W. Munsie) saying the other night that there would be a tremendous row if any attempt were made to touch the goldfields representation. In an earlier Redistribution of Seats Bill introduced by the present Premier it was proposed to put the population of the Golden Mile on the same quota as that in the metropolitan area, be-

cause it was a congested population living in a small area. I do not think anyone can advance a reasonable argument why the quota on the Golden Mile should be 2,000 against a quota of over 4,000 in the farming districts. The quota in the four electorates on the Golden Mile, which a man could walk around in the course of a few hours, should be as great as that in the farming districts, some of which extend 200 or 300 miles in length.

Mr. Raphael: The mentality of the gold-fields people is so much higher; that is the reason.

Mr. PATRICK: I was hoping that the Government would have given some indication of introducing an amendment. In any event, whether there is to be a redistribution or not, there should be a readjustment of the present boundaries.

Mr. Withers: I agree with you there.

Mr. PATRICK: The member for Leederville should also agree. A suggestion has been made that the number of members should be reduced. I am one of those who believe that the number of members in this House should be reduced, because the States now have largely reduced responsibilities compared with what they had a few years ago. That is due to the Commonwealth Government having taken over the whole of our financial responsibilities.

Mr. Raphael: Are you advocating unification now?

Mr. PATRICK: I consider that an amendment of the Electoral Act is desirable to provide for compulsory voting.

Mr. Raphael: Hear, hear!

Mr. PATRICK: I am sure no member will disagree with that.

Mr. Raphael: It would save a lot of money at election time.

Mr. PATRICK: Regarding secession, which seems to interest the member for Victoria Park, considering the excellent arguments advanced by the Opposition in favour of secession, I think it would be a good idea to put the question to the people. I disagree with the member for Nelson in that I believe the question should be put to the people at the next election. Regarding education, I am pleased that the Government have adopted the principle of spending most of the money available in providing more facilities for schools in the country districts. If there is congestion in a city school, other buildings are available in which to house the children,

but there are country districts where the building erected by the Government represents the only facilities available. Last session the member for Fremantle desired to discuss the University. I consider that this State cannot afford a free University.

Miss Holman: When the people are least able to pay, make them pay more.

Mr. PATRICK: I believe ours is the only University in the British Dominions that is free.

Mr. Sleeman: That is not the point I wished to deal with.

Mr. PATRICK: No. In the sister State of South Australia, £28,000 is collected annually in University fees, and if the people in a State in such poor circumstances as South Australia has been can afford to pay fees for University tuition, the people in this State could do so.

Mr. Panton: There are more facilities in South Australia.

Mr. PATRICK: As I have pointed out previously, the University is not free for country people. People living in the metropolitan area can send their children to the University more easily than can people in the country, and it would be much better if certain fees were charged and the proceeds devoted to providing more scholarships to enable additional country children to attend the University. The whole of the railway policy requires to be reviewed. The system is burdened with too many dead lines.

Mr. Raphael: They are nearly all that.

Mr. PATRICK: South Australia has a Transport Board, part of whose duty is to inquire into railway lines that are not paying. The board can submit a recommendation to close such lines provided sufficient other transport is available at reasonable rates. Undoubtedly many railways in this State should never have been built. On the Port Hedland-Marble Bar line, for instance, a train is run, I think, once a week. Then there is the railway from Mt. Magnet to Sandstone which runs once a fortnight. In my opinion it would pay the Government to close those lines and put on motor transport. This form of transport has grown up since the railways were built and the people could be given a far more efficient service with motors and it could be run without incurring the great loss involved at present.

Mr. Marshall: I venture to say that many of your friends, the woolgrowers, would not agree with that.

Mr. PATRICK: I believe that all the wool grown could be carried more cheaply and that a more frequent service could be provided by motor transport than by rail service. The member for Mt. Magnet seemed a little annoyed because the freight on wire and wire netting had been slightly increased, but he made no mention of the big reduction in the freight of wool, which is now one of the few lines on which the freight is lower than in 1914. I do not know whether it is that our railways are more economically run, but I think it is because they are carrying a much lower capital expenditure than in South Australia that freights here are lower. One wise thing done before responsible Government was to empower the Government to resume land for railway purposes without paying for it. I should like to compare the freights on fencing wire and wire netting with those charged in South Australia:—

Miles—		...	100.	150.	200.	250.	300.	400.
			s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Western	Aus-	19	0	24	1	29	3	44
tralia								
South	Aus-	28	1	35	7	43	5	72
tralia								

Consequently we have something in the matter of railway freights on which to congratulate ourselves. One freight that I should like to see substantially reduced is that on stock. The present prices for stock are very low.

The Minister for Agriculture: Our freights are the lowest in Australia.

Mr. PATRICK: Long distance freights, to quote my own district, last year cost 4s. per head, including commission, to Midland Junction and the stock brought 6s., 7s., or 8s. per head.

Mr. Marshall: Your district is only a suburb of Perth compared with mine.

Mr. PATRICK: The member for Geraldton mentioned the stretch of territory lying north of that town. I feel sure he is interested in the question because a good deal of money is being spent on the port he represents, and naturally he desires to see a considerable increase of traffic to merit that expenditure. The previous Government made a big mistake when they neglected to open up to the railway system these northern lands. It is many years since any railway was built in the North. Some of the country is good agricultural land and lies within 100 miles of a port. Whilst we had this country within 100 miles of Geraldton,

the Government were considering the wild-cat 3,500 farms scheme, and were putting men out 60 miles from a railway. I am glad that the Railway Advisory Board have recently visited the district, and have put in a satisfactory report. There is also the question of spur lines attached to the Midland Railway. The Government should not adopt a dog-in-the-manger policy. If they are not prepared to buy out the Midland Railway Company they should allow it to develop its own territory by means of spur lines. It is the only railway in Australia that at present is paying its way. I agree we should have a uniform railway system, in that it should either be an all Government monopoly or all private enterprise. If, however, the Government are not prepared to take over the line at a reasonable price, they should allow the company to develop its own territory in the way suggested.

Mr. Marshall: Can you get it from Mr. Poynton at a reasonable price?

Mr. PATRICK: The Government should take into consideration the importance of making investigations into the supply of a more economical fuel for farm tractors. It is no use financial institutions condemning tractors and saying that the farmers must go back to horses. There are several thousands of tractors in the State, representing the investment of millions of money.

Mr. Raphael: All wasted.

Mr. PATRICK: It is ridiculous that they should be allowed to lie idle, and that farmers should be compelled to use horses when there are not sufficient horses for the work that requires to be done.

Mr. Raphael: Do you suggest the Government should buy the kerosene for them?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has already made one speech.

Mr. PATRICK: If the hon. member will listen patiently, I shall be able to correct his ignorance. The South Australian Government have appointed a permanent committee of engineers to investigate all gas producer plants used on tractors, and to report upon them for the benefit of farmers. We see there what adversity will do, and what improvements have been effected to tractors. It is also significant that the improvements in the way of gas producer plants have been made by farmers themselves. In South Australia a farmer named Slattery has effected several improvements, and his patent is be-

ing sold by one of the leading agricultural firms. In this State there is a farmer in the Wongan Hills district, a Mr. Herbert, who has also turned out a satisfactory plant. Mr. Herbert has been able to save £8 per week per tractor in his fuel costs. He ran two tractors all last season. He has now purchased a new one and has equipped that with his gas producer plant. He and his brother came from South Australia a few years ago. They were farming on a big scale. When prices fell they found that tractors did not pay, and they went back to horses. They then found they could not cover the same area with horses as they could with tractors, and they reverted to machinery. One of the brothers was able to put in most of his time working on the mechanical side of tractors, and ultimately he was successful in evolving this gas producer plant. Mr. Slattery of South Australia says that this season he has seeded 1,600 acres with combines at an expenditure of £8 in fuel. The member for Victoria Park will see that if we can cut out the importation of various kinds of fuel, and utilise labour in preparing the charcoal for our own fuel, to burn in gas producer plants, we shall be doing a fine thing for the country. I hope the Government will investigate the different local inventions, and issue reports concerning their effect and importance. I wish to say a few words about the matter of diversifying our system of farming. Some farmers in England say that they are not very much concerned with wheat as a crop. In England, out of every £100 the housewife spends on food, she spends only £11 on cereals of every kind, bread, cakes, biscuits, porridge, etc., and £62 on livestock products, meat, butter, eggs and milk, etc. There is room for big development of our livestock products in the districts north of Perth; that is, in the production of fat lambs, in dairying, etc. This development would be more economical north of Perth than in the South-West. It would be far better to have dairying developed and fat lambs raised in the northern part of the State, and to allow dairying to develop gradually in the South-West, and the heavy timber to develop itself. At Orreroo, in South Australia, a dry part of the State, tremendous stacks of cream cans can be seen on the railway stations, and there is a fine butter factory there. More butter is turned out in the ordinary wheat

districts of Victoria than in the rich dairying districts of Gippsland.

The Minister for Lands: Only during the last few years.

Mr. PATRICK: It has been going on for many years. The present system will get us nowhere. I remember once in my town a year or two ago attending a meeting. A farmer came with his horse and sulky and put the horse into the yard. After the meeting, he went out to see a man about a dog. On his return he jumped into the sulky and whipped up his horse. I asked him what the matter was, and he said the blanky horse would not go. He had actually forgotten to take the halter off the animal's neck. He was belting the horse, but got nowhere. The present system will get us nowhere, until we put our primary industries on a solid foundation, and get back to sane and sound finance. We have to stop spending loan money on roads and bridges, etc., and must spend it only on reproductive works. Any expenditure on roads, bridges, schools, etc., should come strictly out of revenue. The farmer is the most essential individual in the community. He has a right to demand at least the cost of production, plus a profit on his work. If we do not put our export industries on a favourable basis, nothing can succeed, whereas if we do, all else will follow. I am not so pessimistic as others about the future of this country. In 1914 we had no crop at all, but managed to scrape along. It is better to have a large crop selling at a small price, than to have a very small crop selling at a high price. Even to-day wheat prices rule 30 per cent. higher than a year ago. The price of wool seems to be advancing; and I have no doubt that the movement will continue, and that the price of wool will revert, though perhaps not to as high a level as in boom times, still to a reasonable level. I believe that this State will recover much more rapidly than the other States of the Commonwealth, because our land values are on a much lower scale than land values elsewhere.

Mr. Marshall: Land values are one of the great troubles.

Mr. PATRICK: A leading merchant of South Australia told me that while the boom was on, wheat country on the west coast of South Australia sold as high as £29 per acre. That land produces no more than country in Western Australia. Though our land values may have gone a little too high, undoubtedly

they are on a low plane as compared with land values in the Eastern States. That is the reason why Western Australia will recover a great deal sooner. But what we have to consider is that the world, after all, is a very small place, and that we have to drop the narrow nationalism which has spread so much since the war. In conclusion I will quote a statement made by Signor Mussolini. No one has indulged more in that narrow nationalism than Signor Mussolini, who began by declaring that Italy had to grow all its own wheat—in which Italy has not succeeded. The statement I wish to quote is—

A solution leading to a resumption of economic and financial activity must be found. Such a solution can only emerge from a very broad conception which recognises the interdependence of States, though their economic systems may be different.

On motion by Mr. Wansbrough, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.43 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 6th September, 1932.

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

QUESTION—COLLIE COAL.

Supplies, Prices, and Delayed Award.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Which mines at Collie are supplying coal (a) to the railways, (b) to the power house? 2, What was the quantity supplied by each mine per week, or fortnight, and the price per ton paid to each mine by the railways and by the power house? 3, On what date was Mr. Howe appointed to arbitrate upon the disagreement

between the Commissioner of Railways and the coal mining companies as to prices? 4, Has Mr. Howe yet given his decision? 5, What is the reason for such a prolonged delay?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1 (a) and (b), Co-operative, Proprietary, Cardiff, Stockton, and Griffin. 2, For week ended 27th August, 1932—Railways: Co-operative, 991 tons; Proprietary, 1,732 tons; Cardiff, 559 tons; Stockton, 951 tons; Griffin, 402 tons. Tramways: Co-operative, Proprietary, Cardiff, Stockton, 1,829 tons; Griffin, 204 tons. The prices paid, which are tentative only, all being subject to adjustment by arbitrator. were—Railways: Co-operative, 16s. 6d. per ton; Proprietary, 15s. 10d. per ton; Cardiff, 14s. 11d. per ton; Stockton, 15s. 4d. per ton; Griffin, 13s. 6d. per ton. Tramways: Co-operative, Proprietary, Cardiff, Stockton, 10s. per ton; Griffin, 9s. 9d. per ton. 3, 10th November, 1931. 4, No, but an interim decision was given on 12th November, 1931. 5, The hearing of evidence is not yet completed, and evidence of a more comprehensive nature than was expected is now being given.

QUESTION—CROWN RESIDENTIAL LOTS.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Chief Secretary: 1, How many Crown residential lots were found to be illegally occupied by residents of Meekatharra, Wiluna, Gwalia, and Leonora, respectively, for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1932? 2, Since action has been taken by the Lands Department to lease these lots and collect annual rents, how many leases have been applied for in each respective district?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Fourteen at Meekatharra; 56 at Leonora (Gwalia). The Lands Department has no information in respect of Wiluna. 2, Nine at Meekatharra; 19 at Leonora (Gwalia).

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the 18th August.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [4.40]: I take this opportunity sincerely to congratulate you, Mr. President, upon having been re-elected to the important