

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 9th September, 1936.

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

CHAIRMEN (TEMPORARY) OF COMMITTEES.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with Standing Order 31a, I nominate during this session a panel of the following members who shall act as temporary Chairmen of Committees whenever requested by the President or the Chairman of Committees:—Hon. J. Nicholson, Hon. V. Hamersley, and Hon. G. Fraser.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. T. MOORE (Central) [4.36]: It is not my intention to speak at length on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply. I shall endeavour to confine my remarks to the portion of the State I represent—the Central Province—and point out how the programme of the Government is likely to affect it. I congratulate the Government upon the showing they have made during the past three years. Every member who has spoken has given the Government credit for substantial achievements. In no session of Parliament since I have occupied a seat in the House have I heard less carping criticism than on this occasion; in fact, it has been practically absent from the debate.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I have not spoken yet.

Hon. T. MOORE: I am sure the hon. member will be no exception, because the Government are certainly entitled to commendation for their work. They have experienced strenuous times, but every Minister has stuck to his duty well, and the Government have made a good showing. I know that we are not out of the wood yet; the Government have still a strenuous time ahead. Everybody realises that. Last year

we had a surplus, the first for many years, and quite a lot of people considered that on that account we were out of the wood. It should be remembered that in the past we have carried on to a great extent with the aid of loan money, and there must come a time when supplies of loan money will cease. The amount we have to find per head of population is growing, and growing rather alarmingly. If, by the expenditure of loan money, plus the expenditure of the meagre revenue available, we were building up a population in this State capable of carrying the extra burden imposed by borrowing, we would be getting somewhere, but unfortunately that is not so. During the past year overseas arrivals in excess of departures were roughly 1,000, while the natural increase of population was only a little over 4,000. In this great country there is much room for additional population, and from a defence point of view we are assured that population is necessary in order to hold the country. Viewed in this light, we are not advancing as we should be. In fact, the slow progress being made is rather alarming. I am one of those who maintain that we are borrowing in a hand-to-mouth fashion and undertaking only very small projects that get us nowhere, and that it would be much better if we took a long view and, by the expenditure of a larger sum per annum, secured something substantial for the expenditure. There would then not be the tinkering that is going on to-day. I have had occasion to use that word before. We are not going to get anywhere by undertaking only little things. This is a big country and we should ensure that we obtain for our expenditure something that will prove tangible as the years go by. From the point of view of populating this country, we are not doing as well as we might. We hear of the grave turmoil that exists in the world, and on every hand nations are re-arming. I maintain that in order to build up the defences of Australia we would be adopting a wise policy if we expended a certain amount of money to attract population. That would be money well spent. If trouble arose, the money would certainly be found for defence purposes. It is quite easy to obtain money for war purposes, but that is the wrong way to tackle the problem. We would be in a much better position from a financial point of view if we spent money more liberally to secure a population capable of defending Australia, rather than waiting until trouble

came and then finding ourselves with only a meagre population.

Hon. G. Fraser: You are not suggesting a resumption of immigration, are you?

Hon. T. MOORE: No. This course has been suggested by certain leaders. We should make it possible for people to secure employment in this country. I am not suggesting that we should resort to assisted immigration. By no means! We know what a calamitous proposition it proved in the past. I believe that it would be possible in this State to carry out great developmental schemes if only we thought in a bigger way. We think along lines that are altogether too small.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Can you suggest something?

Hon. T. MOORE: Yes. One of the essentials lacking in the country is water supplies, which should be provided wherever it is possible to settle population. At times I have made requests to the department for water supplies, the lack of which has presented a problem, particularly in the last couple of years. The people in certain areas are carrying on a precarious existence because they have not the funds to enable them to construct dams or sink wells necessary to conduct their farming operations. The consequence is that whenever a bad season occurs, those people are caught. Mr. Holmes has been in a position to construct very large dams, and he knows the value of them. If it were possible to provide sufficient water supplies to meet requirements in all seasons, many of the country residents would be getting somewhere. When I ask the department for water supplies, the reply given is, "Yes, we believe that they are necessary, but the Government cannot do everything." I admit that the Government cannot do everything. Still, it is possible to get money for roads, and water supplies are required more than are roads.

Hon. L. Craig: That is a Federal matter.

Hon. T. MOORE: I am speaking of the way we spend the money that is available to the Government. Though the money for roads is derived from the petrol tax, I suggest that steps should be taken to earmark a certain amount of it for expenditure on country water supplies. This could be worked through the Federal Government. There is now a case where a matter of £1,000 is to be spent in a district on roads, but what the people there want much more

than roads is a water supply. The proposal, therefore, is altogether wrong. Money for building roads is available, because it comes out of the petrol tax; but, after all, the foundation of a country is its people. The people here concerned need water supplies. Therefore any money expended wisely in the provision of water supplies is money spent very well indeed. Western Australia is a country which lends itself to a great deal of expenditure in that respect. With the present Government I have no quarrel in the matter: they have spent far more on water supplies than have other Governments. However, even the present Government should go further still. I would at all times wish to see Agricultural Bank farming properties, at all events, equipped by the Government with water supplies. Then we would be getting somewhere. Many of the abandoned holdings have been abandoned because of insufficiency of water supplies. No man can carry on a wheat farm successfully without stock. Hence permanent water supplies are essential. I want now to deal briefly with farming conditions in the province I represent. Unfortunately, calamity exists among the farmers there, especially in the Mullewa district, which embraces a huge area, because there has been only 4in. of rain during the growing period. To hon. members who know how much rain is required for growing wheat, I need say no more. Undoubtedly there is a very hard time indeed ahead of the unfortunate settlers to whom I refer, who have done their very best. Those settlers are some of the finest in the country. They have farmed on good lines, and over a period of favourable years have had good crops; but they have no reserves. Here is a calamity year, and the Government will have to assist those unfortunate men. I am sure the Government will do what they can. The farmers in that area are bound to need assistance. Side by side with farming, there are the pastoral areas. What has happened in the pastoral areas is not generally known, because the pastoralist is of the non-complaining sort. Those pastoralists went out 40 years ago and built up stations, and did good work. It has been truthfully said many times that, after all, for years we have been riding on the sheep's back, but let us not forget that to-day we have not many sheep on whose backs to ride. That is

the unfortunate position of the pastoralist. Assuredly the Government have assisted him by reduced railway freights; but I would go further and take a long view, saying that those pastoralists who have been transporting feed for their starving sheep—and we all know what sheep mean to the country—transporting it from, say, the Northam district, have a right to expect that feed to be transported for them free of charge by the Government. The amount of stock on those stations now is small, and the herds will take years and years to build up again. Moreover, the pastoral country itself will take a long time to recover if the stock now on it is lost. In many cases the stock are of excellent quality—merino flocks which have taken years to build up. Having gone a long way to assist the pastoralists, the Government should go further. Unquestionably they should defer land tax in those cases, and I believe they will do so. The mining industry is the one bright spot in the province I represent. As everyone knows, on all hands in the back country to-day there is a feverish haste to do things. Mining has provided a good deal of employment, which is an excellent thing for the whole State. There are big mining towns like Wiluna, and what promises to be a second Wiluna, Big Bell. There are also Youanmi and Triton and other mining centres which have been of great assistance to Western Australia during the past two or three years, and will continue to afford even greater assistance. However, it is unfortunate that while the mining companies are doing well, not much provision is being made for the men who will be maimed in the industry. Knowing the mines as I do, I declare that in spite of all that has been said concerning the good ventilation of to-day, men who go into the mines shorten their lives. Ten or 15 years hence we shall have the same proportion of young fellows coming out and needing to be looked after. I hope, therefore, that the mining companies will soon be sufficiently strong on their feet to allow of something to be taken from their profits to provide for the inevitable industrial victims in the years to come. Tragedies, indeed, are occurring daily; we constantly read in the newspapers of mining fatalities. Many of those fatalities are the result of too much hurry. Piecework obtains in the

industry, and men on piecework do not look after themselves in the direction of safety first. There is too much speeding up. Certainly foremen and shift bosses are needed in the mines to look after the safety of the men. That should be part of their duty. If we instil that view into the people running the mines, we shall certainly avoid some of the fatalities. The mining industry, I repeat, is the one bright spot in the Central Province. Now as regards the port of Geraldton. It was pointed out here yesterday by one of my colleagues that the port will be hard hit by the installation of bulk handling. Bulk handling will have to be introduced for the farmers, being to their advantage; but the State will have to look after the men displaced. In this country there is, unfortunately, a good deal of unemployment to-day. Undoubtedly the position is not as bad as it was, but there is too much unemployment in a State where so much remains to be done. There is plenty of work to be done that would be advantageous for the country, taking the long view; but unfortunately too many men are on short time or altogether idle. I hope something will be done for the men who for five or six years have been on the dole.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Advertise to-morrow for men to work on farms and see how many you will get.

Hon. T. MOORE: Unfortunately men who follow a particular line of work will not suit on the farms. I know the class of men offering for farm work. As an employer of men on a farm myself, I know that only certain men are used to farming work. That is the unfortunate feature. If those men came to Mr. Holmes, he would find that they were not fitted for the positions offering. If a man does the right thing, he will only offer himself for work he knows he can do.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: A lot of them can do nothing.

Hon. T. MOORE: I do not follow the hon. member in that regard. I know that thousands of men working in the country for years have battled hard trying to keep up two homes—one for themselves, and one for their families in the metropolitan area. For such men the time has been calamitous, and I hope it will not continue. The men of to-day are as good as ever men were, and perhaps better. If the men of to-day are

given any work they can do, they will do it. I happen to know about Government sustenance work in the direction of regrading which has been done in the Central Province. With sustenance men the Government engineers have done the work more cheaply than they had estimated. Thus it is plain that men working for the Government, despite their working only short time, are giving the State a very fair deal indeed. I hope something will be done to get those men full-time employment. Many of them are married men, and the position of a married man who is just getting sufficient to keep himself in employment is most unfortunate when he has to try to keep up two homes. A sad picture could be painted from that aspect. It is always a question of money; but as I have said before, if ever trouble starts, we very soon find that money is made available for destruction of life and property. On the other hand, when it comes to building up a country and building up a population—because population, after all, is what we need, as is evident from the fact that we encourage married men—we seem to be hamstrung. It is a rule of banks in this State. The present Government, together with other State Governments, go to the Loan Council and discuss where they are to get money. We all know that the banks decide how much money is to be allotted to each individual Government. I think every hon. member will agree with that statement. What we have to-day is the dictation of the banks.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Not dictation. It is a matter of measurement. It is a question of what is available, and that is not dictation.

Hon. T. MOORE: Will my hon. friend tell me where money will come from when another war breaks out? Has he ever known of a shortage of money in that emergency? As regards the question of what is available, the real question is as to the amount available for the given purpose.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It cannot all be done at one fell swoop.

Hon. T. MOORE: Much the better course would be to build up the country to-day. Let us not wait for the one fell swoop which will come along by and bye when we have built up our finances. So far as indebtedness is concerned, we have built up our finances in a very few years. Now I wish to deal with rehabilitation of farmers. The working of the Rural Relief Act passed last

session has not been so advantageous to the farmers as was expected. I have had brought under my notice individual cases of farmers under the Associated Banks. The Agricultural Bank are writing down to a great extent, but farmers under the Associated Banks are not obtaining the relief to which they are entitled. Unsecured creditors are certainly being got rid of, but that only makes the position better for the bank owning the farm. Such is the unfortunate manner in which I find the Rural Relief Act working in the Central Province. I had hoped that something better would come out of that Act. I had hoped that the Associated Banks also would assist by writing down, on the principle of equality of sacrifice. But they have not done so. It has been said here before, and I repeat it, that the people on the farms are just at the end of their tether as regards machinery and horses. Their houses, which were shacks years ago, are getting more dilapidated each year. For years they have been living in shacks in which, in those very dry and arid areas, no one should wish to see children reared. Surely something could be done in the way of providing these people with better housing accommodation. Certainly money will have to be found for the purchase of implements and horses to enable farming to be carried on. Otherwise a number of farmers will be forced to give up wheat-growing. I have touched only briefly on these various points. The Address-in-reply gives us a chance to hear what is happening in various parts of the country, and the matters I have mentioned are what I find happening in that portion of the State I represent, the Central Province. The outlook to-day, except in regard to mining, is by no means bright. The pastoral and farming industries are certainly not in as good a position as one would wish, and I hope that the Government will be able to assist the unfortunate people who are in need of assistance. I support the motion.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [5.3]: I desire to offer a few remarks on the Address-in-reply. I find that there is an opinion that the Address-in-reply is more or less a useless institution. Personally, I do not think so. I think it is one of the most useful institutions in Parliament, if hon. members would but take advantage

of it. Like the last speaker, I think it gives an opportunity to members of bringing before the country at large the conditions existing in its various parts, and affords them an opportunity of ventilating such grievances as need ventilation, of stressing the needs of the country, and especially of indicating the way in which the country has developed with the passing of the years. We have seen some big changes so far as the Government are concerned. The new Government were elected in February, and we find that the existing Cabinet contains no fewer than four new Ministers. I expect that as a result of the changed personnel we may be prepared to see a more aggressive Government policy than in the past. Reference has been made to the changes in the personnel of this House. We have lost two members and gained two others. I regret to have lost a very helpful colleague in Mr. R. G. Moore. I hope his successor will ably fill his place. I feel sure that the work Mr. Moore did while he was here will be appreciated for many years to come. There is also a new King on the Throne. We think with regret of the passing of the late King George, and remember the very many sterling qualities which endeared him to his people throughout the Empire. The new King is a young man judging from whose activities in the past we can be sure will be vitally concerned with the welfare of his people and the prosperity of the Empire, as his father was before him. When speaking on the Supply Bill I mentioned the financial trend, and speaking now on the Address-in-reply, I want to make a further reference to that matter, because there are figures now available which were not then available, and which I think are significant. I want to deal with certain figures having relation to the per capita production of the State. As I pointed out previously, there has been an alteration in the figures compiled by the statistician dealing with production. The revised tables of production show the net production in various industries, instead of as formerly, the gross production, and some startling changes are noticeable. There has been a very material fall in the production per head estimated on the net basis as compared with the old basis. For instance, in the latest Statistical Year Book we find the pro-

duction is given for 1926, and 1931 to 1935. I have taken these figures and compared them with the population figures. Working on that basis we find that the production per head since 1926 was as follows:—

Year.	Pro- duction. £
1926	64.05
1931	32.07
1932	37.8
1933	39.55
1934	46.1
1935	45.5

Although the figures have been increasing since the depression, they are still a long way short of the figures of 1926. We find—and this is rather disconcerting—that there is a fall in the production figure for 1935 compared with 1934. There are no figures available for 1936 so far. The figures dealing with the public debt have been steadily increasing. They are as follows:—

Public Debt.

	Public debt per head.	Interest and Sinking Fund charges.
	£	£
1926	155.7	8.56
1931	174.1	8.34
1932	180.2	8.03
1933	187.2	7.95
1934	193.4	8.01
1935	197.6	7.92
1936	199.5	7.91

That is, there is practically £200 per head of public debt, and the increase in ten years has been from £155.7 to £199.5. These are figures that everyone should regard very seriously. When we realise that every individual, man, woman and child, in Western Australia carries a State debt of £199 5s., it should give us cause for serious reflection. The figures with regard to interest and sinking fund charges, as I pointed out on the Supply Bill, have been affected more favourably owing to the reduction made in the rate of interest paid on our debt; and particularly because we were paying such a small rate of interest on our Treasury Bills, the charge per head for interest and sinking fund has steadily diminished. Hon. members may have noticed in the figures of the Budget which was delivered by the Deputy Premier last evening that in connection with the interest and sinking fund charges it was stated that there would be a considerable increase on account of the loans to be raised during the coming year; so that any

decrease in the burden per head, unless we have a tremendous addition to our population, looks like being out of the question, and from now on we may expect a steady increase in interest and sinking fund charges, unless, as I have said, there is an increase in the population. This question I hope to be able to refer to on another occasion when we shall have before us a Bill dealing with one aspect of an increased wealth production, if we are so fortunate as to obtain it. There is another aspect in respect of these figures which so far has not been discussed; that is, the Savings Bank accounts. Some rather interesting figures can be disclosed in this regard. For example in 1926 no fewer than three out of four persons possessed accounts at the Savings Bank, the total being 75.8 per cent. In 1931 this figure had increased to 85.6 per cent. Of course I realise that quite a number of people would have more than one account, but the fact remains that in 1931 just about when the depression was starting the number of accounts was 85.6 per cent. The figures since 1926 are as follow:—

Savings Bank Accounts.

Year.	% No accounts to population.	Deposits per head.	Deposits per account.
1926	75.8	23.2	30.6
1931	85.6	25.1	29.2
1932	47.4	23.5	49.6
1933	44.07	22.9	51.9
1934	43.5	23.5	53.9
1935	44.1	24.5	55.3
1936	45.4	25.1	55.1

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Is that a 50 per cent. drop in those few years?

Hon. H. SEDDON: A drop in the number of accounts. There is a fall from 85.6 in 1931 to 45 per cent. in 1936.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Are you sure of that?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Would the drop be accounted for by the Commonwealth Bank taking over our Savings Bank? There must be some reason for the drop.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I ascribe it to the depression. A number of people carried Savings Bank accounts not only for themselves, but for their children as well, and they actually had to close those accounts because of the difficult conditions through which they were passing.

Hon. T. Moore: Thrifty people too.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is the point I am trying to emphasise—the fact that the thrift of the community has suffered severely as a result of the depression.

I have taken out the figures showing the deposits per head, that is to say, the average amount in the accounts. These are the figures showing the number of accounts in proportion to the population, and the amount per account per capita. When we come to the figures showing the deposits per account we find rather a different state of affairs. It will be seen that the accounts which survived have shown a considerable increase over 1931, and are very much larger than the deposits reckoned on a per capita basis.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Many thousands of pounds were stowed away in the Savings Bank because there was no profitable investment for the money.

Hon. H. SEDDON: And many thousands of pounds were placed on fixed deposit with the ordinary banks, because people could not get a satisfactory return for the money outside. The figures indicate that a serious blow has been struck at the thrifty in the population on account of the depression. There has been a considerable decrease in the number of accounts compared with the population. That the accounts which have survived are the stronger accounts indicates that the depression is working very adversely, in so far as we are getting a separation, on the one hand, of people who are practically up against it, and those people whose accounts have survived and are evidently in more comfortable circumstances, and have been able to continue saving even in times of depression. A large percentage of the population is always up against it. The first line of defence for the worker is the savings bank account. Upon the thrifty depends much of the money we find from year to year to provide relief works. The question is one that should demand the attention of every member. The position of relief works depends entirely upon the amount of the funds available for the absorption of unemployed. I cannot agree with the last speaker that banks are able to make these sums available. My reading leads me to believe that these funds are obtained from four main sources.

Hon. T. Moore: Where did they get the money in 1914?

Hon. H. SEDDON: It was obtained by inflation.

Hon. T. Moore: A little of that would not hurt us now.

Hon. H. SEDDON: We are getting quite a lot of it. It was the aftermath of that inflation which brought such a debacle later on.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It was obtained from the thrifty people who were afraid to invest their money.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The thrifty people who have their money in the savings bank are providing the funds which are being used by the Government for relief works.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And the deposits in the Associated Banks.

Hon. H. SEDDON: These funds come from four sources. The first source is the savings bank deposits; the second source is the money which is available through insurance companies; the third source comprises the funds that are available to trustee companies; and the fourth source comprises the reserve funds of banks and business concerns. During the depression a large proportion of the Treasury bills were obtained through this unemployed capital. With the revival of production and an increase in commercial activity there is going to be a demand for these funds. As business prospers the money will naturally come back into business activity. We shall, therefore, be thrown on to the four sources I have mentioned—savings bank deposits, accumulations by insurance companies, trustee companies' accumulations, and the reserve fund of banks and commercial concerns. If members have been following the figures and the information submitted to the banking inquiry, they will notice that the banks submitted figures showing the enormous amount which they have placed in Government securities by way of investing their reserve funds. They have had the idea that by investing in Government securities they have a line of protection for their deposits, upon which they can readily draw when the occasion arises. The first step taken by a bank to meet any heavy demand upon deposits would be to realise on the reserves, and thus throw those reserves upon the market. I am, however, dealing with the question of finding money for relief work. These funds are being obtained from the four different sources I have mentioned. Whilst increased activity will create a demand for bank de-

posits, chiefly fixed deposits, it will also act in the way of providing employment in commercial activities, which in my opinion is the most satisfactory method of relieving unemployment. The remaining factors, however, should be encouraged. If we are going to do that it is essential there should be some ratio maintained between the amount of relief expenditure and the amount of savings that are available annually.

Hon. T. Moore: And upon how the population grows.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes. So long as we have increased commercial activity, so long shall we diminish unemployment. That is a great thing. The function of Governments is to provide a reservoir fund whereby they can take care of the reservoir of labour during the time that labour is seeking employment in industry. The first step is to conserve these funds as much as possible. The next step is to exploit the means of increasing the amount available. These funds have come from the thrifty. We have had the spectacle of men who were thriftless getting first consideration in employment. Surely we should benefit from our experience during the depression. We should see if there are not means whereby we can arrange that the national income shall be so split up that every worker will be able to provide some savings, and see that he does provide them by instituting some form of compulsory savings.

Hon. A. Thomson: Men have to be 'broke' before they can get a job.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The thrifty man not only provides for his own rainy day, but the money he has is made available to help the other fellow. If we are going to benefit from our experience we should search out for some means to provide for the conservation of money in times of prosperity to meet the demands which arise in times of adversity.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Such as national insurance.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes. That is why I am so pleased that this question of national insurance is occupying an important part in the policy, not only of the Federal Government, but of every Government that is trying honestly to grapple with the question of unemployment. Reports have come to us from the International Labour Office

showing that schemes have been inaugurated in various countries in the direction of national insurance, thereby conserving the funds which will be utilised to employ people who in times of depression are thrown out of their regular walks of life. The best way to enforce compulsory saving is by means of a national insurance scheme. By that means we shall have not only a constantly increasing amount of money available from year to year for public works—these are really relief works—but we shall have means before long of determining the amount that will be available from year to year, and so we shall see how far we can go to meet this important question of unemployment. It will tend to smooth out the peaks and valleys. The fact that the money will be available in times of prosperity will not cause the same strain to find the money in times of adversity. The money can be sunk in our Government funds, and in times of trouble it will be there to help in providing employment. This will smooth out the peaks and valleys which occur in the community to-day. There is another aspect with regard to employment which might be approached, and that is the question of improving the standard of living. We have had throughout the community the very widely expressed desire for increased leisure and for a shorter working week. The first point to take is that of raising the standard of comfort, which is the basis on which the minimum wage is computed by the Arbitration Court. The figures relative to the cost of living have been worked out on a percentage or proportionate basis as follows:—15 per cent. of the total wage is allowed for rent; food 40 per cent.; 13 per cent. is allowed for clothing and footwear; 5 per cent. for fuel, light, etc., and 27 per cent. is allowed under the heading of miscellaneous. That is all very well for a formula. No doubt it was arrived at after careful investigation. One may have a formula and work upon it, and yet it may not apply all round. Fifteen per cent. may be allowed for rent. A man may find himself in an agricultural town or on the goldfields, and discover that the allowance for rent is altogether inadequate. As Mr. Moore pointed out, the housing conditions in the country areas and on the goldfields cannot be compared with those obtaining in Perth and in the more settled parts of the State. Therefore, when one is working on a formula, it is desirable to see that

the formula is applicable. It is no use saying that 15 per cent. is allowed for rent if there are no houses available, or if a man is not in a position to find the money with which to build a house. That is one of the things which is worth exploitation by the Government when they are considering relief works. Private investment nowhere provides adequate housing accommodation in the outlying parts of the State and up to the present this question has been left largely to private investors. But the private investor has had some rather harsh experiences, with the result that he is prejudiced. He does not look at the question from the standpoint of the general welfare of the community, but rather from that of securing a return on his capital, and ensuring that his capital is safe. Then again, the average private investor has been hampered by the effects of legislation imposed upon him, and he has been asked to shoulder part of the burden of the depression out of proportion compared with that borne by the rest of the community. That has had a natural effect, and so we shall find that the question of housing will become more and more one for the community at large, and less and less for the private investor. There is no comparison between the standard of housing in the country and on the goldfields and that which obtains in the city. Even in respect of such elementary matters as water supply, lighting and sanitary services, all of which demand a large capital expenditure, the fact is evident that while the provision in country areas is often most primitive, we insist, on the other hand, on very high and sound standards for the city. If our people are to enjoy the benefits to which they are entitled from the tremendous increase in the productive capacity of the community following upon the application of science, we must get down to bedrock and ascertain if something cannot be done to raise the basic housing standard of the community. All this leads up to the important question of national planning. Whatever may be said for or against the Soviet Government of Russia, the fact remains that they have placed in the forefront of their activities the question of national planning. A conference was held in London recently at which this most important problem was discussed. Debates on all sorts of questions were held, all coming under that one comprehensive

heading, and as a result it was recognised that the question of production by the community and the matter of consumption must be thoroughly investigated, and some attempt made to bring the two closer together. For that reason, the first finding of the conference was to emphasise the necessity for statistical data of a far wider and more intensive description than had been available through the statistical services. The conference recognised that that was the first line of approach to the equation of production and consumption, and to the question of giving the community the standard of living they were entitled to. Throughout the whole of my remarks, I do not intend to discriminate between one section of the community and another. If an improved standard of living is possible, it must apply to every section. It would be quite useless to maintain one standard for the city workers and at the same time a different standard for their fellow-workers in the country areas. Unfortunately, that is the position in Western Australia to-day. The conditions in the exporting industries are much different from those in industries concerned with supplying our local requirements. It appears to me that the first line of approach is through the question of housing, and the most satisfactory method of providing finance is by way of a system of national insurance. Lastly, we must insist to a greater extent than at present upon the building up of statistical data and information that should be available but which, under existing circumstances, we have no earthly chance of procuring. That information is not available to us because our public service is not adequately equipped and financed to provide the necessary information in connection with our national income and production per head. I would like to deal with the question of mining from the standpoint of speculation. It naturally arises from the necessity to conserve our savings. Unfortunately the effect of the mining boom and the unrestricted methods of finance on which many of the concerns are working have resulted in what I can only describe as the relentless pursuit and ruthless swindling of the small investors. It is just about time that the Government took this matter in hand. It has been handled very effectively in other countries. Great as has been the increase in the production of gold in Western Australia, it is nothing like as great as

the increase in gold production in Canada, nor has it increased as rapidly in that Dominion. Canada passed through the same experience as Western Australia. There was what I may describe as the swindling period, when everything was booming. That led to the appointment of a Canadian Commissioner of Securities. As a result of the activities of that official, clever criminals were driven out of the country, and in the United States and elsewhere opened up what are known as bucket shops and sold worthless shares to the public.

Hon. W. J. Munn: Some of them must have come to Western Australia.

Hon. H. SEDDON: It is recognised by the police of the capital cities of Australia that men, after having been placed in gaol in, say, Brisbane for swindling, have gone to Melbourne or Sydney or vice versa at the completion of their sentences and have opened offices. They have persuaded people to invest their money with them, and just when the stage is reached at which the investors begin to ask questions, their activities come under the notice of the police. Unfortunately, often the information is available too late, and when action is sought to be taken, the birds have flown. The police tell us that there has been a procession of these fellows from one capital city to another, all of them with their criminal records, but under the existing system there is no collaboration between the various police departments that would enable track to be kept of the individuals concerned, or to prevent them from carrying on the questionable schemes by which they fleece the public. It has been said cynically that a man should be able to take care of his own savings. On the other hand, the small investor is particularly susceptible to the representations of these plausible gentlemen, with the result that time after time he is fleeced of all he possesses. We have the spectacle of such individuals being robbed of all their savings because the criminals I have referred to are given free scope instead of having their activities curtailed and controlled as they should be.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Is not there some provision for this sort of thing in a Bill introduced in another place?

Hon. H. SEDDON: I do not know.

The Chief Secretary: What do you suggest can be done?

Hon. H. SEDDON: In Canada they have taken drastic steps. They appointed a

Commissioner of Securities. The first step was to license the promoters of companies and also persons who were posing as stockbrokers. Quite a number of people are called stockbrokers who are not affiliated with any stock exchange, and that is the type that requires to be watched. The first step was to issue a license to every promoter before the individual was allowed to proceed with the promotion of the undertaking. Not only was control exercised before the company was formed, but certain exhaustive inquiries were made by the Government authorities, and certain information had to be supplied and various conditions complied with before the company could be floated. The result has been a great improvement. That applies also to stock exchange speculation, which is a game on its own. If a man knows the game and the rules, he enters into it with his eyes open. He knows what he is taking on and what he can expect. He knows that it is largely a contest between the "bulls" and the "bears." The "bull" has been described as the man who buys something he does not want and the "bear" as the man who sells something he has not got. Between these two sections, the whole game of stock exchange speculation is carried on. That is all right so long as the individual knows what he is doing, and he is fully aware of the rules of the game. It is really a kind of warfare, and if one loses anything it is one's own fault. On the other hand, this game has got a long way out of hand. Absolutely essential information has, in many instances, been suppressed or at least misrepresented; and thus the game has not been played in accordance with the stringent stock exchange rules. As to the general public, many who at the time of the boom endeavoured to make a fortune quickly lost almost everything they had made. Those are the people who require protection. To a large extent they cannot protect themselves. Much has been done in the United States and Canada, and the question is being investigated in Great Britain to-day. Much more can be done to police the activities of these people. In Western Australia we are up against what I regard as an almost insurmountable obstacle. Probably 98 out of every hundred concerns in this State are operated either from Adelaide or Melbourne, so that the

State can exercise no control over those companies, which have done some pretty hard and tall things. The provisions of the Canadian legislation sought, in the first place, to prevent fraud through misrepresentation and misappropriation of moneys or securities obtained from investors. Another object was to procure for investors a complete disclosure of essential information with regard to the securities offered for public sale. In the third place, the legislation aimed at Stock Exchange supervision and co-operation with the Government department. The British Government recently authorised an investigation regarding investment trusts. That type of business is opening up here and is rapidly developing throughout Australia. Hon. members will no doubt recall the exposures made in Sydney recently with regard to a company operating between Sydney and New Zealand. The disclosures showed how ruthless were the directors of those two concerns in using money for their own purposes. That type of scheme has been extended throughout the Australian capital cities, and now is the time for Governments to take action and secure control over the running of the undertakings. The idea underlying the scheme is that a sum is subscribed by various investors. We will say that £20,000 is subscribed and that money is then invested in, perhaps, eight or ten different classes of industrial stock. Owing to the fact that these securities are in large denominations (£100) they are outside the reach of the ordinary small investor. But after combining, the stocks are all bought, and the interest returned is all pooled, and the investor is paid proportionately to his holding. After 10 years the trust is wound up, and the investments are either sold or distributed amongst the shareholders. The difficulty arises that the number of units or shares which are sold to the shareholders can only be handled and transferred through the concern itself; they are not listed on the Stock Exchange, and there is no free market. So the investor finds himself tied up with the share in this concern and is not able to effect a sale. Certain recommendations were made following inquiry. The first was that these clubs should be registered and controlled in the same way as an ordinary commercial company. The second was that the management be restricted to the United Kingdom. The third was that

each trust deposit a substantial amount as security for shareholders. In the fourth, provision was made for the free transfer of units and sub-units; and the fifth was for transfers to carry stamp duty and come under Stamp Act penalties. The court had power to wind up the concern at the request of aggrieved shareholders, and it was provided that at the request of 10 per cent. of the shareholders a Government inspector would be made available to investigate books, etc., of the concern. It appears to me that one way in which the Government could find a useful activity would be by safeguarding those people who are saving up a few pounds and looking for a better investment than is provided by the Savings Bank. There is urgent need for a Commonwealth Companies Act. That is the only way in which I can see we might get control over those companies which are domiciled outside the State. Reverting to goldmining, I want to quote an outstanding example of a company which is now holding a mine in Western Australia. It shows the kind of thing that is going on. Three years ago a mine was discovered with sensational values and was acquired by a promoter for £11,000 cash and a large parcel of shares. He had a long option period and he paid off the amount out of the ore won from the mine. The shares were quoted on the market and rose from a few pence up to 7s. In 12 months from £40,000 to £50,000 worth of gold had been won from the show. In spite of this a 1s. call was made which the shareholders were told was for the purpose of installing machinery, but to the best of the knowledge of the shareholders no machinery was acquired. Moreover, nobody knows where that £40,000 or £50,000 has gone to. No accounts have been given to the shareholders; there has not been a meeting of the shareholders for three years, and no balance sheet has been issued for the same period, nor can the shareholders get any information whatever. That is the sort of thing that is going on in Western Australia, for the mine is here and the company is here. Actually the company now holding the mine is registered in Adelaide, and the offending person is resident in Perth. He gets away with it while the local shareholders are helpless.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Are the shares still being quoted?

Hon. H. SEDDON: I believe they are. That is the kind of thing that has been going

on in this State. I can quote other equally glaring instances, but I expect my colleague will give further illustrations of what has been done in the way of mining flotations and mining finance. This state of affairs is no good to the community, and I sincerely hope the Government, in the interests of the mining industry, and of the people of this State, will have a special investigation made.

Hon. A. Thomson: Also in the interests of the people who put their money into the mine.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Now another question, namely that of reporting on mines. We get people coming forward and we find that prospectuses are issued proclaiming that Mr. So-and-so has reported on the mine. But when we come to make investigations we find that Mr. So-and-so is no better qualified to report on a mine than is the average schoolboy, but because his name has been printed on the prospectus and distributed amongst the community, many people accept him as a man of wide knowledge. We get such men posing as mining experts when they have no more qualifications than schoolboys. Here is an instance where the Minister for Mines could well take action, by insisting that such men must have the requisite qualifications before being allowed to report on a mine. Some of those men are pretty unscrupulous and not above engaging in a swindle. Those two cases I have cited might well occupy the attention of the Government. Now I should like to deal with some goldfields matters of importance to the goldfields community. I was pleased indeed to see that the gentlemen who are dealing with the money that was raised under the Youth and Motherhood Appeal have decided to allocate £3,000 to the Kalgoorlie hospital. I want to voice my appreciation of their generosity in that direction. Certainly the money did not come before it was needed. I should like to point out to members that the demand made on behalf of the Kalgoorlie hospital was due to the fact that the maternity ward is a district ward; instances have occurred where mothers have had to be moved three times within eight days after their confinement, this for absolute lack of accommodation. So it will be seen that the demand for a new maternity ward was not made before its time. I am pleased to see that it is intended to provide a pre-natal clinic there, so that those requiring medical attention will be able to get the necessary

medical advice and assistance at that clinic. That does not get over the fact that the Kalgoorlie hospital is urgently in need of replacement. The buildings there are very old and although there has been a large sum of money spent in providing new quarters there, I still say the whole of the premises ought to be rebuilt.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are you speaking from experience of another place up there?

Hon. H. SEDDON: No, but I am speaking from my own knowledge of the hospital. Another question is that of the schools on the goldfields. Many of them have been carried on from year to year without any money being spent on renovations or reconditioning. I hope the policy of the Government will be to devote some of their Loan funds, not only to the school premises but also to the quarters occupied by the teachers. That would give those teachers some little comfort in the outlying districts where they are working. Members will recall that a few years ago there was a movement for the reduction, if not the abolition, of the Kalgoorlie School of Mines. Indeed, it was suggested by a Minister in another place. At that time there were but three students in the geological class, and so the lecturer in geology—of course he had other duties to attend to—had only three pupils facing him in the classroom. The following figures will give some indication of the present position:—

In 1932 there were	289 students in the school.
In 1933 there were	306 students in the school.
In 1934 there were	330 students in the school.
In 1935 there were	476 students in the school.

And I have here a message from the Students' Association which tells me that, including the correspondence class, the number of students to-day is 600. When it is realised that there has been but very little increase in the staff, it will be understood that the work put upon the lecturers by this enormous crowd of young men is very great. For that reason I should like to see the Government increase the status of this school. At present it is under the control of the Director of Technical Education. That was arranged some years ago with the idea of restricting the staff. From the records of the school, I think it should be placed on the status of a university. My reason for saying that is because a number

of young men, who were trained in that school, have gone to other parts of the world, where they have worked themselves up to the highest technical positions. Some of them are managers on the Golden Mile, while others are managers in Canada, the United States and South America. All this because of the excellent training they received at the Kalgoorlie School of Mines.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: That is the trouble; we lose all the best of our young men.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That was so, but at present there is an absolute scarcity of trained men in the mines. I should like to see the fine records of this school recognised by the Government, and the status of the school raised to the status of the Adelaide School of Mines, which is under the control of a special committee and has the status almost of a university. As I say, in the mining industry to-day every man who has had training on the scientific side of mining is sure of promotion. The old idea of promoting the practical miner has not worked out satisfactorily in some respects, and the need is recognised for the scientific and technical training of the staff. For that reason, I should be glad to see the Government do something to improve the status of this school.

The Chief Secretary: How is the status regarded as lower?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Through being under the control of the Director of Technical Education, it is regarded outside the State as being more or less a technical school, and there is a great difference between a technical school and a college. From that standpoint I should like the Government to investigate the matter and place the School of Mines on an independent basis, ensuring that its control is exercised apart from the department controlling technical education.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is to say, instead of being a subsidiary institution, you would make it quite distinct.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes, and give the school its own control. I did intend to speak on the question of soil erosion, because certain remarks made by me on a previous occasion are being borne out by very significant and sensational statements made by scientific investigators in the Eastern States. Members have before them an example in what is taking place in western America. What is occurring there is going

to occur in Western Australia unless vigorous steps are taken to prevent the erosion that is occurring under the methods in which the farming and pastoral areas are being exploited.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Such erosion has already taken place in parts of South Australia.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes.

Hon. J. Cornell: And in parts of the wheatbelt here.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is so. I think I have touched the items upon which I particularly desired to speak. I sincerely trust that the Government will have a successful career and that the legislation to be introduced will be such as will enable us to provide for the welfare of the people and the advancement of the community as a whole. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [6.2]: At the outset I wish to associate myself with the remarks made regarding the lamented death of King George V., and with the tributes paid to the present King. I deplore the death of two old and respected members of this House, namely, Sir Edward Wittenoom and Sir Charles Nathan. With other members, I regret the defeat of Mr. R. G. Moore and Mr. Yelland. Our recollections of those two gentlemen are pleasant, and we sympathise with them in their passing from Parliamentary life. I join in the expressions of welcome extended to the two new members. I trust that their sojourn in this Chamber will be as pleasant as that of almost every member who has been here in my time. I have already expressed myself regarding the retirement from the Ministry of Mr. Drew and the election of Mr. Kitson to the leadership of the House. I trust that he and Mr. Gray will continue to enjoy the confidence of members, and that their work in their new spheres will prove congenial to them and beneficial to the State. The Speech of the Lieut.-Governor differs very little from its predecessors. There was the usual brief recital of the State's main achievements for the year, most of it already ancient history. Then there were a few meagre references to legislation that it is proposed to introduce during the session. I consider it a pity that more information is not supplied to members regarding proposed legis-

lation. If that were done, members would have an opportunity, if they so desired, to make some research, and then the complaint frequently heard of Bills being introduced late in the session, unexpectedly, and with insufficient time for their study, would be unjustified. If the Government provided more information regarding their legislative programme, the business of Parliament would be expedited and better debate would result.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It was the custom for many years to do that.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Then I am afraid that successive Governments have fallen from grace to the detriment of Parliamentary work. The most outstanding feature of the Speech is the reference to the year's surplus. It is alleged that we finished the year with a surplus. I do not intend to discuss the question of finance, but the statement has been made, and not controverted, I think, that the State has neglected to pay at least one of its obligations, namely, sinking fund. If that be so, I can hardly see how we can logically claim to have had a surplus. I understand "surplus" to mean an amount remaining after every obligation and charge has been paid. If that is a correct interpretation of the word, the people of the State are being in a sense—I hardly like to say deceived—misled, and the actual position is not quite as rosy as has been painted. I suppose that all Governments are equally to blame for endeavouring to put the very best face on their financial transactions, and I do not know that the present Government are any exception to the rule, or any greater sinners than their predecessors were. It will be interesting to hear the Leader of the House in explanation of that point. I am gratified that there are indications of slowly returning prosperity. I do not propose to cover the whole of the items referred to in the Speech, but will address myself mainly to those with which I am more closely associated. The Speech records that the shipments of fat lambs for the year have been highly satisfactory. That statement is pleasing to some of us who years ago, in season and out of season, endeavoured to educate the people to realise that the South-West was suitable for fat-lamb raising. I can well recall the opposition and ridicule that was heaped

upon us in those days. On one occasion I spent rather a long time in writing a column article advocating early and continuous attention to the production of fat lambs in the South-West. The article saw the light of day, and at the time of its publication I had to make a train journey. I sat in a corner of a compartment when a man entered with the newspaper. He was the wool representative of one of the biggest firms at that time operating in the State. He made some semi-humorous remarks about people not having much brain, and added, "Here is a damn fool down here trying to tell people that fat lambs can be grown in the South-West." I had the pleasure of listening to some remarkable criticism of my lack of intelligence. I did not let him know that I was the author of the article, but many a time since I have wished I could get into touch with him and ask him how he squared his opinion in those days with the production of fat lambs in the South-West at present. In my estimation the industry has only just commenced. It is a form of activity for which there is quite a big outlet, and if growers continue to follow it up as they are doing at present, it will mean the introduction of much new wealth into the State. Those engaged in the industry are the type of people who rarely approach the Government for assistance. They are very self-reliant, and almost invariably have fought their own battles. There is one way in which the Government could assist them, and that is by the provision of better transport. This matter has been brought up at the annual South-West Conference for some time past, and to the credit of the railway authorities, some improvement has been made. But there is still room for further improvement. One hears frequently—not so often as in the past—complaints of lambs being bruised in transit, and being rendered unfit for export. Every lamb damaged in that way means an economic loss to the State.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Prior to the tea adjournment I was making reference to the production of fat lambs, and in passing pointed out the necessity for the greatest care being taken in the matter of transportation. I said that every animal damaged

as the result of bruising was an economic loss to this State, because its value in new money was lost to us. If we could urge the railway men in all grades to remember that fact, it would be highly advantageous: and this applies especially in the case of men in authority in the Railway Department, who could endeavour to educate employees in the lower grades concerning the need for careful shunting and handling. In the South-West we are looking forward to the day when the need for the long journey from the South to Fremantle will be obviated and it will be possible to establish abattoirs in Bunbury and have lambs shipped from that port. Considerable progress has been made during the past few years with the Bunbury harbour, though a good deal remains to be done. However, the work is thoroughly justified, because unquestionably in the years to come the shipment of primary products from that part of the country will be made from that port. Bunbury is the main port of the South-West, and should receive the trade that is its due. If that were done, it would obviate much of the damage caused by railway transport, besides saving considerable cost to the producers. Mention is made in the Speech of the improvement in the quality of butter manufactured in Western Australia during the past year. In my opinion this is largely the result of dairying education. The various agricultural bodies in the South-West have for many years urged the Government to grant assistance in the direction of the introduction of pure-bred bulls and pedigreed stock, and also in other directions. As the effect of education, better pastures, careful herd testing, more hygienic methods on the farm, and, what is equally important, the adoption of the most approved scientific methods in the butter factories have combined to bring about that desirable state of affairs. It is also gratifying to know that in a season when the production of butter for export throughout Australia is down considerably—to the extent of 37 per cent. as compared with the previous year—our output, although we are small compared with the rest of Australia, has shown no diminution. Another fact in which we can take pride is that while the percentage of choice butter manufactured for export in the East has, unfortunately, fallen 9.26 per cent., the increase in Western Australia is between 20 and 30 per cent.—a highly commendable in-

crease, and one which proves that our dairy farmers are now on much better lines than in the past, and that there is a much better future ahead of them from an export point of view. Already the dairying industry is second only to wool amongst Australia's industries, and it is destined, I feel sure, in spite of the competition of other parts of the world, to grow to still greater dimensions. While all of us hope that wool will always hold its place in Australia's economic structure, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that the wool trade is being seriously threatened in numerous directions. For that reason I consider it highly essential that the Government should do everything possible not only to help the wool grower but also to assist the dairy farmer to hold a leading place in the productivity of our agricultural areas. Of 94,982 tons, almost 95,000 tons, of butter manufactured for export in Australia last year—and worth, by the way, about £10,000,000—Western Australia's share was very small indeed, almost negligible; but that share will grow. In the manufacture of choice grade we have advanced from about 1 per cent. to about 30 per cent., and our position from the aspect of export trade will rapidly improve. The chief factor is winter storage, and it may not be out of place to make a brief reference to the phenomenal increase that has taken place in Australia's export of butter during the past few years. In 1926-27 barely 166,000 boxes of butter were examined by the authorities controlling export. Down the intervening years there has been a steady increase, until during the year ended June, 1935, no less than 4,498,000 boxes were examined—almost 5,000,000 boxes. That represents a phenomenal increase, and tells us that, provided Australian butter can get a fair spin on the world's markets, it will hold its place. There is cause for satisfaction, too, in the fact that the price of Kangaroo brand butter in London has reached within a few pence of the price of best New Zealand. We have been told for a good many years that we could never compete with New Zealand because we could never get the quality or other features connected with butter manufacture. For a time the prices were almost parallel. There has been a difference of only a few pence for some considerable time. That in itself is most heartening, and I hope that the prejudice against Australian butter abroad

is being broken down. I urge the Federal Government, and the State Government also, to back up the Australian Export Produce Board in their endeavour to increase the sales of Australian butter abroad. Undoubtedly those who have travelled and have sampled butter from a good many countries can say with all truth that there is no better butter manufactured than the choice butter manufactured in Australia. I was interested to learn in the Eastern States recently that a conference of butter factory managers had recommended the establishment of Australian restaurants throughout Great Britain. That recommendation I regard as an excellent one, because it will ensure to the people of Britain the opportunity of eating choice Australian butter. In the past our trouble has been that it has been almost impossible to obtain Australia's best products in Britain. Once the people of the Old Country have eaten choice Australian butter—and not the manipulated or blended article that is so frequently sold as Australian butter—the consumption will increase largely. The establishment of a chain of Australian restaurants throughout Britain would do more than anything else I can suggest to destroy the prejudice of which I have spoken, and to defeat the machinations of the blenders and distributors, none of whom is a great friend of Australia. There is a good precedent for the proposed action, a precedent set by Argentine. For a considerable time the Argentine experienced the same prejudice and the same difficulty with regard to their meat, as a result of which they established a chain of retail stores throughout Britain, in which they sold Argentine beef. The result was most satisfactory, and as far as I know those stores are still in existence. At any rate there is the testimony of the people of the Argentine that that action put them on the map with regard to the consumption of their meat in Great Britain.

Hon. H. Tuckey: That would be a Government trading concern.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I cannot say. In the production of cheese, which is another growing industry in the South-West, splendid progress is being made, and here again the money expended at different times and authorised by Parliament is being returned in increased production and the building up of a good sound trade. The quality of Western Australian cheese is well known

to be excellent; so excellent, in fact, that the demand is in excess of the supply. Next year we hope to see the output from the three or four factories in this State reach 1,000,000 lbs. Not a big output, perhaps, but a considerable amount for an industry that has only just commenced. Last year we sent £75,000 to the Eastern States for the purchase of cheese, and if we do nothing more than direct that to the farmers of the State, we should be doing them a good turn and keeping money in the State instead of sending it elsewhere. Reference to the agricultural industry would not be complete without mentioning group settlement and the Agricultural Bank. Both have been in the limelight considerably of late, and both have been roundly criticised. In my estimation, while there is a great deal that is blameworthy on either side, both sides are deserving of sympathy. Group settlement was a tremendous experiment. It was an experiment which was agreed to by Parliament, and has been backed up by Parliament over a good many years. But it is an experiment, too, which, as a result of most deplorable management, has gone very near to collapsing altogether. I believe we have reached the bottom level and that from now on there will be some real progress. The Agricultural Bank is deserving of some sympathy, because it came into the scheme when most of the damage had been done. Various Governments endeavoured to carry on group settlement. They got it into a hopeless mess and then quietly shelved it on to the Bank and said, "Now get out of that if you can." For that reason the Bank deserves generous treatment. The task undertaken was of tremendous magnitude and while we, perhaps, have been a little impatient sometimes regarding the result of the Bank's activities, we must realise that it was an undertaking that necessarily took time. On the other hand, there is a good deal to be said for the settler. With a few exceptions, I contend the group settlers now are a very estimable community. They have been subjected to a good deal of adverse treatment. They have also been subjected to a lot of adverse criticism, much of which was unwarranted because, after all, the great majority of the group settlers are hardly ever heard of. It is frequently the fellow with an axe to grind who makes the most noise, and that has been the case all along. I am not going to ac-

cept the statement that the group settler is generally an inferior person. As a matter of fact, he is rather a superior type in many respects. I feel sure that no member of this House would have submitted for a week to anything like the interference with his business which group settlers have had to endure ever since they entered the scheme. The group settler has been asked to do what every experienced farmer knows to be extremely difficult, if not impossible. It was expected that he would make a reasonable living, bring up and educate a family decently, increase the capital value of his holding, pay rent and interest on outrageously high valuation on a very small area, and in most instances with an inadequate herd and inadequate pastures. And all this very often under the direction of incompetent officials who were placed over him, and many of whom, I am sorry to say, had themselves previously proved failures on the land. There is no doubt that the group settler has been badly directed and I do not know of any man in any other walk of life who would submit to an incompetent person walking in and telling him how to conduct his business, and insisting that he should follow a course which he himself knew would lead to disaster. This is what the group settler has been forced to do, or get out of the scheme altogether. Following the reconstruction of the Bank, the Commissioners revalued all the holdings and announced the new assessments in a manner which I think was asking for trouble. These new valuations were fired at the settlers in a take-it-or-leave-it fashion, and with the intimation that they need not bother about making any appeal because if they did it would not be noted. That was looking for trouble, because in the very best of schemes there is always some anomaly, and the Bank Commissioners in my estimation in that regard erred. My complaint against the Bank Commissioners in that direction is first of all the tactless way in which they approached the settlers, and secondly—which is more important—that they failed to check up on any of the valuations that had been made, or apparently so. and I say that because if they had checked up on valuations here and there they would probably have discovered what they have had to admit since, that there were quite a number of anomalies. Verification of that can be found in the fact that as result of the recent outcry and the

publicity given to the action of a section of the settlers, the Bank sent down an official to look into a number of the valuations disputed. I understand that there were no fewer than forty valuations that were regarded by the settlers as being altogether unfair. Later on one of the Commissioners went down to investigate the position. I have not been able to obtain definite information, but I have been told that in every case of appeal there has been a revaluation in favour of the settler; the settler's contention has been admitted and assistance or a further writing down has been granted. If that is the position of a few, what must be the position of the whole? If the Commissioners, before the revaluations were made public, had themselves checked up on the figures supplied, they would have seen that some of the revaluations on being made public would be met with a great deal of opposition. Then I consider that the Commissioners' extraordinary determination that they were not going to be interviewed by anyone, settlers or even members of Parliament, was responsible for much of the dissatisfaction. I do not for a moment contend that members of Parliament wanted to get into the picture, because they had had quite enough of group troubles; but if they had been requested to intervene they would willingly have done so. This attitude on the part of the Commissioners raised feelings of distrust amongst the settlers, who interpreted such attitude to mean that it was useless to attempt to secure redress, and that only one thing remained—if they did not like it, they could walk off.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Commissioners were carrying out the provisions of the Agricultural Bank Act.

Hon. W. J. MANN: That may be so, but members of Parliament were not anxious to get into the picture at all.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Commissioners had declared that they were going to take a firm hand.

Hon. W. J. MANN: There are different ways of taking a firm hand. Two men can approach a problem; one can make a mess of it and another can act quite sensibly. There are always two ways of doing most things. What the settlers want is a revaluation based on a clear and definite realisation of the earning capacity of the asset, pro-

vided it is worked with reasonable energy and is not allowed just to dwindle away, or to be worked in a haphazard fashion. Between the estimate of experienced farmers and the estimate of the Bank as to fair valuations there is a wide gap. On the one side the valuation is made as a result of life-long experience, and on the other side it is made mainly from the point of view of capitalisation, the business point of view. There is a tremendous difference between the two. One man knows from experience what a holding will produce under the best conditions, but the official views it from the standpoint of pounds, shillings and pence. When valuations are made in that way not much can be said for them.

Hon. G. W. Miles: How would the settlers get on if the blocks were given to them?

Hon. W. J. MANN: They would get on all right.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Some of them would get on.

Hon. W. J. MANN: There has been prodigal waste and misguided effort, with the result that the position of the settler has become untenable. It has been suggested that the right of appeal against valuations should be made possible before a board. Opposition to that course has arisen on the ground that it is against ordinary banking practice. If the conditions were the same in the case of the Associated Banks as it was in the case of the Agricultural Bank, there might be something in that contention, but the two sets of conditions are not analogous. The ordinary banking institution determines the value of the asset before any advance is made. In the case of the group settler no such procedure is followed. The Agricultural Bank was merely given a proposition with a fictitious value, a value often inflated beyond reason. It cannot fairly be urged against the right of appeal to a board that it is not in keeping with ordinary banking practice. In the circumstances anomalies are bound to be frequent. I favour appeal to a board, provided the tribunal is composed of experienced farmers, who have successfully operated their own properties. I hope the suggestion will be accepted, in which case it should make for the very much smoother working of the scheme. I

trust the Bank will keep down interest charges to the lowest possible level. It has been suggested that the interest should be reduced to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. I would not go as far as that, because the scheme is entitled to charge fair interest. Where men are struggling and are paying interest, the Bank might do as the Workers' Homes Board and other State instrumentalities do, namely, make a rebate of a small amount on the interest charged.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: After rebating 75 per cent. of the capital!

Hon. W. J. MANN: The Government lost capital through their own maladministration. The settlers cannot be blamed for that.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The groupie got the money.

Hon. W. J. MANN: He got part of it only. A lot of it was accrued compound interest.

Hon. T. Moore: And a lot of it remained in the country.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The city merchants got a lot of it, and other people waxed fat upon it. After all, the groupies got the thin end of the stick in most cases. I hope the practice of seizing the proceeds of small sidelines will be stopped. In many cases these sidelines are the result of months of labour on the part of the wife and children of the settler in an endeavour to earn a few shillings for themselves. Grabbing these small amounts has not got the Bank anywhere, but has given the Bank a bad reputation. The practice is paltry in the extreme and heart-breaking for the people concerned. It may be said that the proceeding was a legal one. It may have been legal but it was not logical, particularly when it is most essential to maintain the best possible feeling between the Bank and the settler. I hope we have heard the last of that phase of the scheme. Members have no idea of the pain, disappointment and sorrow that have been caused to the dependants of settlers through this practice. It is all very well to say a settler did this and that. When people work seven days a week and the Bank commandeers all the proceeds, and the settlers cannot pay their storekeeper for the plain necessities of life, it takes an Angel Gabriel to be content and keep quiet.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Group settlers are not singular in that.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I know that many primary producers have had the same experience.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If the State handed over all the assets without charge, would you be satisfied?

Hon. W. J. MANN: Even then the State would not lose. Western Australia is not the only State which has lost money on such schemes. If the hon. member has read of what has happened elsewhere, he will know what losses Victoria has sustained in closer settlement, and the extent to which these have outweighed our losses on group settlement. In giving evidence in Victoria recently, the chairman of the Closer Settlement Commission urged the Government to put their scheme on a proper business footing. Closer settlement in Victoria is not quite analogous to our group settlement, because it has a wider application and takes in some of the wheat-producing parts of that State.

Hon. T. Moore: Nearly all.

Hon. W. J. MANN: It is so extensive that closer settlement involves one-sixth of the agricultural lands of Victoria, which is made up principally of agricultural areas. The chairman also said that the bulk of the northern mallee had never paid even working expenses, apart from interest, depreciation and capital charges. The total losses through the effort to stimulate closer settlement were between £15,000,000 and £20,000,000, in addition to which enormous sums were lost through the non-payment of rates, licenses, and other things of that description. Although we have lost money in this State, we are not singular in that. It is not much comfort to know that other States have also lost money, but it might be borne in mind that the position here is more difficult than it can possibly be in the other States. Over there, with their many years of experience behind them, they have made bigger losses than we have, and the position now is deplorable in the extreme. Whilst group settlement has been a tremendous experiment, it has had a wonderfully good effect on other sections of the farming community. The money expended has been widely distributed and enjoyed by most people in the State. The Speech also indicates that last year's apple crop was 1,000,000 cases, and that 800,000 cases were exported. I have already referred to the

necessity for equipping the Bunbury harbour in order that fruit and meat shipments might be carried on. Our fruit export trade is destined to grow. The consumption of fruit the world over is extremely low. People have yet to be awakened to the advantage of a greater fruit diet. As this awakening occurs, so will the demand for our fruit increase. I do not fear that we shall not be able to find reasonable markets, provided proper business precautions are taken to market the fruit in the right places.

Hon. T. Moore: Fruit is too dear on the other side of the world.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes, because the cost of getting it there is also relatively high. The more we can cut down costs, the better. If the Bunbury harbour is equipped for the shipment of fruit, as well as meat, that will tend to reduce costs. I am glad the Main Roads Department are assisting the fruitgrower by endeavouring to improve the roads. Fruit carried over rough roads becomes bruised, and its value deteriorates. In the past growers have suffered from that sort of thing. I hope the State Sawmills will see that an adequate supply of fruit cases is available this year.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: How are they going to do that?

Hon. W. J. MANN: It can be done. Fruit cases are not as payable a line as the cutting of ordinary timber. I understand there is about £1 a load difference in the profit.

The Chief Secretary: Where did you get that information?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I have been told that it is so. It is known that the mills do not look upon the cutting of fruit cases with a very kindly eye.

The Chief Secretary: Not beyond a certain point.

Hon. W. J. MANN: In the past there has been an outcry from growers who have been unable to get cases.

Hon. L. Craig: There was a great outcry last year.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I know that some of the growers will not order their cases early enough in the season to enable supplies to be cut.

Hon. L. Craig: It is a complicated business.

Hon. W. J. MANN: If they so desire, they can have their fruit cases ready for their crop, and there is no need for the outcry that we have heard in the past. I have one other reference to make to the South-West, and it may not be quite orthodox. We should pay a little more attention to the fur resources available there. In Queensland an open season for 'possums for one month was declared in July last, and in a Brisbane newspaper a statement appeared that the official estimate was that 1,500,000 skins would be obtained during the period mentioned. Any member who followed that matter up will recollect the fabulous prices that were received for the skins at the auction sales, the return from which ran into a very large amount. Advantage was freely taken of the open season, and it resulted in the circulation of a lot of money. In the South-West we have had a close season for 'possums for a long time, and I understand the bush is now teeming with them. In some places the 'possums are becoming a pest.

Hon. H. Tuekey: In very few places.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I am told that that is the position, and that they raid gardens and even enter houses. A good deal of money is available from that particular source, and I trust the Government will declare an open season for 'possums at a suitable period, so that people in the country can augment their slender resources.

Hon. J. J. Holmes interjected.

Hon. W. J. MANN: It is all very well for those who do not have to count every shilling, and whose income is assured. It is quite a different matter with the man in the country who wants some extra cash with which to purchase a suit of clothes, or with which to make some provision for his wife and children.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You would not remove the embargo during the breeding season?

Hon. W. J. MANN: No. It should be during the proper time of the year. The next matter I will deal with relates to the tourist traffic. For years we have been endeavouring to awaken the Government to the lucrative trade that is available from the tourist traffic. The money and publicity that the State has

lost through neglecting that traffic cannot be computed. People here hardly realise what a wonderful range of attractions Western Australia possesses, attractions that are not available in any other part of the world. From Albany to Wyndham, and from the coast eastward to Kalgoorlie and Wiluna, we have interesting industries and pleasure resorts that many people would be only too glad to visit, were those attractions brought under their notice. In other parts of the world, vast amounts of money are distributed by tourists who are always seeking new scenes, new experiences and new thrills. We are doing practically nothing to secure for Western Australia participation in that source of revenue. We have our State ships travelling northward, and I am told that the idea of catering for the tourist traffic is, to those in authority, absolute anathema. They want nothing to do with that traffic. In the South-West trains are running empty.

Hon. T. Moore: The people have taken to motor cars.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Those trains are empty because no effort is made to secure patronage for them. We have a State Tourist Department which is about the poorest and most attenuated one could imagine.

Hon. L. Craig: It has no money.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I make no charges against the director or his officials, but the position is that they are not permitted to spend a shilling. There is no vote worthy of mention for the tourist bureau, and it appears to me that the bureau is in the position of a wood-and-water joey for the State Gardens Board, which seems to be the outstanding authority.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Who are on that board?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I want to know something about that board. I want to know how the board are financed. In vain have I looked for some time past for a report on the activities of the State Gardens Board. I would like to see their record of receipts and expenditure. I suppose they are kept by someone, but no one seems to know anything about it. The board must have some source of revenue. I understand that some is obtained from the Swan river, and in other directions, but they must get a

good deal on top of that. I want to know whether their accounts are audited, and if not, why not? Someone can find money for the State Gardens Board, because they are able to build roads to pleasure resorts and a hotel at Yanchep. They are able to provide nice drives for the metropolitan folk on Sunday afternoon.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: A lot of the work is done with the advantage of private donations.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I was not aware of that; I want to know something about it.

The Honorary Minister: At any rate, the man in control is a live wire.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes, but still the work is done in the dark so far as the public are concerned. I want to know where the money comes from, and how it is spent. I am not criticising the work that has been done, but I complain that it is mostly in one direction. It is nearly all in the interests of the people in the metropolitan area, and the rest of the State can go hang. Take the position of Cave House at Yallingup. I do not associate this with the State Gardens Board, but if money can be made available for that body, I claim that Cave House should have been built long ago.

Hon. G. Fraser: Did not the money available for Cave House go into a trust fund?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I understood that £1,000 was spent on equipment, and I presume the rest of the money is in the safe custody of the Government. The Chief Secretary smiles when I refer to Cave House, and I certainly desire to commend him for the attempt he has made to alter the condition of affairs at Yallingup. We cannot expect tourists to come here if we do not cater for them decently.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about New Zealand?

Hon. W. J. MANN: We cannot compare Western Australia with New Zealand. The Cave House at Waitomo is a delightful place to visit.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is that run by the Government or by private enterprise?

Hon. W. J. MANN: By the Government. People are prepared to pay £1 or 22s. 6d. a day for accommodation there, and are willing to book well ahead, whereas in this State the Cave House at Yallingup cannot be filled up at 10s. a day, simply because no

conveniences or facilities for tourists are provided. The manager is an excellent man, but he and his staff cannot do the impossible. I hope that the Chief Secretary will, if possible, redouble his efforts and see that something definite is done to assist the tourist resorts of the State. We should be able to provide an itinerary for tourists ranging from the Leeuwin to Wyndham and back through the goldfields. It will be done some day, because the people will be glad to see our goldfields, which are among the greatest in the world.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Could you not hand Cave House over to the State Gardens Board?

Hon. W. J. MANN: Certainly not. There is one other matter I shall refer to. Exception has been taken to the proposal of the Government to spend a considerable amount of money in providing trolley buses for the Claremont district. I cannot subscribe to that project. If the Government have money to spend on improving transport facilities in and around Perth, there are many other places that are languishing for such conveniences that could be better dealt with.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And water supplies are required.

Hon. W. J. MANN: There are many directions in which that money could be better spent. It seems almost futile to hope that we shall have a better train service. We have been promised an improvement for a long time, but I am afraid that improvement is as slow in coming as the trains are slow in running. We still hope for some better transport facilities and one can merely say, "Lord, let it be soon." With regard to the State Transport Co-ordination Act, I hope the Government will take into consideration the necessity for the amendment of some of its provisions. My complaint is that the country roads are not properly policed. There is a great tendency on the part of some people to make traffic hogs of themselves when they get on country roads. One section of motor drivers think they own the earth. They drive in the middle of the road and will not move to one side or the other to permit other traffic to pass. They are a menace not only to themselves, but to everyone else on the road. When they get into the country they seem to think they are a law unto themselves. Another thing is that some vehicles, particularly trucks, load with an undue over-

hang on either side. This is a very dangerous practice. On country roads you can see a truck loaded with timber and the load overhanging 18 inches on either side, which of course leaves very little room for anybody else on the road. The sooner we have traffic police with some roving commissions to go along the roads and make an example of those people, the better it will be. I support the motion.

HON. H. S. W. PARKER (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.31]: I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Leader of the House. I sincerely trust that as long as another place permits him to keep that seat he will have a very pleasant time in it, without too much opposition from members. I have noticed with some disgust the actions of various professors of our University. We find that the Government paid last year £31,500 towards the maintenance of that institution. Then we find that many of the professors—it may be that they are extremely good in their own departments, I do not know, but what does strike me is that we have an enormous number of journalists occupying the positions of professors at the University.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Journalists or Communists?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I will come to that second aspect a little later. A number of the professors appear, not only to take their long leave of four months every year, but also to acquire study leave, which takes them abroad. Who pays for their trips I do not know, but I assume they pay for them themselves, and I assume also that they are paid their salaries while away. There are very few professional men in life who are able to acquire not only four months' holiday in each year, but also trips abroad for the purpose of keeping themselves up to date. A professor is usually looked upon as more or less a bookworm. They are now building a library at the University at a cost of £60,000. Already they have a good library there, and with the money available one would think the professors could keep themselves fairly well up-to-date. It seems that with a free University some arrangements could be made whereby we would get an interchange of professors. But you turn on your wireless and find a professor talking; you pick up your newspaper and find a professor writing, and if you walk along the street you see placards explaining that

a professor is to address a meeting. This is the sort of thing I mean:—

TRUTH CANNOT BE SUPPRESSED!

Throughout the world to-day workers and intellectuals are watching with admiration and sympathy the wonderful progress made under Socialism by the people of the Soviet Union. In West Australia this interest will be expressed in a

Congress of Friendship for the U.S.S.R.

to be held in the

Arundale Hall,

James Street,

on

Saturday Afternoon, Nov. 2, at 2 p.m., to which the Public are cordially invited!

That is what we seem to be paying for. I feel this matter personally, for I am a direct subscriber towards the maintenance of the gentleman who was addressing that meeting. The same gentleman I saw billed to speak at some society which is going to abolish war.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Well, they will be doing a good work there.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes, they will be doing good work. But from infancy I have always been taught that if I want a fellow not to hit me on the nose I must stop him from doing it. Apparently there is a new philosophy abroad, led by the professors of our University, namely that we must have no war. I must say for that professor that he certainly served in the last war. And of course we are all entitled to our own view, whether on religion or on politics. But what I object to is his airing those views as a professor of the University, instead of doing it in his private capacity. I should have thought that gentlemen who hold the positions of professors at the University would have sufficient to do to look after their jobs without going outside. If they are not sufficiently well paid, let them be paid more. But I do seriously ask the Government to remove that tax from the legal practitioners which compels them to pay £5 each towards the maintenance of one of the chairs at the University. There are legal practitioners in country districts to whom £5 means a considerable amount. Nevertheless those fellows have to pay that £5 before being allowed to practise in court. It is the only profession charged with this amount, and I must say that we should have

for our use a very extensive library. There is one at the Supreme Court, but it is by no means up to date, all for want of funds. A small subsidy is given by the Government each year for the maintenance of that library, but nothing like sufficient to get all the weekly and monthly law reports from the Eastern States and from England. That library is available to members of Parliament, lawyers, judges, magistrates, clerks of courts and students of the University. I think that £5 subscription would be far better spent if placed in that library at the Supreme Court instead of in the University. Another thing that disgusted me very much was the entire and absolute lack of decency on the part of one of our professors who in the public Press castigated the Vice Chancellor of the University. I am not concerned as to which was right, but there was one of the professors holding up to ridicule a gentleman in the position of Vice Chancellor! Could there be anything worse? The University is supposed to be a dignified place and a place to be proud of, but apparently manners are not taught there, and any manners that may come out of the University are due to the students own innate good breeding. Look at the procession they have, a ridiculous and absurd procession. I do not know whether the University can stop it, but it is a pity if it cannot. Then take the University magazine, a paper they publish every now and then, but one that you cannot have in your home. Do the University professors write for it? No. I understand that the articles appearing in that paper are written gratis, that no one receives any remuneration for them. It should be a very good paper if some of the professors wrote for it some of the articles they write for the public Press. It may be claimed for them that they write for the Press in order that their knowledge might be disseminated. That may be so, but I think their knowledge would be disseminated very much better if they devoted their time and attention to the students, and so allowed the students to disseminate the knowledge in their turn. I trust we shall not have any further exchanges in the Press between officers of the University, whether professors or others. I must say I cannot join with Mr. Moore in contending that the Government have done so much good work.

Hon. T. Moore: Fairly good.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I will say this, that part of their work has been very good,

where they followed the previous Administration in endeavouring to get men back to work. The previous Administration from 1930 to 1933 had a very hard time indeed, with no money and a tremendous number of unemployed. They had to carry on as best they could. One object they had in view was to encourage private enterprise so as to get men back to permanent work, instead of casual work. True, that Administration had a large number of relief workers and half-time workers, which must be a horrible form of employment. But I suggest that the Government should do their utmost to encourage private enterprise so as to give the working man an opportunity to get permanent employment—and the only way to get permanent employment is to be employed in works of a permanent nature—

Hon. T. Moore: Kenneally was after that.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I will tell you about Mr. Kenneally. I would like the Minister when replying to the debate to tell me in what way the present Government during the past three years have advanced any money to factories for the purpose of establishing those factories in a practical way, so as to give men permanent employment. I notice that the ex-Minister for Employment, who was supposed to devote the whole of his time and attention to his job—I hardly like saying this, because he is not here to reply to me—certainly devoted a tremendous amount of time and attention to very excellent publicity work. It was seldom one could pick up a newspaper without seeing the Minister's photograph as he opened some show. I went to many myself, but I did not succeed in getting into the photograph. The Minister seized every opportunity to talk local production, which of course was excellent work. But consider what the previous Administration did in fostering the dairying industry. That was a permanent matter, supplying our own goods instead of importing them. But what have the present Government done, except talk about local industry—"support local industry"?

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Oh, did they?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Well, they talked about it.

Hon. G. Fraser: The trouble is, they did not talk enough.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Wherever I go, they are always talking about it. The Government cannot possibly promote private enterprise, which is the only way to get men into permanent work, because, broadly speaking, they are opposed to private enterprise, and they are directly opposed to banks and the so-called monetary system. They object to the banks, and yet private enterprise can only be financed by the trading banks. The only way that any industry, primary or secondary, can carry on is through the assistance of the banks. The Government claim that the general improvement in employment is due to their work. Nothing of the sort! It is due to the general improvement all round, and that general improvement has been brought about through the banks advancing money to people to employ men. Nobody can suggest that through any particular Government are men employed by private enterprise, unless the Government advance money to the industry to enable it to employ men. Temporary Government works are the very worst form of employment that any man can have. We cannot expect to get full value for the money, for various reasons, one being that the men are not always suitable for the occupation: they have no heart in their work; they have no permanency in their job, and they are simply working from hand to mouth. Furthermore, they are inclined to lose their self-respect. We must encourage men to secure permanent employment. The present Administration, according to articles appearing in the Press from time to time, from the pen of their newest Minister, are strongly opposed to the banks. I must assume that that is the general policy of the party. But it is rather curious that they should have appointed one of their own Ministers to an institution that bears the name of a bank and given him a princely salary, far more than is paid to the manager of a trading bank. I am referring to the so-called Agricultural Bank. That institution, of course, is not a bank, never was and was not intended to be. It was formed to settle the land, and now the day of reckoning has come, and naturally there is considerable trouble. In the ordinary course of business affairs, the man on the land would go to a private bank for assistance.

If land values dropped and the value of the security fell, the bank would decline to carry the man further, and would cut the loss. The banks usually do that by selling up the security. If there was a debit, it would be wiped out; if there was a credit, the man would get the difference. Then some other person would take the land over and the State would be none the worse for the change. There would still be a farmer on the land; instead of its being Brown, it would be Jones. Years ago the Legislature in its wisdom decided to have an institution to advance money to settle the land. I feel sure that everybody recognised there would be enormous losses. The day of reckoning has arrived. The institution was carried on until farmers gained the idea that they had a perfect right to go to the Agricultural Bank and demand money. That view, of course, was entirely wrong and was no good to the country. The present Commissioners are not advancing any more money, except as a trading bank would do. The Legislature, in passing the Agricultural Bank Act, realised that it would not be wise to open up new country—the Bank was to have nothing to do with politics which the opening up of new country generally is. The Bank was there for no other purpose than to wind up the affairs of the destitute farmers. It was said there were a great many people on the books of the Bank who should never be there. I entirely endorse that statement. It was said that those men must be got rid of, and that we must have decent men on the land who would make their farming pay. That is quite true; it has to be done. It was said, "We are not going to advance any more money. If the property is worth an advance, go to the private banks." The Act is simply designed to wind up the Agricultural Bank. Yet we have three gentlemen as Commissioners at high salaries for the sole purpose of winding up an institution dealing with destitute farmers.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: They are not all destitute. Many of the Agricultural Bank clients pay their way.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: If some are on a good sound footing, they could go to the private banks. At any rate, we should not call the Agricultural Bank by the high-sounding name of a bank. Let us have a rural credits institution, and apply it only where there is a reasonable prospect of

securing the payment of interest and the repayment of capital.

Hon. T. Moore: This House defeated that a few years ago.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Maybe, but new blood has entered the House since then. It seems to me the time has arrived when the policy of the Government must be to wind up the Bank. This might occupy 25 or even 50 years, but certainly it should be wound up. It is of no use carrying on in the present way. When once a Government institution has lost the confidence of the people with whom it deals, it cannot be of any benefit to the country, however well or however badly the institution may be conducted. If it has lost the confidence of the people with whom it deals, it cannot be of any value. There is a very common phrase in use, "Agricultural Bank assets." The Bank has no assets; it has securities. It was suggested in this House that the Bank should pay insurance on its assets. The Bank has no assets until it seizes the security. Pending that, the assets belong to the farmer. The Bank has security over the assets, and has to watch the security very closely, because often it is not as good as it might be. The State has lost a considerable sum of money through settling the land. That is unfortunate, but we have to put up with it. Some years ago many banks crashed because the value of their securities fell below par. That is happening now with the Agricultural Bank. Many of its securities, people believe, can never return to par. Consequently, the State has to cut its loss and wind up the institution. Assume that a man has obtained an advance from the Bank of £3,000, and that on sale by the Bank, all the property will bring is £1,000. Is it not far better to let some good man go on that property at £1,000, a man who is able to pay his interest, than to have on the holding a man with a hopeless debt of £3,000 doing no good for the country? It is far better to get the country settled in a businesslike way. If the property were worth £1,000, the man could go to a trading bank, or some other institution, and get £500 with which to carry on.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Why not write down the value to the present owner?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: When it was offered for sale, the present owner could have the right to buy it. Let us write down

securities until we write the Bank out of existence. The Commissioners are really the farmers' mortgagees. They are not bank managers.

Hon. L. Craig: Liquidators.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Not necessarily liquidators. They are farmers' mortgagees, and they deal principally with destitute farmers.

Hon. T. Moore: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I am pleased to have that contradiction. While I have occupied a seat in this House, I have had reason to doubt whether there was a solvent farmer in the State.

Hon. T. Moore: You never go into the country.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I spent last week on a farm, but that does not matter. It is very interesting to learn that we have farmers who are comparatively well off. They do not need the Agricultural Bank in the way it is being conducted at present. I should like to see the names of the Bank Commissioners changed to "farmers' mortgagees," and let them be paid accordingly. When I first entered the law, I went to the court one day, and found there many more barristers than I had seen before. I asked the reason, and was informed that it was the Bankruptcy Court. It is curious that there are a far greater number of briefed barristers in the Bankruptcy Court than in any other Court. Why, I do not know. Perhaps wherever the corpse is being divided, there the crows congregate. The other day I was in the country—Mr. Moore should be pleased to hear that—and was speaking to a magistrate. He told me that he had to travel there at his own expense; the department would not pay even for petrol for his car. He told me that to use the train would absorb three days, whereas by using his car he could leave home after breakfast and return for the evening meal. Yet, he pointed out, there were frequently several Government motor cars outside his court belonging to inspectors of the Agricultural Bank. Any one connected with the Bank seemed to have a car, but the Government would not provide even petrol for his car.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: A magistrate is not overworked.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: He is overtravelled. Has the hon. member seen the Bank Commissioners overworked? Some of them drive up and down to their office in state in very nice motor cars. Some arrange-

ment should be made for a magistrate to receive better treatment. I hope the Minister for Justice will consider the matter and see that magistrates are treated more reasonably. It must be to the advantage of the department if a magistrate is able to travel quickly and be available for other work.

The Chief Secretary: Did he apply for petrol?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I understand he did so and was refused. A matter that I think should be emphasised is that of our standard of living, of which we are rightly proud, has to be the standard of living that the primary producers give us. It is no use outstepping the primary producer. It is the primary producer who keeps the city and the metropolitan area going. The primary producer, whether it be the miner, the pastoralist, the pearler, or the farmer, is our sole source of wealth. We have got to do what we can to keep him producing. We have to take a relative view of matters. Throughout Nature we find host and parasite. Unquestionably our host is the primary producer, and the parasites are the rest of us. Now we are unfortunately getting round. Listening to the speeches in this debate, we find that the Government are being asked to provide money from the parasites to keep the host going. As soon as the parasite starts to keep the host, if the host cannot keep himself, the parasite has to go, because he cannot live unless he is bleeding the host. Therefore we have to see that everything in our power is done to assist the farmer and other primary producers.

Hon. L. Craig: He is sucked dry nearly.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: That is the only way we live—on the farmer and on the pastoralist, on the wheat cheque and on the wool cheque. Yet we find £80,000 being spent on an absolutely and entirely useless bus service, when that money will be needed by the pastoralist to re-stock his station and by the farmer up North where the crops are failing and the farmer outback, towards Koorda as well. The whole of that money is required, and urgently required. If we do not keep the farmers on their holdings, what is the use of trolley buses? None whatever. In any case, the buses are absolutely not wanted in any shape or form. Who wants to see those filthy, unsightly poles with live electric wires all about the place? Apart from their being dangerous and entirely unsightly, there is the fact that we have succeeded for many years in having

our wires underground throughout the city. But now we are to have them right from the top of the hill in Claremont along the river—a network of imported wire. The only excuse is that this will save importing petrol. It is shocking to think we should be spending all that money on un-needed trolley buses when funds are so urgently needed elsewhere. If we leave the buses to private enterprise, we shall have an enormous source of revenue. The revenue produced by the buses is great. There are the direct taxes, without taking into consideration the indirect taxation and income tax and so forth. But we are to have another State trading concern which will be like many of our State trading concerns, a dead loss. If privately owned buses are a dead loss, it will not matter to the Government, as they will still get their revenue out of the scheme. But if the Government's proposal proves a losing one, we shall have to pay. Who wants to pay? Who wants to go into this useless gamble?

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Tramway Union forced the Government's hand.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I sincerely hope the citizens will take some action before this proposal is carried out. Just think of £80,000 for buses when schools are needed around the country so that the farmers can keep their children by them and be more happy. Water supplies, too, are needed. If we do not spend a large sum of money in the North-West, it will be denuded of white men by leprosy. That disease is so serious that large sums of money will have to be spent, and quickly. The plea is that we have no money. But the Government have £80,000 to spend on a new, useless, unwanted State trading concern. It is time we began to realise that money must not be spent in the metropolitan area if we want the metropolitan area to continue. It must be spent in the country to keep the people out in the country and encourage them to remain there. The other night I happened to listen to a speech in another place suggesting a 40-hour week, not for the farmer, who has got to pay for it, but for the city worker. The farmer is the man who will have to pay for improving conditions in the city. Take the conditions at the present time; they are not comparable as between the country worker and the city worker. There is not the slightest doubt about who has the better conditions and the better standard of living; and yet we want to

improve the better conditions and the higher standard of living of the city worker at the expense of the country worker. It is even suggested that men should retire at 40 years of age. Can a farmer retire at 40? Can any primary producer? It was also suggested that the school leaving age should go up to 16 years, so as to get more men into employment, because then persons from 14 to 16 years would not be employed. I quite agree to taking the age for leaving school up to 16 years if the starting age is made eight years. I think our people would be far better educated if we started them at eight and they went on to 16, than, as at present, from six to 14. If a boy is started at eight, he will soon pick up to what is called the normal standard at 12 or 14.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: How is the man on the basic wage with a large family going to get on?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I have not worked the matter out, but I would be in favour of raising both ages. I quite realise that there are many Governments, some more progressive than others, inclined to look at matters through the electoral rolls or the Electoral Act. That is entirely wrong. Whatever the Government may be, they should stand or fall by doing what is the right thing, and not be out vote-catching. I fear that sometimes the present Government's actions have led me to think that possibly they are after votes and not after what they think would be correct. Now I wish to quote Section 11 of the Transport Co-ordination Act passed in 1933—

(1) On the direction of the Minister, the Board shall, or of its own volition may, inquire and report whether the services of any railway or part of a railway or any tramway or part of a tramway, are adequate for the requirements of the district or area which such railway or tramway serves.

(2) If in the opinion of the board the services of any railway or tramway as aforesaid are inadequate, and the requirements of the district are or can be better served by road and/or air transport, the board may recommend the closure or partial suspension of service of the railway or tramway.

(3) Any such recommendation shall be put before Parliament for its sanction, or otherwise:

Provided that the Minister shall direct the board to call tenders for road transport and/or air transport to serve the district or area served by the railway or tramway, and the re-

sult of such tenders shall be ascertained before the Bill for the closure is put before Parliament.

(4) In calling tenders, the board shall frame such conditions as will insure that adequate provision is made for all the transport requirements of such district or area.

(5) No tender shall be accepted by the Minister until Parliament approves of the closure of the railway or tramway. On the acceptance of any tender by the Minister, the Board shall collect from the tenderer the sum or sums agreed upon, and such sum or sums shall be paid into the Treasury and used to liquidate the capital cost of the railway or tramway which has been closed. Any sum or sums received from any subsequent tenderer or tenderers shall be dealt with in like manner.

(6) The capital cost of any railway or tramway so closed, less the value of any material recovered, shall at once be deleted from the capital account of the Railway Department.

(7) It shall be the duty of any person or persons charged with the promotion or proposing to construct any new railway to confer on such proposal with the Board, which shall inquire into the same and report thereon. The Board's report shall be laid before Parliament when the Bill to authorise the construction of the railway is introduced.

I think hon. members will agree that that was meant, and was thought, to be sufficient to stop any tramway from being closed without the authority of this House: but what is overlooked is that the definition of a trolley bus makes it a tramway. So that the Government are not closing the tramway at all, but are only substituting a different form of tram. The Government ride roughshod over the Act, within their legal rights but not within the spirit of the Act, as hon. members will agree. If the Government did what I submit would be the right thing, they would call for tenders for the material in that road. This would wipe out some of the capital cost of the tramway. The sale of the rails and the necessary paraphernalia, —posts and wires,—would also assist to wipe off some of the capital cost. I consider the Government have done a thing they should certainly not have done. There is a matter which I would like the Government to take in hand. I am sure hon. members will agree with me as to this. For many years, I know, the present Government have desired to have a Parliamentary Draftsman. It is highly essential that there should be a drafting staff. The Parliamentary Draftsman's job is one that cannot easily be filled. Drafting in itself is an art, a matter that requires consider-

able book knowledge. We are now turning out a great many extremely well-trained lawyers from the University who are all requiring jobs. I would like to see someone appointed clerk-in-charge of the drafting room, which would be a sub-department of the Crown Law Department, where all drafting would be done, whether the actual drafting was done by the Solicitor General, the Crown Solicitor, or the draftsman available to private members. It should all go through that department — all laws, improvements to laws, and necessary amendments required by law. He should advise the Attorney General and Minister for Justice, so that the Government could be well informed as to current legislation in other parts of the Empire. A striking example of the manner in which regulations are drafted, printed and gazetted, and come before this House, is the recent one of the traffic regulations. The traffic regulations, owing to the amended Act, took over six months to draw up. They were then gazetted. I took exception to one regulation, but before that could come before the House all the regulations, which took six months to draft, were thrown out and a fresh lot came into existence. Only yesterday these new regulations were brought forward. Quite obviously the reason was that they had not been gone into. I do not know, but I am going to assume that the repealed regulations could not have been prepared by the Crown Law Department, but must have been prepared departmentally. I was once an officer of the Crown Law Department, and I know this happens. A department wants a regulation for the purpose of rectifying some evil. They consider it is useless taking it to the Crown Law Department where they would not have it attended to for a week, a fortnight or a month, or perhaps would not get it at all. So they draft it themselves, the Minister puts it through, it is gazetted, and no one ever worries about it. It may be ultra vires, but no one is going to query it. That is entirely wrong. A regulation has the same force as an Act of Parliament, but I defy any member of this House to find where a regulation under a specific Act is to be found or seen. Take the Noxious Weeds Act. I will defy any member to say whether there are or are not any regulations under that, and if so, how he can find out if there are. Everyone knows that regulations are made holus-bolus

and we get them put on the Table here, and there is no record kept, no index. The department should have an index of all regulations, and a file of all regulations. They should issue them every year in bound volume, as the Commonwealth does, keeping them up-to-date, and watching amendments, and so assisting people generally. One of these days we are likely to be run in because a policeman has suddenly discovered there is a regulation to prevent us from spitting on the footpath, a regulation we have heard nothing about.

Hon. J. Nicholson: There is such a regulation now.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Would anyone be able to find it? The department I suggest would pay its way in facilitating matters generally. It should be a separate department. Regulations are as important as Acts of Parliament and should be treated as such.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They didn't give you time to remedy this when you were there.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Unfortunately there was some misunderstanding. With the establishment of such a department, it would be found that as time went on expert draftsmen were being trained, men who are so urgently needed. The head of the department would watch the law and current alterations in the law. May I refer to one that went through in England in 1935, the Law Reform Act? It is not uncommon to find instances such as this. Two cars collide with the result that a passenger of one car is seriously injured. We must assume that there was some negligence or there would have been no collision. The passenger could sue either of the drivers or both. What he usually does is to sue both and get a judgment against both. It does not matter whether one driver is very negligent, and the other only a little so. The law takes no notice of the degrees of negligence. Therefore the law will give a judgment against both. The net result is that the plaintiff can get the whole of the money from whichever driver he likes. He could let one go free—probably his pal who was the driver of the car he was in and very likely the negligent one—and get his money from the other.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I think there is the right of contribution.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: In the new law in England, there is the right of contribution, and the man from whom the money

is claimed can insist on getting his money recouped to some extent by the other man. But that is not so here. Again, here a man is liable for certain of the wrongs his wife may commit. In England that is not so. If the wife in England, for instance, slanders her neighbour, she has to pay for it, and not the husband, but that is not the case here. It might be said that a private Bill should be introduced in this connection. A private Bill might be passed through this House, but there is another place where they have only private business once a week, and an enormous number of private Bills are slaughtered. I know from personal experience, for I have tried to get a private Bill through the other place. But this matter should be dealt with by the Government. I feel sure that if we had had such an office as I am suggesting, we would have long since had third-party insurance for motor cars. This matter was top of the list in the Governor's Speech last session, but it is not even placed in the Speech this session. It is, however, long overdue. I would also ask the Minister to make some inquiries into the possibility of expediting the issue of the bound volumes of the Statutes, for which we at present have to wait eight months. The bound volumes may mean nothing to the man in the street, but they are important to those dealing with the Statutes—all the courts and the lawyers. If a man wants to know anything about the law, he asks the lawyer, but the lawyer cannot tell him because he has not got the bound volume. Every year I have brought up this subject. It is absolutely essential that the Statutes be consolidated. Mr. Sayer has practically all consolidated and ready for the printer. Mr. Sayer was retired some years ago and his services in this work that he has carried on since his retirement have proved most valuable. Let us get the whole work completed even if we have to cut out half a mile of trolley buses. Through the astuteness of Mr. Sayer, consolidations have been pushed through each year. In the Speech now being debated there is mention of the consolidation of the Police Act. Why not a Statutes consolidation, and do the thing properly? The Police Act Consolidation, I presume, means that it is proposed to amend the law relating to the police—a new Police Act—and it is being called the Police Act Consolidation. It is high time that the Statutes were consolidated; the con-

solidation would provide ample work for the new drafting officer whose appointment I have suggested should be made without delay.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [9.26]: In the course of the debate on the Address-in-reply we hear complaints from members regarding the proposed legislation mentioned in the Speech. On examining the position this year we find that we have progressed somewhat, for there is listed about ten measures, which is a larger number than I remember ever having seen mentioned in the Speech. Members cannot now say that there has not been an improvement in this direction. The Governor's Speech is always a very interesting and comprehensive document, and is taken advantage of for a marathon debate. I wish to let members know that at this hour of the evening it is not my intention to continue the marathon; I desire merely to make reference to one or two subjects mentioned in the Speech. The first is the question of migration. We have heard a lot in recent years from statesmen, and politicians in the Commonwealth, who have agitated for a resumption of the migration policy. I hope it will be many years before there is such a resumption.

Hon. L. Craig: You mean assisted migration.

Hon. G. FRASER: Assisted or nominated.

Hon. L. Craig: Or voluntary.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am dealing with migration as we knew it some years ago.

Hon. L. Craig: There is nothing wrong with nominating migrants under certain guarantees.

Hon. G. FRASER: What are guarantees worth? There are many instances of those who guaranteed having been called upon to fulfil the guarantees and not being able to do so.

Hon. L. Craig: Their guarantees should not have been accepted.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member should be allowed to proceed without interruption.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is suggested that the guarantees should not have been received, but they were received and in many cases the guarantors were not able to stand up to the guarantees they had given. There

were instances when, after the migrants had arrived and had been here for some time, the conditions of those who had given the guarantee had changed to such an extent that they were not able to stand up to the responsibility they agreed to accept. I hope that migration on similar lines will not again take place, at least for many years to come. If it is desired to have population in this country I do not again wish to see similar schemes put into operation. I would prefer the method suggested by Mr. Moore this afternoon, that is, to make the conditions more attractive than they are now, and by this means induce people to come here rather than as a result of any Government scheme for the assistance of migrants.

Hon. L. Craig: No one wants that.

Hon. G. FRASER: Whilst Mr. Piesse did not favour an entire migration scheme, he was quite prepared to set a scheme afoot to bring domestics to this country. I know there are many more males than females in this State, nevertheless I am opposed to that suggestion. The hon. member said we should have domestics brought here, because it was impossible in many cases to obtain domestic servants under present conditions. We do not need a migration scheme to obtain domestics. Many people blame the women folk because they will not take jobs of this sort. In numbers of instances one cannot blame the women folk. This is one of the unorganised industries of the State, and because it is unorganised numbers of people take advantage of those who enter it. I do not say that is so in all cases, but in innumerable instances women are expected to work all sorts of hours and under all sorts of conditions for a mere pittance. We have complaints because the women folk of the State will not assume duties of this kind.

Hon. L. Craig: You have not given the real reason.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have given the chief reason.

Hon. L. Craig: They get higher wages than shop assistants.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is news to me. I know something about the wages of shop assistants and about those paid to domestics.

Hon. L. Craig: One gets her keep and the other does not.

Hon. G. FRASER: The domestic is kept from first thing in the morning until midnight, in many cases.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You are speaking of 20 or 30 years ago.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am speaking of to-day.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The conditions are quite different now.

Hon. G. FRASER: The conditions of the industry make it difficult to obtain women for this class of work. They have to work long hours, receive small pay, and have unsatisfactory conditions generally to contend with. Many domestics who have had previous experience do not care to venture back into the industry. If something could be done to improve the conditions it would not be long before many of the vacancies that now exist would be filled, and the complaints would cease.

Hon. L. Craig: Why can it not be organised?

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The girls are not available.

Hon. G. FRASER: I suppose those in the industry are as much to blame as anyone else, I understand this House refused to give them the right to organise. There is not much chance for any organisation to make headway unless it has the protection of the Arbitration Court.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And have another Miss Shelley coming into our home.

The PRESIDENT: If the hon. member addressed the Chair he would not provoke so many interjections.

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know that she would enter any of the homes. A few Miss Shelleys in some of the homes would make the conditions more decent than they are to-day. I was pleased to hear Mr. Mann touch upon the tourist question. I have given some consideration to that matter. I was surprised to see the small amount that had been expended on advertising to bring tourists to this State. We have all the natural advantages, and quite a number of places of beauty to attract many more tourists than we have had in the past. Most of those who complain blame the Government because insufficient money is spent in advertising. Even if we spent treble the amount, that would be insufficient. It is not only a matter for the Government. If tourists were encouraged to come here accommodation would have to be provided for them in various parts of the State, accom-

modation of the standard required by visitors. That indicates the matter is not only one for the Government. I admit we should impress upon the Government the necessity for playing their part in the matter, but private enterprise must also take a hand when the tourists are brought here. I do not know that at present we have the facilities for a large tourist traffic.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Government could at all events fix up Cave House.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes. I interjected when Mr. Mann was speaking that I understood the money from the insurance on Cave House had been placed in a trust fund. That was the answer supplied to me at the time of the fire when I asked a question concerning the matter. During a recent trip to the Eastern States I noticed that a good deal of attention was being paid there to tourist traffic. As a result of the activities of the authorities there the States are undoubtedly reaping a rich reward.

Hon. L. Craig: The catering at the railway stations there is much better than it is here.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes. When we do get the tourists we must look after them a great deal better than we do now. It is for the Government first of all to arrange the necessary advertising; secondly a great improvement will have to be effected in the railway facilities offering in this State. Most of the tourists that come here will have to travel over the State by rail, because they will scarcely be able to bring their cars with them. It is rather too expensive to hire cars here, consequently the principal mode of travel will be by rail. If we relied solely upon our present railway catering arrangements I am afraid not many tourists would come back twice.

Hon. L. Craig: They are disgraceful.

Hon. G. FRASER: There is a dining car on the goldfields line, but when we get away from that line we find that the catering arrangements are more primitive than they are anywhere else in Australia. Apart from the goldfields line, or perhaps the Murchison and Wiluna lines, it is impossible to get a meal along the route. At Beverley on the Great Southern only a little time is afforded to the traveller to obtain some sort of a meal. The train for Pemberton leaves Perth at 7.30 in the morning and reaches its destination at 10.15 p.m. Throughout that long journey it is impossible to obtain a meal, beyond tea and

sandwiches at the refreshment rooms. If the Government do embark upon a campaign to encourage tourists I suggest they effect the improvements to which I have referred. A good deal has been said about orderly marketing. In our district we have many producers who are suffering because of the lack of marketing facilities. Fruitgrowers and those engaged in vegetable growing are the people most concerned. At one time there is a superabundance of produce on the market, and at other times a scarcity, because there is no organisation to regulate the marketing.

Hon. L. Craig: James cut that out.

Hon. G. FRASER: Let me take onions, for instance. Only two or three districts grow onions extensively, and the produce all goes on the market at the one time, with consequent low prices for the growers. The consumer would not have to pay a higher price if the commodity were marketed in an orderly manner. The grower finds it hard to carry on under the present system, but if orderly marketing were instituted, a great improvement in the industry concerned would be effected. I was surprised to hear Mr. Parker take the Government to task for their employment policy, and to hear him contrast the policy of the present Government with that of the past Government. I should have thought he would have left that subject alone. During the term of the previous Government hundreds and thousands of men in the metropolitan area were doing nothing but pick grass out of the footpaths. I am surprised to think that the hon. member should stand for that sort of employment.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You quite misunderstood me.

Hon. G. FRASER: The present Government have made an endeavour to engage men in occupations that will prove of benefit to the State. During the term of the previous Government men were loaned to local governing bodies so that they might draw cash instead of ration tickets, and were called upon to fill in their time in various ways. That type of employment was stopped by the Government at the first opportunity. All those men who were wasting their time were put on to works from which great benefit would accrue to the State. The sewerage and other works were being carried out by men who previously were merely filling in time for the local governing bodies, apart from which, of course, there was the fact that the

local governing bodies could reduce the number of men employed by them. That resulted in a further increase in unemployment at that time. We now find that men are engaged on tasks that are of advantage not only to the men but to the State as well. Despite what Mr. Parker said, the men on that work now have some outlook that was not available under the regime of the previous Government. When we consider that for upwards of five or six years some of the men on part-time employment have averaged throughout less than the basic wage, it seems almost impossible that they could have struggled through. I hope that the announcement that is to be made by the Government regarding conditions that will operate as from the 5th October next will be such that these men will be placed on full-time employment. I am one of those who desire the financial emergency tax to be altered so that the men in receipt of the basic wage shall be exempted from the tax.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That was done with regard to the basic wage workers in the metropolitan area, but not on the goldfields.

Hon. G. FRASER: Due to the higher basic wage payable on the fields, I know that the goldfields workers had to pay the tax, but I shall assist the hon. member if he seeks to exclude men in receipt of the basic wage throughout the State from the necessity to pay the financial emergency tax. I do not think he will accept the challenge. Because of the recent rise in the basic wage, a large number of workers will now have to pay the tax, although formerly they were excluded from that responsibility. I hope the Government will take an early opportunity to introduce legislation to grant further exemption for the basic wage workers. While the amount of the tax may not seem much to the man who is in a steady position, it is considerable in the eyes of the man in receipt of the basic wage.

Hon. L. Craig: We are living in a state of emergency.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, but we should at least endeavour to do the best we possibly can for the basic wage workers. I believe that only those in receipt of more than that wage should be asked to pay such a tax. There is one other matter I wish to refer to, and it is inevitable that it should be touched upon by any member coming from the Fremantle district. I refer to the road bridge. Not much advance has been made in the effort to secure a new structure. Two or

three years ago, the engineers told us that there was still a life of eight years in the old bridge. I assume that a lot of preparatory work will be required, even if the Government decide to build a new bridge. By the time those preparations are made and the bridge is completed, not much of that eight-year period will remain. I trust that before long some definite announcement will be made regarding this all-important work.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I suppose you anticipate that, now you have two Ministers from the West Province.

Hon. G. FRASER: Ministers do not take us into their confidence regarding such departmental matters, and we have no more knowledge in that respect than the hon. member. This, of course, is not merely a Fremantle matter, but is one that affects the whole of the State. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. H. Tuckey, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.52 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 9th September, 1936.

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

QUESTION—FORESHORE, SWAN RIVER.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has he yet received any report from the Joint Committee representing his

department and the City Council on the question of the control of the foreshore between Barrack-street and Mounts Bay-road? 2, If so, what is the nature of such report? 3, Is there any prospect of an early start being made with the work of reclamation and beautification of this part of the foreshore?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1 and 2, No. 3, No policy of reclamation and beautification can be determined until the authority of control is settled, and the question of the various uses to which the respective parts of the area are to be put is decided.

QUESTION—HARVEY IRRIGATION AREA.

Mr. McLARTY asked the Minister for Water Supplies: 1, In view of the serious position that has arisen in the Harvey irrigation area owing to the shortage of water, causing approximately 4,600 acres to be excised, is it his intention to give immediate consideration to making provision for additional water storage in this area? 2, As 22½ per cent. more land than can be watered by the present weir is still in the area, how does the Irrigation Commission intend to water this area?

The MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, Provision on the Estimates for survey of possible reservoir sites is contemplated. 2, It is considered that not for several years would the whole of this percentage of land need irrigation supplies, and that in the meantime progressive methods of water saving should meet increasing demands.

QUESTION—STATE INSURANCE DE- PARTMENT AND GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Employment: What are the premiums per £100 of insurance paid by the Public Works Department to the State Insurance Department for part-time relief workers, quarrymen, timber fellers, general labourers and the department's clerical staff?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT replied: The insurance of the Public Works Department employees is arranged on a flat rate basis. The rates charged are 20s. per cent. for the clerical staff and 160s. per cent. for other workers.