

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 20th August, 1924.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. G. W. Miles, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to the Hon. J. J. Holmes (North) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eleventh Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND (East) [4.35]: On rising for the first time in this House I wish to express my appreciation to you, Sir, for the very cordial reception you gave me upon my entering the political arena. I recognise the difficulties that confront me, but I am satisfied that the cordial reception I received at your hands will go a long way to assist me in carrying out the duties that devolve upon me. I thank members generally for the very kind and courteous reception they have given me. I feel I am amongst warm friends and that there lie before me some very happy times, although I expect also to experience some very strenuous times. So far as I am able I shall conform to the rules and regulations governing the House, and I trust that you, Sir, will not experience any trouble on account of neglect or deficiency on my part. I assure you of my desire to uphold the dignity of the House, and I express my loyalty to you, and once more to our sovereign Lord the King. To all matters that come before us I am determined to give the consideration and unbiassed attention that every measure is entitled to receive. I shall not be biassed by any party feeling, because it is our duty to devote such attention to the work here as will make for the best interests of the State as a whole. I congratulate the Leader of the House upon the position he occupies. When he was Minister for Lands I was one of his officers and it was there that I learned to appreciate his work and to realise what he really had done and was doing for the State. So long as he continues to carry on the work of developing the State—for it is in the development of the State that our wealth lies—I shall be prepared to give him my whole-hearted support. Although I was under his jurisdiction I also had to assist in the administra-

tion of other forms of government. In the best of them I found some things that were not quite up to the mark and in the worst of them I found things that were praiseworthy, and between the two I came to the conclusion that in every instance the producer is the man upon whom they had to rely. Now I find myself a member of this Chamber, and I realise that it is a non-party House. Here members may speak as they think without expressing the resolutions of any camera or caucus or other executive body. I wish to be able to give unbiassed and untrammelled attention to every subject that comes before us as it appeals to me as an individual. I have noticed recently in certain sections of the Press that there is a tendency to import partyism into this Chamber. This I greatly deplore. It is bad enough to have party legislation elsewhere, and when it is directed towards the advancement of one section of the community without giving similar consideration to other sections, it is our duty to neutralise its bad effects. I regret that any attempt should be made to prevent this House from dealing with a measure in other than an unbiassed and untrammelled way. It should be a House of review. If it be made a party House it will cease to be a House of review, and will be open to the charge of being biassed through party considerations. This House cannot be considered as one standing for commercialism. It represents the thrifty man and the married man. A lad starting work at the age of 15 has to put by only half a crown a week, and when he is 21 years of age he is qualified to be an elector to this House. He has only to possess £50 worth of freehold property. This indicates that a man not in possession of this amount is not of a thrifty nature, generally speaking. On the other hand, a married man is living in a fairly poorly-conditioned home if it is not worth the £17 per annum that is required as rental value.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That does not apply in the timber areas.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: If it does not apply, the homes supplied to the timber workers cannot be up to the standard. I presume the hon. member refers to the fact of timber workers being given a home as a concession. If that be so, they are in an exactly similar position to a number of civil servants, such as post office employees, who are provided with homes as a concession connected with their employment. In that instance, although they may not pay directly by way of rent, they have a concession given to them in lieu of salary, and therefore they can apply to be placed on the roll.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They cannot do that.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I trust this House will never consist of members who will have to subjugate personality and individuality to the dictates of any one organisation, and with detriment to another section of the community. The Premier recently stated

his intention to continue the advancement of the country by way of developmental works. I realise that it is only upon the development of our State that we can expect to balance the ledger. Development is essential. But are the Government truly earnest in their desire to assist Western Australia by a developmental policy? We find they have started with a direct negative in the introduction of the 44-hour principle. That principle represents the negation of progress. I for one would like to see men able to do with less work, but the question is, can the country afford it to-day? At the close of the war Germany promptly set about making up leeway by working extra time in order to increase output. In Western Australia, a country which because of its youth and the peculiar circumstances of its situation has always had much leeway to make up, the Government are asking us to make increased leeway by working only 44 hours per week. Australian conditions of production are perhaps the most costly in the world, and yet the Government of this State are increasing that cost, and with the enhanced cost they expect us to compete against other countries which have lower costs of production and are sending their goods into the same markets. Again, this imposition of the 44-hour week means increased cost throughout the State. Which section of the community is to carry the extra cost? Undoubtedly it will fall back again on the producer. Notwithstanding this, we are told to advance the production of the State so that the ledger may be balanced. With one hand the Government urge the people to produce more, and with the other hand they introduce legislation which must hold Western Australia's production back. The 44-hour principle is wrong, and represents a direct blow at our productivity and an impediment to our progress. If the producers are to make a do of it, they cannot afford to work 44 hours per week. Indeed, they will have to work longer hours than in the past in order to make up the leeway caused by concessions to other sections of the community. In contesting the East Province election I made it one of my principal pledges to endeavour to increase production, as the only means by which the finances could be squared. I feel certain that increased production is the only means that will bring in the necessary revenue to enable the Government to carry on. If that is correct, we must pay more attention to our agricultural resources. The agricultural industry has now jumped to the front, and is largely carrying the burdens of the State. Recently I visited the Eastern States, and for the first time travelled in Queensland; and I returned from Queensland with an elevated opinion of this, our own State. I am perfectly convinced that Western Australia's potentialities are second to none in the Com-

monwealth. It is for us to direct our undivided attention to the development of our latent resources, if we are to come into our own; and the sooner we do that, the better it will be for Western Australia. We can do it only by opening up our undeveloped areas and bringing them into production without delay, and by applying science to agriculture in order to increase the production of those parts of the State which are already settled. As an instance of what production has done for Western Australia, I shall refer back to the years 1910 and 1911, when the development of the eastern wheat belt first began. At that time it was asserted that the development of the wheat belt was a grievous error. Sir James Mitchell was abused from every quarter. People said his policy was insane. Sir James received kick after kick. He was cursed and anathematised from every direction.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I do not think that is quite correct.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I think it is correct, because I happen to know that Sir James Mitchell was much abused both by those settled in the country and by the dwellers in the cities and towns. Many people came to me with their grievances, a fact which I took as a proof that the grievances were fairly widespread. But now that the wheat belt has proved a success, we are told Sir James did not settle it.

Hon. J. Ewing: Some people are very unfair, are they not?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I have come to the conclusion that there are two kinds of honesty in this world. There is an honesty which is not fair to the person concerned, as in the case of Sir James Mitchell; and that quality can hardly be called honesty. We had better leave such honesty behind us. Sir James was abused for settling the wheat belt, and now that the wheat belt is a proved success we are told that the work of settlement was done by somebody else. I for one will not see Sir James abused for what he did. Let him have the credit to which he is entitled.

Hon. A. Lovekin: He got every credit here.

Hon. J. Ewing: Yes, the same credit as he is getting to-day.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I do not say that what I refer to has been confined to this House. I am speaking now of a general expression of opinion throughout the State. Sir James was Premier of Western Australia up to a few months ago, and thus was the representative of the State; and it was our duty then, as it is our duty now, to defend him from abuse, whether that abuse comes from inside this Chamber or outside it. After being abused for what he undertook, he was refused the honour and glory attach-

ing to his achievements. However, such is human nature. Some pertinent facts may help us to realise exactly what has taken place as a result of the development of the wheat belt. I quote them in order to show what has been accomplished in the past, and what may be expected to accrue from further development of the State. Since 1919 there have been about 11 million sterling borrowed by Western Australia. The borrowing was for various purposes, but seven millions of the amount were spent in the wheat belt, being used for the development of the lands there, and also for the soldier settlement scheme. Those seven millions are costing Western Australia £400,000 per annum. That £400,000 is being collected again by the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board. Certainly the recoup of some of the money will be delayed, but eventually it will come back into the Treasury. It means that we have had seven million pounds' worth of development work which has cost the people practically nothing. Its effect upon the State has been to improve the financial position of the Railway Department very materially. There was a loss of half a million on the railways in 1919, and they are now working on a level footing financially. In other words, the expenditure of the seven millions on the wheat belt has during the last five years returned to us an average annual income of half a million sterling through the Railway Department. That in its turn means that the seven millions spent in development work on the wheat belt will come back to the Treasury in 15 years' time. If we borrow money for development on such lines, we are on a sound financial basis. Sooner or later the money comes back, and we shall be able to utilise it for further development. The value of the improvements and advantages accruing is everlasting. The development policy to which I refer has also exercised an influence over labour conditions in Western Australia. I am prepared to maintain that labour conditions depend largely upon the development of our country. If we develop and produce, we will find work for everybody. Production of wealth means employment of labour. During the five years from 1919 onwards labour conditions have changed very much for the better. Early in 1919, when the expenditure of the seven millions began, there were 3,000 men out of employment in Western Australia. On top of that, immigration was proceeding. Furthermore, 11,000 men were returning from the war. True, many of those 11,000 men were re-assimilated into their ordinary occupations; but a large percentage of them had to be dealt with on the labour market. After five years those 3,000 unemployed are off our hands, and the proportion of the 11,000 returned soldiers are

off our hands, and the same remark applies to the migrants. The development of the country within five years so improved the labour market that there were hardly enough men to take the jobs offering. From that point of view so long as we develop the country, labour conditions must improve. I therefore appeal to the Government to continue that development, if they mean to stand by the people whom they claim to represent. In connection with the development of Western Australia I must refer to the great North-West, and I shall also have to consider the South-West with its group settlements. I have not had an opportunity of visiting the North-West, and therefore cannot speak of it from personal knowledge; but I believe that it is possible for us to develop that territory along the lines of cotton growing and tropical fruit culture. I am firmly of opinion that sooner or later the North-West, which is now said to be the home of the coloured races in Western Australia, will become a land that will be a credit and a benefit to our white people. I trust the North-West Department will do all they can to increase the possibilities of that part of the State. While on this subject, I would like to quote some wool statistics in order to show the value of the industry to the State. Most of our wool, as hon. members know, is grown in the North-West. In 1914-15 we sent away 24 million lbs., while in 1922-23 the quantity was 42 million lbs., almost double the figures of eight years before. As I have said, production that brings wealth has also an influence on every section of the community, and especially upon the labour market. It is imperative, therefore, that we should pay every attention to the increased production of wool, as well as to increased production in other respects. These figures seem to me to create confidence in this great State of ours, and in the possibilities of the North-West. Coming to group settlements, I am pleased to note that the Government intend to continue the policy that was inaugurated by Sir James Mitchell. An unfair attack has been made on the ex-Premier. When he proceeded to the Old Country he placed before the Imperial authorities certain conditions which were accepted, and then when he returned he was lauded to the skies for the great deal he had made. The papers were full of it and the commercial people spoke about it, and he was hailed to be a good fellow because he had effected what he went Home to carry out. Somebody else went later, and working on the lines pioneered by Sir James Mitchell, was able to get perhaps a little better deal. Naturally that came as the result of experience. In this State, however, the operations that have been carried out have disclosed that it has not been possible to do everything that was desired, from the financial point of view. Then because the scheme has not turned out trumps completely, Sir James

Mitchell is abused on the score of so-called failure.

Hon. J. Ewing: There is very little difference between the Federal scheme and ours.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: When the scheme was inaugurated Sir James was praised, and because it has not turned out as successfully as some people expected, he is abused.

Hon. A. Lovekin: All shadow and no substance.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Why did not the people tell him then that there was only a shadow in it?

Hon. A. Lovekin: So we did.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: If Sir James had been told that when he first inaugurated the scheme, there might have been some justification for the criticism that has since followed.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Turn up "Hansard" of two years ago and see for yourself.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Very well, I will look up "Hansard." Sir James Mitchell has now relinquished office. He had been defeated when I was returned to this Chamber. When criticism is offered, I expect it to be of a constructive nature. It is only by criticism of this kind that we can assist the country and the Government that may be in power. It is my intention at all times to offer criticism of this description and I intend also, whenever it lies in my power, to assist the Government in its policy of development. I found that practically the first two speeches I heard in this House—those of Mr. Holmes and Mr. Lovekin—constituted an attack upon Sir James Mitchell. I like Australian fair play, but that kind of thing appears to me to be hitting a man when he is down. Both those hon. members admitted that they had assisted to bring about the ex-Premier's defeat, and not satisfied with that, they came into this House prepared to abuse him and kick him after the defeat. That is not what I call Australian fair play. I would not be guilty of using such unfair tactics.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Why do you say I kicked him?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: There is too much destructive criticism. Unless a member is prepared to offer helpful criticism, he cannot be of much assistance to the State. When we have destroyed, it is pretty hard work to build up again. I am satisfied that the group settlement policy must be continued, and that we must develop the South-West. The State requires that that policy shall be carried out, and the Empire has been demanding it, whilst the safety of our territory also makes it imperative. If we are not prepared to do that, someone else may attempt to do it for us. I will not say too much about group settlements just now because there is to be a Commission appointed to investigate the position. But I should like to compare the

antagonism that has been shown towards the scheme at the present time with the antagonism displayed towards the development of the wheat belt in 1910-11. I am inclined to think that the latter was even greater than the opposition now being shown to South-West development. Western Australia lost, through the development of the wheat areas, about £200,000 on account of inexperience in the cultivation of certain unsuitable lands. Are we to say that, on account of that loss, we would have been justified in throwing aside any further work of development at that time? We shall always have losses, and if we are always going to permit such losses, incurred in the initial stages of a policy of development, to stand in the way of further progress, then we shall never make any advance. I admit there is a possibility of losses in connection with group settlements, but those who have offered opposition to that scheme of development have never had the temerity to suggest anything in its place. In connection with the development of the South-West we must naturally take into consideration the possibilities of dairying. Mr. Baxter told us the other night that about 500 cows only were available in Western Australia for the groups. A little while ago, when I was in Adelaide, it was reported in the papers there that our Minister for Lands had said that 2,500 cows would be required for the groups. This puts us in a precarious position with regard to finding stock for the groups. We have to pay strict attention to the class of cow that we give to the settlers. In the Eastern States the dairying industry has been in existence for the past 50 years, and the people engaged in it have developed a very fine type of cow. I know that they are not too keen on letting us have any of the progeny, because of their own requirements over there. So that if we make an effort to secure stock in the Eastern States we shall be offered inferior animals and it will, in consequence, be difficult for us to supply the group settlers with the best type of stock. If we can get five or six really good cows, they will be worth a dozen poor ones, and it is certain that if we do secure inferior stock we shall assist the settlers to find their way to the bankruptcy court. Then we are faced with this fact, that whilst we are trying to establish the dairying industry, the Eastern States are endeavouring to stabilise the market. That indicates the parlous condition in which the industry finds itself in the Eastern States, due to the high cost of production. The dairying industry is about one of the hardest in which an individual can engage; it is often heart-breaking work, involving long hours and seven days a week. It is on that account that many people will not have anything to do with it. The industry can only be properly engaged in by an individual with a family, otherwise he is up against labour conditions. The Government

have a very difficult problem before them in connection with the development of the industry in this State. I wish to offer a few remarks on the subject of decentralisation, touched upon by Mr. Burvill at the previous sitting. I can readily support what Mr. Burvill said in connection with the need for opening up our ports and thereby reducing the expenses of our railways. In connection with decentralisation, we must remember that the price of goods sold at the world's parity cannot be increased within our Legislative halls. No legislation can affect the prices that we can get in competition with the world's producers. The only way to reduce the cost to the producer is to reduce the cost of delivering goods to the world's market. This can only be done by opening up our various ports, and reducing the cost of railrage from the farm to the port of embarkation. If we could do this there would be less unnecessary haulage over the railways, and the railways would pay better. Education plays a big part, a greater part than most of us realise, in the development of the country. One of the causes for the influx of people to the city is the greater advantages to be derived for their children from city educational facilities. Our insufficient and inefficient country schools largely account for this drift. We need more schools in the country, and better schools. I venture to say the pioneers of the country have been penalised through their children far more than most of us realise, because they have not had efficient schools, and in many instances the population has been so sparse that they have had no school at all. That was one of the greatest difficulties that I, as a farmer in the wheat belt, was up against. There are scores of children scattered about the country, and it is impossible for them to get any schooling. There is a system of correspondence classes in vogue in the Education Department, but little children do not understand the tuition given by this means. It, therefore, devolves upon the parent to spend several hours a day in directing the children in their own home, and the parents have not the time to do it. In despair, the people send their children away, or have to go to the city to have their children educated. Mr. Gray referred to the cost of conveying country children, namely, 6d. a day, being a tax upon the community that should be wiped out.

Hon. E. H. Gray: I did not say that. I said the system required regulating and the amount reducing.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: When Mr. Gray suggested that this rate should be reduced and better facilities given to city children, I could not help thinking he was showing a lack of intelligent thought. The development of the country depends on the educational facilities given to the children, and if he had looked at the matter from a broad point of view I am sure he

would have seen that 6d. a day allowance was a very small one. It does not amount to more than £13,000 a year. Most of that amount is picked up not by the wealthy farmers, but by the people who need it most, namely the workers in the country.

Hon. E. H. Gray: I am prepared to prove that is not so.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I am speaking from knowledge I have gained from the people I have seen. It is usually the pioneer who goes out into the country and develops it, and who is in such a bad position. The Government say to him "We will allow you 6d. a day sustenance to enable your child to be driven to the nearest school, so that you will not be deprived of the advantages of education."

Hon. E. H. Gray: I have no objection to that.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: That is all that is done.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Some people get as much as 15s. a week.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Then they must have at least seven children in the family going to school. A man who has a family of that size is an asset to the State, and is worth more than 15s. a week.

Hon. E. H. Gray: So he is in the city.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Not so much in the city as in the country.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Not more than three children on an average are being conveyed at any one time from one family. More often the boys ride their own ponies. Most of the parents who receive this allowance are either pioneers or workmen.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The pioneers do not get it, because they have not a horse to spare.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: It is their fault if they do not get it. How can anyone keep a pony on 7s. 6d. a week? The question is whether we should give people outback the opportunity of having their children educated, or provide further advantages to children in the city who already have schools within easy walking distance. There is not a single person in the eastern wheat belt but would readily make his children walk to school if there was one near enough. As it does not pay the Government to establish a large number of schools, the best thing for them to do is to assist the children to go to schools already established, where they may obtain the rudiments of an education. Mr. Gray seems to have lost sight of the broad issues at stake.

Hon. E. H. Gray: I have seen the system abused, and that is why I spoke about it.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: It is not abused. He is directly attacking the broad issues that underly the development of the country through the training of the intellect of the rising generation.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: Many city children travel free on the railways.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I am glad to have Mr. Dodd's assurance on that point.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We should keep the country children in the country, instead of bringing them to the city.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Many children pay railway fares when attending special classes.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: If country people want to send their children to special classes they have to send them to the city, and pay for their board and residence there. Country children are already at a disadvantage but the hon. member would like to take away from them the small advantage they have, and give it to the children in the city.

Hon. E. H. Gray: I did not say that.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The inference was there. Education costs the State more per pupil in the country than it does in the city, but the education given in the city is superior to that given in the country. This is due to the fact that the department sends to the country only inexperienced teachers. I do not say the department is not doing its best. We all recognise the good that is being done by the young teachers in country schools. When, however, a teacher has four or five classes to conduct, with perhaps not more than three or four children in each class, he or she is unable to give proper attention to the children, such as is given to them in the city. Parents, therefore, have to send their children to town if they desire them to be well educated. This accounts for a great deal of the drift to the city. The attack by Mr. Gray on the system of country education, is a direct attack upon the development of the country. Very few sons of farmers receive the allowance he spoke of. When he attacks the travelling allowance given to country children he is largely attacking that section of the community he is supposed to represent. The education of our children cannot be measured in terms of pounds, shillings and pence. The education vote should never be reduced.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Spend the money in getting a better class of teacher.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I should be glad if the class of teacher could be improved. I am pleased that further secondary schools are being established, and that Albany is to be taken into consideration in that respect. I believe this will be of great importance to the producers along the Great Southern railway. I am glad the Government have decided to establish an agricultural college, and that this will soon be an accomplished fact. I have been told by Mr. Ewing that the sum of £15,000 should have been spent on the project last year and a similar amount

this year. If there is likely to be any mistake in the choice of position for the college, I should like to see the matter left over for a year or two. The college when established must be one for all time. The total sum of £30,000 set aside for the purpose is not sufficient, and should be materially increased. Western Australia is mainly an agricultural State. We must develop that industry along scientific lines. We have before us the experience of the Eastern States, where there are many fine agricultural colleges. We also have before us the progressiveness of America, with all her scientific research. We should, therefore, be able to apply all the principles of agricultural science that can be collected from every part of the world. Western Australia will have to depend almost entirely upon her production from the land, and should have an agricultural college second to none in the Commonwealth. The sum of £30,000 is paltry when we consider the establishment of a college that will be of benefit to the State for generations to come. The amount should be reviewed.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is only a beginning, and a good one.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: We must develop our agricultural industry along scientific and up-to-date lines, but this cannot be done for £30,000. If this sum were looked upon merely as a beginning, and preparations were made for further development and further advances towards this object, all might be well. Let us have a college established on the best possible lines, and let us have one that will take second place to none within the Commonwealth.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is much more than the University had to start with.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: It has to be remembered that the University requires to have only the buildings erected; with the agricultural college it is necessary to purchase a fairly large property as well as to erect the buildings and provide all the paraphernalia necessary. Dealing with the Industries Assistance Board, it has been stated that there will be a loss of about £1,000,000 as the result of its operations. I am inclined to think that the Minister for Agriculture has slightly overestimated the actual expenses in connection with that institution and the losses generally. I do not think the loss will be so great. I believe the Industries Assistance Board has served its purpose and the losses made have meant the salvation of the industry. Much has been said regarding the intention of the Minister for Lands to remove some of the settlers who have not made good. The argument has been used that if those settlers leave their farms, some one else will come in and reap the benefit of the reduced assessments. If the land is good enough, and the settler is a satisfactory worker, there is no reason why his indebtedness should not be written

down and the individual given another opportunity to make good. It is better to write down the loss on behalf of the man who is already on the property, rather than to allow someone else to take over the holding and reap the benefit of his labour. The personal equation must be taken into consideration and, applying that to a lot of the settlers, I am inclined to think that the Government are justified in many instances, in the anticipated action indicated. The reference to development brings me to a consideration of the Midland Railway Co. and their concession. I have not been able to go into the question deeply, but there are one or two observations I wish to make. When passing through the Midland Company's areas between Perth and Moora, I have noticed that farmers generally there have not been able to progress as have farmers in many other parts, where they secured the land direct from the Government. That result is due to the fact that people who selected land from the Government direct have been able to secure assistance through the Agricultural Bank and through the Industries Assistance Board. Those conditions do not operate with the Midland settlers. They are entitled to some consideration and if terms were quickly made with the Midland Company for the purchase of the line and the concession, the interests of the State would be served. There are huge tracts of land in that part of the State that can be developed, and the result would be satisfactory to Western Australia in the long run. I had intended touching upon the fruit marketing question, but perhaps it is not necessary to do so at the present juncture. When I visited the Eastern States recently I noticed that in Queensland the authorities have taken the bull by the horns in connection with the pooling system and have made it compulsory, whether the growers like it or not. I am satisfied that if the pooling system is to be introduced for the handling of our primary products, it must be along compulsory lines. I have encroached upon the patience of hon. members long enough. From the trend of my remarks I think they will realise that my whole heart and soul is in the development of the country. It is only by that means that we can expect to get such returns as will permit us to balance the ledger. It will take a long time to do it. We must look forward, perhaps for generations, to the development of the country as the only possible means whereby we can elevate this great State of ours to the position it will ultimately reach in the Commonwealth of Australia. In conclusion, may I say that I have unbounded confidence in the possibilities of Western Australia, in the people who are endeavouring to develop it and, last but not least, I have confidence that the present Government intend to do all they possibly can to assist in that development. So long

as they look steadfastly towards developmental works, bringing all our resources into fruition and by scientific application to increase the production of lands already producing, then I can assure the Government that they will have my whole-hearted support, and that I will do all I can to assist in the advancement of the project they have in hand.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.37]: As one of the new members of this House I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating Mr. Drew upon his appointment to the leadership of this Chamber. I had not met the hon. member prior to my entry here, but from remarks that have fallen from other hon. members, both inside and outside the House, I feel quite satisfied that he will conduct the business of the House to the satisfaction of members and with credit to himself. I would like to thank members for the kind remarks of welcome to new members. I realise that the Council has set a very high standard for the conduct of its business and I shall endeavour to live up to that standard. I do not intend to take up much time, but there are one or two matters to which I shall refer briefly. I would like to draw attention to the statement made by the Leader of the House with regard to our trade with Java and the Federated Malay States, particularly with reference to its effect upon the State's motor ship "Kangaroo." The Minister made a statement on this subject in the "West Australian" of the 17th July last. In the course of that statement he said—

The support given by Western Australian exporters to the m.s. "Kangaroo" on the Java-Singapore trade is, I regret to have to say, not of a very encouraging nature. I feel that our exporters should take a greater advantage of the benefits open to them by reason of the vessel being on this route. I have gone thoroughly into the question, and I trust I may receive the valuable help of the Press in my efforts to improve matters in the direction to which I refer. A survey of the situation is necessary to enable your readers to grasp the position. When the m.s. "Kangaroo" was purchased in 1915, the Government had in view that she should eventually be fitted to enable the trade, which was expected to grow up between this State and the adjacent country of the Dutch East Indies and the Federated Malay States to be adequately catered for, and also to provide a means of transporting live stock and frozen meat from the far North to the metropolitan markets.

The "Kangaroo" was originally intended to provide meat that would reduce the price to the consumer in the metropolitan area. Shortly afterwards the war commenced and practically every privately-owned steamer

was commandeered by the Admiralty. Being a State-owned vessel, the "Kangaroo" was allowed to roam about the ocean, and she was practically what I call a "freight pirate." On six charters she made something like £300,000. The normal freight before the war was something like 27s. 6d. per ton. On various occasions the "Kangaroo" had charters at £13 per ton, and on one shipment from Western Australia to Egypt she earned approximately £100,000.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That was an indication of what the other companies had been making.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: As I have already mentioned, the ships belonging to private companies were commandeered by the Admiralty during the war and the companies had to take what they were given. I would like to know what has become of the money earned by the "Kangaroo" during that period.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It went into Consolidated Revenue.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: When the "Kangaroo" returned to Western Australia and it was decided that she should take up her running on the North-West-Java-Singapore trade, the Government also decided to send a delegation to the East Indies to ascertain what could be done to increase the export trade to those countries. I had the honour of being a member of that delegation, and I have a report furnished by the chairman of that body. I would like to read the names of those who comprised the delegation, showing the organisations they represented. They included the following: C. S. Nathan (chairman of the Council of Industrial Development), J. C. Port (W.A. Sawmillers' Association), H. A. Stephenson (Produce Merchants' Association), K. H. Watson (Flour Millers' Association), A. C. R. Loaring (Primary Producers' Association), W. M. Gray and T. Nisbet (Chamber of Manufactures), H. J. Lambert (journalist), and A. H. Macartney (secretary). Aboard the vessel was a consignment of stock for Singapore. We called at Java but could not remain there for long on account of the live stock.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Was that the delegation that Mr. Seaddan accompanied?

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Yes, he went in his capacity as Minister for Industries. At any rate we got to Singapore. There was a building there, the old post office, with an approximate area of 3,000 sq. ft., situated centrally in Raffle's-square. It was rapidly converted into a West Australian exhibition hall. A comprehensive display was made of our primary products, consisting of flour, wheat, bran, pollard, oats, chaff, potatoes, etc., tastefully decorated by bundles of wheat sheaves. In this section we also included dried fruits, currants, sultanas, raisins and lexias from the Swan Settlers' Association and J. N. Cox

of Coolup, and dehydrated fruits and vegetables, the product of the Kendenup estate. The flour milling industry was well represented by a very handsome exhibit from the Flour Millers' Association, containing a number of receptacles showing wheat cleaned, milled and dressed, and its various by-products, while Messrs. F. & C. Piesse and the York Flour Milling Co. also made attractive displays. In the general section the following manufactured products and firms were represented: Gas stoves, bath heaters and sanitary ware, Metters Ltd.; ales and stouts, Swan Brewery and Castlemaine Brewery; chocolates, confectionery and cordials, Plaistowe & Co. Ltd.; baking powders, jellies, condiments, W. D. Moore & Co. and Richard Holmes & Co.; jams, pickles and sauces, Rayner & Co.; biscuits, cakes and puddings, Mills & Ware and H. Hunt; soaps, W. H. Burford & Sons; toilet preparations and essences, Wattle Preparation Co.; medicinal requirements, Neale, Constable & Co., F. H. Faulding & Co., and British Drug Co.; leather trunks, bags, and general leatherware, Mallabone & Co.; harness and leather goods, Hugo Fischer & Co., A. E. Arundel & Co.; wines, Santa Rosa Distillery Co.; tinned fish, Westral Freezing and Tinning Co.; cyclone products, Cyclone Fence Co.; brushware, W.A. Brush Co.; paints, kalsomine, Calyx Paint Co.; sandalwood oil, Plaimar & Co.; tiles and drain pipes, Stone Pipe and Pottery Co.; cement, W.A. Portland Cement Co.; white lead, Australian Mining & White Lead Co.; manufactured stationery, Detmolds Ltd.; glycopaste, Granville & Co. So it will be seen that it was a fairly representative gathering. We had practically every class of manufacture represented. We held an exhibition for 10 or 11 days, and did all we could to push business. We then came back to Java. On the way to Batavia we had the decks fitted up, and when we got there we exhibited our goods. Despite all this, there has been very little improvement in the business. The trouble is that outside of two or three lines the goods they require in Java and Singapore are goods that we ourselves are importing, and until we can supply ourselves, we have little or no chance to supply the requirements of Java and the Federated Malay States.

Hon. A. Burvill: What class of goods?

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Butter, bacon, ham, cheese, dried fruits and the like.

Hon. A. Burvill: You will find them all in the South-West when it is developed.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Those are the goods we ourselves are importing. There are a few lines we can supply, such as flour, fresh fruit and sandalwood. The figures quoted by Mr. Drew refer to the last three years. Practically there has been no improvement since the delegation went up with the "Kangaroo." In flour we continue to hold our own; this year we

have done a little better. We have five or six flour millers in Western Australia keenly interested in the export trade, and they leave no stone unturned to cater for the trade. Our flour mills are capable of turning out something like 100,000 tons of flour per annum. Fresh fruit has just about held its own. But we have at least half a dozen firms who are catering for the fresh fruit trade and also other lines. Sandalwood has increased during the last year or so. Of course we have a virtual monopoly in sandalwood, something like 90 per cent. of the world's production, and so we can do as we like with it. As a rule, the sandalwood shippers make their own arrangements. So there is very little chance of improving the trade generally. Mr. Drew in his statement said that a member of the Perth Chamber of Commerce had brought up the question before that body and suggested that concerted action to improve matters be taken by the manufacturers. Unfortunately, the members of the Chamber of Commerce did not feel that there would be any great advantage in following out the suggestion. Since then one or two companies have been sending their own representatives there, but there does not seem to be any general movement towards the desired end. As President of the Chamber of Commerce at that time, I may say the reason why no action was taken was because the Chamber did not think the trade was there and, as Mr. Port and I had represented the Chamber on that trip of the "Kangaroo," on our report they thought it was useless to go any further—that if the business was not there, it could not be created. The Perth Chamber of Commerce is just as keenly alive to the interests of Western Australian trade as is any other section of the community, and is at all times anxious to assist the Government of the day in the advancement of the State. It is not the fault of the traders that the "Kangaroo" is not a paying proposition. In my opinion she never will pay on this route, because she is not suitable. She is too slow, and moreover the business is not there. She rarely does more than eight knots. It took us two months to go to Singapore in her and come back. Of course she had not been docked for over two years, and so was very foul. Several times I looked over the side at night and could not tell whether she was going or coming back. My advice to the Government is to sell the "Kangaroo" while they have an opportunity, because in two or three years' time it will be very difficult to do so. She never has paid except when freight-pirating during the war. I am opposed to State trading. Government trading is immoral. It is the Government's function to govern, not to trade. Interference with private enterprise by Government enterprise kills energy, initiative, ambition and creates distrust in the minds of the investing public. It brings about chaos and stagnation. De-

ficiencies owing to Government mismanagement have to be made up out of Consolidated Revenue, and the whole of the community suffers for the privilege of allowing the Government to experiment in socialistic enterprises that would be better left to private enterprise to develop. I should like to read a statement by Sir Arthur Cox, Treasurer of New South Wales. This appeared in the "West Australian" of April 12th—

In the opinion of the State Treasurer (Sir Arthur Cocks), one of the chief causes of high taxation in Australia has been the entry of different Governments into business enterprises. Allowing for the profits on some of the enterprises in the Commonwealth, he said, the incredible total of £7,661,988 had been absolutely wasted. Most of that had been loan money, or if not, it had increased loan money. It had increased borrowing necessities to the amount lost. That meant that the taxpayers had to find about £459,719 annually in interest. Every taxpayer would be penalised until that money was paid back. It was a staggering realisation and a stern lesson to Governments of the future. The figures were mostly up to June 30, 1923. The Commonwealth easily headed the list with an estimated loss of £2,645,761 on the shipping and shipbuilding activities, plus a loss of £1,628,395 on war service homes, representing a total loss of £4,274,656. The accumulated net losses on State enterprises in New South Wales to June 30, 1923, were £356,981. To this sum had to be added £415,720, the net loss on Walsh Island to date, making the total £772,711. These figures took into consideration an accumulated profit on the brickworks, metal quarries, and Monier pipe works. The total losses on Queensland Government enterprises to June 30, 1923, were £823,665. Western Australia on the same date had accumulated losses amounting to £457,914.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That should have been doubled.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: That was to the 30th June, 1923, and it deals only with actual losses, not depreciation. It should be not only doubled but trebled, and then a little more could be added before one got the true position. The report goes on to say—

Tasmanian losses were £69,246, or, according to later figures published in the Press, £77,000. The operations of Victoria and South Australia were negligible, and in each case resulted in a profit. "My object in having this statement prepared," said Sir Arthur Cocks, "is to write in red letters one of the causes of high taxation to-day. The great adventure has been undertaken and failed. Such adventures will always fail. Business men succeed as the result of a lifetime of study and business. They pick

their managers and head men and under men for special qualities of fitness, and promptly sack them if they don't make good. Such conditions do not prevail in Government departments, and muddle and waste go on until we get appalling examples like Cockatoo Island, Walsh Island, the trawlers, and the war service homes. In New South Wales we have wiped out the worst of the socialistic enterprises, and, if the people ever again permit a Government to establish new ones, they will deserve to be called asses."

Hon. G. W. Miles: Hear, hear!

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: What the people of Western Australia deserve to be called, I do not know.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You cannot use the word in this House.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: My advice to the Government is to get rid of the whole of the State enterprises, cut their loss and make a fresh start. By doing that they will establish confidence in the investing public. We cannot do without private enterprise, for two reasons: We cannot do without their money and we cannot do without their brains, but not until such time as Government trading is cut out shall we get real prosperity in the State. I am pleased that the Government intend to carry out the immigration and land settlement policy initiated by Sir James Mitchell. I have sat here night after night and have heard Sir James criticised in a way that I did not think was possible by either Australians or Britons. To my mind he has not received fair play. He has been kicked and knocked about while he was down, and he was knocked down from behind. I have been in Western Australia for 26 years and, as a keen business man, have noted the fluctuations not only in my own finances but in the finances of the State, and I say without fear of contradiction that on two occasions Sir James Mitchell saved the position financially. The first time was when there was a sharp decline in mining. We had unemployed in all directions; mines were closing down; men were leaving the State; business was stagnant. What were we to do? Sir James Mitchell enunciated his scheme for settling people in the wheat belt, and from that time onward for several years we had success. The financial position improved greatly and after a few years things were running smoothly. Then the war intervened and the majority of our young men went away to do their duty. The result was a decline in agriculture, which became very acute at the time Sir James Mitchell came into power. Things were very bad indeed at that time. The ship of State was drifting to leeward at a rate of £700,000 a year. We had unemployed and what were we to do? Our men were returning from the war and had not been provided for. The other States were suffering similarly. At that time the Prime

Minister called a conference of Premiers and asked them to initiate schemes for immigration and land settlement. When those schemes were presented the Prime Minister said there was only one worthy of consideration, and that was the scheme initiated by Sir James Mitchell. Sir James returned to Western Australia, laid his cards upon the table, and we were all delighted. It was then arranged that he should go to England to see what he could do to further the scheme. He was banqueted prior to his departure by people representing all shades of politics and religion and was wished success in his undertaking. When he put his scheme before the Imperial Government it was soon announced that an agreement had been arrived at whereby the Imperial, Federal and State Governments arranged to share the interest on a loan of six millions. It was considered the best possible scheme that could be advanced. Up to that time it certainly was the best scheme. Of course it is easy to be wise after the event. Now we can see where we might have done better. When Sir James Mitchell returned, business improved greatly, property values increased. There was a property in Murray-street that I could have bought for £7,000, and to-day that property cannot be purchased for £16,000. Some critics contend that the finances have not improved, but that all we have is on paper. I maintain that we have had a great improvement in the finances since the immigration agreement was negotiated. We have railways that, to the end of June, 1923, had cost the country close on 20 millions of money, and for the preceding seven years had incurred a loss of £300,000 a year. Since then the railways have paid their way with the exception of sinking fund. It is a wonderful improvement. The deficit has been reduced in two years by something like £500,000. All credit is due to Sir James Mitchell for what he has done for the State. He has done more for the advancement of Western Australia than any man living to-day. There is no question about that. His scheme may not have been carried out in detail as it should have been. He may have been told that certain work could be done at a certain price and found it was not so. It may cost a great deal more to carry out his scheme, but whatever it costs we have to go on with it. We must have more production and more people. I am pleased that a Royal Commission is to be appointed to inquire into group settlement. There can be no looking back. We must go on with the business. In the South-West is some of the finest land in Australia. I spent my young days in Tasmania, and I say that we have a lot of land in the South-West equal to anything in Tasmania, while the climate also is equally as good. In the South-West almost anything can be grown. There is no place in Australia that I know of better adapted for pig-raising than are parts of the South-West.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Except the North-West.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I am only speaking of what I know. Some members have been urging the need for providing markets, but in Western Australia we have a market at our own door. During the last 12 months it has cost us 1½ millions of money for foodstuffs brought from the Eastern States that might easily have been produced here. On butter we spend half a million, on hams and bacon up to the 30th June, 1923, we spent £176,000 and during the 12 months ended June, 1924, the total was £196,000. On other foodstuffs we have spent money in proportion. For years to come we have our own market to absorb all the dairy products that can be raised in the South-West. These are commodities that are required in Java and the Federated Malay States. It is, therefore, likely to be many years before we shall be in a position to cater fully for the trade of eastern countries, because, first of all, we must provide for our own needs. Only imagine what it would mean to the community if we had that million or million and a half of money circulating within the State!

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Before tea I was referring to the immigration and land settlement scheme. I am glad the present Government intend to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the subject, and I hope the Commission will consist of men thoroughly acquainted with the business. In my opinion the Imperial Government are not doing nearly as much as they should be doing in this regard. It is just as much the concern of the Imperial Government to populate Western Australia as it is the concern of the Western Australian Government.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: I wish you could persuade the Imperial Government to that view.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: We must try to do it. Mention has been made of various gentlemen from the Old Country who visited Australia and inspected group settlements and land development schemes in the various States. Among those gentlemen was Lord Harrowby, who has been mentioned by Mr. Holmes. By virtue of my position as President of the Chamber of Commerce, I had two or three long conversations with Lord Harrowby on this very subject. He informed me that the principal aim of his trip to the Commonwealth was to look into the group settlements and land development schemes. Without any hesitation he told me that the scheme initiated by Sir James Mitchell was absolutely the best in the Commonwealth. He also said to me that he realised Western Australia could not do

more than she was doing in the matter of financing the scheme, and he assured me that on his return to England he would bring the subject before the Home Government and see what could be done. He said, "We must think in millions; not in hundreds or thousands, but in millions. To-day we have five millions too many people in England." I assured him we had 10,000,000 too few in the Commonwealth. He went on to say that Britain's average number of unemployed was one and a quarter millions, to whom £80,000,000 were being paid annually in doles. That statement in itself affords sufficient ground for our asking the Imperial Government to do a great deal more here than they are doing to-day. They should find the who's of the money for clearing land here for British people. Further, they should advance us money for 10 years free of interest, and then for another 10 or 15 years on a sliding scale. That expenditure would represent money saved so far as Great Britain is concerned. The proposed Royal Commission should inquire fully into that aspect of the matter. With regard to the mining industry, I note that a Royal Commission is to be appointed, and I hope the Commission will do something to protect the investing public. For many years past hundreds of thousands of pounds have been wasted, thrown away, taken out of the pockets of the unsuspecting public for shows which had absolutely no prospect of success.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: You want the minnows protected from the sharks.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Quite so. Only recently I with two other directors of a mining company went out as far as Mt. Shenton, 100 miles north-east of Laverton, to inspect a mine. I may say that two or three years ago several returned soldiers, I mean Captain Jones and his party, went out prospecting with assistance from the late Government. After a time they reported that they had found a wonderful show 100 miles north-east of Laverton. Nearly every business man and professional man in the metropolitan area took a share or two shares to assist in the development of what was supposed to be a mine. Largely the money was subscribed out of sympathy, because the men were returned soldiers and it was thought the whole affair was straight and above board. The next thing was a very favourable report on the mine from Mr. Montgomery, the State Mining Engineer. On the strength of that report a cablegram was despatched by the late Government apprising the people in London of this great find. An option was taken by an Adelaide syndicate, which sent over a man to inspect the show. He immediately shut down on it. I believe he offered £300 for it, saying it was no good. A certain amount of development work had been

done when the favourable report was issued by our Mines Department. The net result was that some £3,000 or £4,000 were uselessly expended on the find. One of our mines inspectors, sent out by the Government to report on the show, absolutely condemned it. In submitting his report to his superior officer, however, he advised that it be not published, because it would do a certain amount of harm and would prevent shareholders from going on with the expenditure of money. The report was held over for 10 weeks, during which time the company were endeavouring to get a subsidy from the Government towards further developments. Nearly every day we had word from the Mines Department that we were sure to get pound for pound, and possibly £2 for £1. We waited, and the reports that the thing was very good, and living down, and widening out, and assaying so much continued to come in from the mine. Presently we got a bit suspicious, and I and the other two directors decided to inspect the show personally, although it was a long way off, practically at the centre of Australia. It occurred to us that before starting on the trip we might as well go to the Mines Department and tell them what we were about to do. Accordingly we went to the officials and asked them how long it would be before we got our subsidy. Thereupon Mr. Montgomery said to us, "Well, you know, I have a report here from Mr. Windsor." Mr. Montgomery read to us a little of that report, and then said, "You know, on the strength of this, I could not recommend any subsidy." He did not give us the full effect of the report, and away we went. Although we were only laymen, not professing to be mining men, although I know a little about the subject, the moment we were on the scene we were satisfied that we were on a real, genuine dud. Accordingly we paid off the men and liquidated the company as quickly as possible. In cases of that sort the public should be protected as far as possible. No matter what effect the publication of an adverse departmental report might have on the shareholders or anyone else, it should be published. There is no use in wasting money. The effect of this particular affair has been that quite a lot of good men with a little capital, who were prepared to back a prospector, would not now put a penny into a show, no matter how good it was; and one could not blame them for their refusal. As to mining generally, I look upon it now as a side line. We have to rely upon agriculture to pull this State out of its difficulties.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Western Australia has the largest and richest auriferous area in the whole world.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Yes, but we have not got the gold.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The gold is there.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Yes, but it cannot be found. The area is there, but the problem is to make mining payable.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: There is no other place in the world where mining on such a scale as ours would be regarded as a side line.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I went out to that wonderful mine, the Lancesfield, just out of Laverton, and had a look round. I saw £100,000 worth of machinery lying idle. I saw 200 or 300 houses in which the workmen had lived, and my companion said, "You can have any one of those houses for £1." However, I was not a buyer. It was heart-breaking to see the desolation all the way down the line to Menzies. Mine after mine was closed down. In one place where I stayed for the night—I think it was Mt. Malcolm—I asked one of the persons at the hotel, "How many people have you got here?" The reply was, "There are 18 men, seven married women, one girl, and 75 goats." That was the sort of thing we saw all the way down. The inhabitants were chiefly goats. I could not help thinking of Sir James Mitchell and his foresight in the matter of land settlement. The more a business man travels in the back country, the more credit he must give to Sir James Mitchell for his vision in endeavouring to get people settled on the land and producing more. Now as to the Education Department. This is one of those public utilities which are very costly. Education cost us about £500,000 a year. Although that is a very large sum for a small population of 360,000 souls to pay, I venture to say there is not a man, woman, or child in Western Australia that would favour cutting it down by one penny. We cannot give our children too much education. The time has come when we have to look to the outside world. The Japanese and the Chinese go all over the world looking for the best education; they are met with in the universities of England and America and other countries. Therefore we must so educate the children to whom we look to carry on this great State of Western Australia, and this great Commonwealth, that they will be on an equal footing with other nations when exploiting the markets of the world. I wish to say a few words about the trams. I am sorry to note that the Government intend to take the trams over the William-street bridge. I think that is a pity, and I hope they will not proceed with the work. The locality of that bridge from a traffic point of view is the most dangerous I know of in the city. It is dangerous on the Roe-street side as well as on the Wellington-street side where there is less than 40 feet between kerb and kerb, and it is all angles. The whole of the time the trams will be crossing the bridge they will be rounding curves and there will be heavy wear and tear on the rails, to say nothing of the cars themselves. I do not know any other place in the city

that is more congested with pedestrian traffic. On the top of the bridge there are gateways and steps leading into Roe-street and into Wellington-street, and these are used by thousands of men, women and children. It will be a fatal mistake if the Government carry out their intention of carrying the trams across that bridge. I agree with the suggestion made in this Chamber that the line should be carried along Wellington-street, over Thomas-street, thence by way of Oxford-street to Leederville and Mt. Hawthorn. I do trust that this suggestion will be investigated and that the Government will pause before they carry out their original intention. I desire also to enter a protest against the introduction of the 44-hour week. That action was not in the best interests of the community and will recoil on the Government's own shoulders before they are much older. I am pleased to note that the Government intend to introduce a main roads Bill and I trust some good will come of that. I do not know of anything that is more necessary. We have thousands of miles of so-called roads, the foundations of which have gone, and it will take millions of money to put them back into a good state of repair. So long as the Government introduce legislation that will be in the best interests of the State, so long will they receive my support. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Hon. G. POTTER (West) [7.50]: With other members who have spoken on the Address-in-reply I should also like to congratulate the Leader of the House and the new members of the Chamber. Regarding the Leader it must be particularly pleasing to members to know that the brilliancy with which this House has been led, and the unflinching courtesy extended to members, is to be perpetuated. I also congratulate Mr. Hickey on his elevation to honorary Cabinet rank. I shall have something more to say regarding the appointment of honorary Ministers. Before dealing with certain matters connected with my own constituency, I should like to refer to some of the remarks made by my colleague, Mr. Gray. Mr. Gray seemed to call into question the wisdom of the Government in employing that beautiful emblem of liberty, the Union Jack. I can hardly understand, nor can I believe that the hon. member really considered the effect of his words, in respect of the flying of the Union Jack from the flagstaff at Parliament House. In any part of the world we know that the Union Jack stands for freedom and justice, and wherever we may see that flag we know that there is freedom from aggression on the part of anyone that has not right on his side. It seems to me very strange that any hon. member should try to create the impression that such a thought would exist in the minds of the citizens of Western Australia, because after all there is no State in the Commonwealth that does

more for the Union Jack than does Western Australia. Take it from another viewpoint: We look at the Australian flag as one of which we are also very proud because it incorporates the Union Jack, and we, as citizens of the Commonwealth, have a share in the Union Jack, just the same as have the people of South Africa, England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and the day that the Union Jack is dragged from the flag post of any outpost of the Empire, then that particular place will be the prey of the strongest country most closely adjacent. I would like to refer my friend to a little memorandum that is in our library here. It is a White Book dealing with certain affairs that happened between 1914 and 1918 some thousands of miles from here, and where Australia had the finest escort that anyone could wish for, and where 300,000 people from the comparatively small population of Australia went. Mr. Hamersley regretted that there was no escort for His Excellency the Governor on the occasion of the opening of Parliament. My friend took exception to Mr. Hamersley's remarks and said that he would rather have had an escort drawn from the boys and girls of the State. I know that my friend is not disloyal to the Empire, neither is he disloyal to the Commonwealth. His remarks, however, will have a far-reaching effect, because it is on account of being able to secure the possible furnishing of an escort of boys and girls that the escort of 300,000 to which I have referred became possible.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There was no slur on the Union Jack intended.

Hon. G. POTTER: I am sure my friend is using only a small segment of his mind if he thinks the Australian flag is above the Union Jack, because the Union Jack is also the flag of Australia.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It is incorporated in the Union Jack, too.

Hon. G. POTTER: If Mr. Gray would look up the geometrical formula he would find that the part is never greater than the whole. The Union Jack represents the whole. Regarding this particular Chamber, I wish I had been longer in it so that I might have been in a better position to reply to what has been said about it. It has been said that the Upper House is in a great measure in disrepute in the eyes of the electors of Western Australia and that it is to an extent held in contempt. On account of what? On account of the lack of demonstration of democracy? I wonder if the hon. member—again I am referring to my colleague, Mr. Gray—has given a thought to the wonderful democracy that has been demonstrated in this Chamber. If he looks up the dictionary meaning and interpretation of democracy or autocracy—

Hon. J. Cornell: He is the leader of the new democracy.

Hon. G. POTTER: That was just what was in my mind, only I did not think it would be Mr. Gray who would be the leader.

I wonder if Mr. Gray is prepared to find a new meaning for democracy and autocracy. Democracy was displayed in this Chamber last session when certain measures came before us, and when the most prominent personalities here took certain features of the various Bills out of the hands of the Labour members who are the strong and able representatives of thought that put them into this House. I particularly remember Mr. Lovekin and Dr. Saw who, by virtue of their own suggestions, showed that whenever certain measures went through without amendment those measures would redound against the best interests of those people for whom the principles involved were originally framed. In these circumstances can it be said that this Chamber has not at least a nodding acquaintance with the true sense, spirit and interpretation of democracy. Then again, of those people who must have told the hon. member that they held this House in contempt, how many have adorned the galleries of this Chamber and listened to the debates we had here last session. Even as recently as yesterday it was soul-inspiring to hear Mr. Dodd, from his invalid chair, make a speech that was at once an education and an inspiration. If any one can say that there was not a true democracy reflected in that speech, then I do not know the meaning of the word "democracy." I do not understand the hon. member's frantic criticism unless it was part of a great plan to bring about unification, which will mean the abolition first of one chamber, then the other, then of a third in the Eastern States, and finally leaving our House of Parliament for the Commonwealth elected on the popular basis. Only a few days ago members supporting the present Government complained about the treatment we were receiving from the Eastern States, which knew nothing of Western Australia's requirements. I should think those people would join with Mr. Lovekin in his valiant endeavour to sound Western Australia and see whether she was entirely satisfied with her association with Federation. Perhaps my honourable friend would look up the remarks of the present Premier when, in a fevered moment and breathing a sigh of relief and confidence as to what would happen in this Chamber, he said, "Thank God, we have a Legislative Council."

Hon. J. Ewing: Who said that?

Hon. G. POTTER: The Premier. Since then what has happened in this Chamber to change the minds of hon. members, unless it is this great feature of unification?

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: It will be nothing to their attitude before the session is over.

Hon. G. POTTER: I congratulate the Government upon the appointment of three Honorary Ministers. I am sorry they did not go a little further and give these Honorary Ministers full portfolios. In a young State like this Ministers are required to go

to distant parts, and it is necessary they should have greater responsibility.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You will not have to wait long.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Labour Party will thank you for the invitation.

Hon. G. POTTER: I should be glad if the Government would accept the invitation. When discussing the question of a loan of six million pounds two years ago in this House, I said the disbursement of that amount of money would be a serious matter, and that the Premier of the day was undertaking too much. He should have had more assistance than he had at the time. I went so far as to say it would be advisable for the Premier to appoint a Commission of three experts to deal with the great land settlement policy. At the time my remarks were treated in some quarters as being somewhat visionary. It also said it was no reflection upon my appreciation of the ability and earnestness of Sir James Mitchell when I held the opinion that he was a superman trying to do the work of three supermen. That is why I hope the present Government will take the necessary steps to create these full portfolios, and give to the Honorary Ministers the prestige that belongs to their rank. This would be of great benefit to Western Australia. I will not deal with all the legislation outlined in the Speech because, as Mr. Harris said, we are getting the Government policy piecemeal. It will be time enough to deal with that legislation when it comes along.

Hon. J. Cornell: You will launch your attack when they launch theirs.

Hon. G. POTTER: Yes. It is good tactics to be prepared to meet the attack when it is launched. I will confine myself to a few local affairs affecting the province I represent. I select them because they appertain to my district, and are therefore important to the whole State. With regard to the scarcity of and demand for land in the various confines of the West Province, there is a great deal of land that at present retards the progress of the district. I refer particularly to the University endowment lands on the outskirts of Fremantle. Some 18 months ago we explored all avenues to discover a means whereby this land could be brought into use. We were always met with the obstacle that the land could not be held as a freehold property. For many years the University Senate has been trying to lease this land at reasonable rates. There is that inherent prejudice against leasehold property that has led to the cream of the land between Fremantle and Crooke lying vacant to-day. It militates very severely against the local governing bodies of the district, because on the one side there is the idle endowment land, mostly municipal and University, and paying no rates, and on the other side there are people struggling for a living. The lands throughout the district are ideally situated for fruit growing. By virtue of

the contour of the country they receive the first kisses of the morning sun. That is the main principle and chief feature in the selection of orchard grounds. If the Government would apply themselves to some means whereby this land could be brought into operation, there would be fewer complaints on the part of the local authorities in the district concerning the disabilities under which they suffer, and they would be more able to meet their liabilities. Some people may say that the fruit market is already glutted. That is not so. Overseas there is a wonderful market. Last night Mr. Harris eloquently dealt with the mining industry, and showed there was a market for capital in our great mining centres. We wish to export something to meet that capital, and this can be done from the land to which I refer. There is a great drawback about the position. In Fremantle we have a beautiful port. Only recently Fremantle was rather boastful that it was the only port in Australia that up to that time could berth the great British Special Service Squadron. When we get down to commercial relations with the world is it anything to be proud of that we cannot properly export our products, particularly our fruit?

Hon. G. W. Miles: The harbour charges are too high:

Hon. G. POTTER: I admit that. The super tax ought to be reduced. I have heard Mr. Miles deal with the question of charges in other directions. Quite recently he was talking about the primary products in the southern areas of Western Australia, saying they were not apparently synonymous with those that came from the northern areas. I should like to see that brought in under the same head. We can handle these queens of the ocean in the Fremantle harbour, but such a simple thing as the handling of the products of our orchards cannot be done. The fruit comes from various parts of the State to Fremantle, and at the most unfavourable time of the year for storage of fruit without refrigerating accommodation it is placed in sheds on the wharf. It may have to wait 24 or 48 hours, and it is during that time the fruit deteriorates.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Sometimes it waits four days.

Hon. G. POTTER: It has been known to wait four days owing to the vagaries of shipping. The fruit arrives at its destination in a bad condition. Overseas buyers do not know that Western Australia cannot provide proper shipping facilities for its fruit. All they know is that the fruit is not worth what they are expected to pay. I will give two specific instances. During the last fruit shipping season a certain quantity was shipped after having been in store for a few days in the shed. One shipper was anxious about it, because he had in the consignment certain quantities of fruit put up in special cases in order to test the travelling

capacity of the case and the quality of the packing, and to find out which was the best method of handling the fruit. He was so anxious about it that he cabled to England for a full statement of the condition of the fruit on arrival. It was shown very clearly that the fruit was generally bad. Only three days after, a ship arrived in Fremantle with unexpected space. This shipper had in his private store a large quantity of fruit for shipment by another ship, whose sailing was cancelled. He had authority to ship by this other vessel and placed the fruit aboard direct from the cool store. It was of the same quality as the other consignment, was packed in the same kind of case, and arrived in most excellent condition. Surely nothing else is required to convince people as to what is needed on the Fremantle wharf. We are told that there is a shortage of funds and that we cannot get the cool storage. It is visualised by some people that a fully equipped cool store is required. That is not so. What is needed is to insulate one of the present goods sheds on the wharf. This will only take up about 6 inches all of the sheds. This would only be needed obtained, and the estimated cost is said to be about £16,000. I am assured by people who are interested as growers and exporters that in two years' time the initial cost will be repaid out of a charge of 6d. per case for cool storage. It is not as if it were required to build a complete cool store such as we see in Perth. All that is needed is insulated walls in one of the sheds. This would only be needed for fruit for three months in the year, and would at other times be available for ordinary cargo traffic. It has also been stated that there is no room on the wharf for the cool chambers. When fruit is forwarded for shipment space must be found for it on the wharf. Why, therefore, cannot proper housing be provided for that commodity? It is no uncommon sight during the fruit season to see the sheds in which the fruit is stored shut up during parts of the day in order to stop speculation. Such a procedure is practically a death blow to the fruit. It has been said by an authority that it would be much better to leave the fruit outside covered with tarpaulins rather than to shut it up in an enclosed space in the shed. I hope the Government will reconsider their previous decision and do something to assist the growers.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The work should be attended to at once.

Hon. G. POTTER: Bearing in mind that the space would be required for only three months of the year, and that the growers are prepared to guarantee the repayment of the £16,000 involved within two years by the imposition of a charge

of 6d. per case on all fruit going through the shed, hon. members will agree that the work should be taken in hand. It has been said that there is cold storage available in Fremantle that could be used. Such a contention, however, shows lack of knowledge regarding the fruit industry, because it is the second handling that adversely affects the fruit for export. When it was stated last night that it was necessary to encourage the investment of capital in the mining industry, we should remember that it is necessary to export our products in order to encourage the introduction of that capital. Mr. Stephenson mentioned the condition of the "Kangaroo," whose speed was impeded because of her foul bottom. We can understand that position. We realise that possibly the "Kangaroo" suffers because of her lack of horse power and the type of her hull. If we had the necessary docking facilities at Fremantle, her condition would not require to be so unsatisfactory. I would like the Government to take in hand the provision of docking facilities at Fremantle so that overseas and coastal ships may be dry-docked at our chief port.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: One Government lost a quarter of a million in trying to construct a dock there.

Hon. G. POTTER: That is so, but because one reverse has been encountered, is that any reason why we should sit down and say it is a hopeless proposition? Mr. Kirwan would be one of the first to say that we should have a dock at Fremantle, just as we consider he has been quite right in his advocacy of the Esperance-Norseman railway. We are not parochial. I understand it has been suggested that a floating dock is available in the Old Country, that dock having been built for the Admiralty in 1918. I do not know all the particulars but I submit that intimation to the Leader of the House in the hope that he will deem it worthy of inquiry, in order to ascertain whether the dock would be suitable for Fremantle.

Hon. A. Burvill: It would be suitable for Albany.

Hon. G. POTTER: I am indifferent as to whether we have a floating or a graving dock so long as we have one at some port in Western Australia. That brings me to the condition of the Fremantle harbour. It is not sufficient to say that we have been able to berth the British Special Service Squadron at Fremantle, because we must bear in mind that with a big land settlement policy in operation in Western Australia we must look ahead. It has been said that we have sufficient accommodation at Fremantle for the next 10 years. Be that as it may, we must also take into consideration, in conjunction with the question of extending the Fremantle harbour, the provision of a dock and the building of a new bridge.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Where should the bridge be constructed?

Hon. G. POTTER: The figures relating to the cost of repairs and upkeep of the two existing bridges are on record in "Hansard" and they indicate the necessity for action being taken. I am almost indifferent as to where the new bridge should be constructed, so long as the north wharf at Fremantle is not isolated. I desire to see the bridge constructed and provision made for an extension of the harbour. We know that wharf extension is a matter of slow progress. I am given to understand that it will take at least 10 years to provide for another 20 years' expansion of the Fremantle harbour. I submit that to the Leader of the House, too, in order that the Government may give immediate consideration to the point. The establishment of a high school at Fremantle has also been mentioned. That is a very necessary adjunct to the present State scholastic system at Fremantle. The question has been asked, why establish another high school there? Hon. members should be inspired by the ex-Minister for Education, Mr. Ewing. We should fully appreciate the fact that the future citizens of Western Australia should be educated to the value of a career on the land. Surely it is just as necessary to equip educationally a graduate in agriculture equally as much as it is to educate one for civil engineering or other professions. Why should we ask young men to go into the proverbial wilderness with undeveloped minds? Why not give them the finest education possible so that new realms may be opened up to them when they are in the solitudes of the back blocks of Western Australia? That brings me again to the question of land settlement. We know that the solution of the land settlement problem represents the solution of the future of Western Australia. I have followed the discussions regarding the financial policy with great interest. That question is wholly and solely wrapped up in the land settlement problem. I have listened to strictures passed upon the late Government. While being amused at some of the analogies and allegorical references by various hon. members, which speeches I know will adorn "Hansard" for years to come, I consider we should be very careful regarding some of the criticism that has been lodged. It was only a few nights ago that we had strong supporters of the present Government again declaring that it was they who had kept the Mitchell Administration in office. Why all this contumely heaped by the Labour Party and their representatives upon the Mitchell Administration when last session it was said that they had put through the Labour Party's policy, which statement is repeated again to-day. From the mouths of our friends, the enemy, we have learnt that the Mitchell Government put through the Labour Party's policy with the consent of this

Chamber. How, if that be so, can they account for the strong condemnation of the efforts of Sir James Mitchell and his colleagues? Was their action last session merely a splenetic gesture against the National Government or did it strike a note of sincerity? In view of what has transpired, I am sure that hon. members will not say again that this Chamber, which was responsible for accepting so much of the previous Government's programme, has been lacking in democratic spirit.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [8.27]: I wish to acknowledge the kindly references made to me in the course of the debate and to say that I entirely reciprocate them. I had a fairly strenuous time when I was formerly Leader of this House. Although the legislation that I introduced was often severely handled by members here, I personally experienced the utmost consideration and forbearance from all. It was gratifying to me during my six years of retirement from politics to learn from my Geraldton friends who visited the capital from time to time that I still retained the good will of those with whom I had been so long associated. I am back here again and no doubt we shall hold diverse views on many questions, as we did before. I trust we shall hold them and express them without in any way wounding one another's feelings or transgressing the rules of orderly debate. The performance of my duty as Leader of the House will, I can see, be made more difficult by reason of the fact that I follow a Leader whose fine qualities have been thoroughly appreciated by hon. members. I have had no experience of Mr. Ewing as Leader of the House but I knew him for many years as a private member. I can say I admire his wide knowledge of public questions, his sincerity of purpose and the honourable principles that always governed his conduct. During the time I am to occupy this position I shall endeavour to discharge my duties to the best of my ability and the satisfaction of the House. Some strong criticism has been indulged in by certain members, but little of it has been directed at the present Administration. Necessarily so, for we have been too brief a period in office to incur much censure or to merit much praise. Our political sins lie before us. Governments are human institutions, and it is too much to hope that we can for any great length of time govern the State in a manner satisfactory to all. Mr. Holmes referred to the Premier's figures in respect to losses on the State Shipping Service since its inception. In round figures the losses were given as £21,000. To be precise they are, according to the books, £21,118. But that does not represent the actual position. That loss would have been converted into a profit if the service had had a fair deal from the Treasury. It has not had a fair deal; it has had an unjust deal. For instance, not

only depreciation, but sinking fund also has been debited against the concern. No private concern is similarly penalised. Depreciation is always charged, but sinking fund rarely, if ever. I believe there are some instances in Great Britain in which public companies charge sinking fund, but I am not aware that such a practice exists in Australia, or even generally in the Old Country. Sinking fund is a special provision made by the Colonial Treasurer for the repayment of Government loans. It is a provision not recognised generally by private firms or public companies, and it is foreign to all systems of accountancy adopted by commercial men. Hence the State Shipping Service, and I daresay the whole of the trading concerns established by the Labour Government, have suffered through the debiting of depreciation as well as sinking fund. The State Shipping Service has been debited with £136,000 depreciation. That is all right. But it is further debited with £37,000 sinking fund. That is all wrong. The £37,000 sinking fund should be transferred to the credit of profit and loss account.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Is that depreciation sufficient?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is in accordance with the rule enforced by private shipping companies. Again, the "Kangaroo's" profits were commandeered by the Treasury to the amount of £211,000. I can give the details: In June, 1917, £47,000 was handed over to the Treasury; in June, 1918, £30,000; in November, 1918, £25,000; in May, 1919, £25,000; in June, 1919, £72,000; in December, 1919, £6,000; in May, 1919, £6,000. All that money has been taken into Consolidated Revenue and no interest in respect of it has been allowed the trading concern. However when, later, an overdraft was required by the State Shipping Service, the Treasury charged from 6 per cent. to 6½ per cent. interest per annum. During the three years ended 30th June, 1923, £19,268 was charged as interest on overdraft to the State Shipping Service, despite the fact that the service was in credit. The provisions of the State Trading Concerns Act have not been applied. Regulation 23, which was made by one of the Governments succeeding the Labour Administration, provides that an allowance should be made to the trading concern for the use of its money, or that no interest should be required if an overdraft was wanted. That regulation reads as follows:—

The profit or loss of each trading concern for each year when ascertained shall be treated in such manner as the Colonial Treasurer shall direct, but any estimated profit available in cash during the course of the financial year and not required in the trading concern may be paid to the credit of Consolidated Revenue Fund when directed by the Colonial Treasurer; but should unforeseen circumstances arise that

any portion or all of such money so carried to Consolidated Revenue Fund be required by the concern, the amount so required shall be transferred to the banking account.

That has not been done. The Trading Concerns Act has not been observed, and consequently the service appears now in a very much worse condition than it really is. But to get down to bedrock: Taking the £21,118 and setting against it the £72,468 interest due on moneys received by the Treasury and the £37,000 sinking fund, or a total of £109,486 that the shipping service should be credited with, it will be found that the shipping service shows a credit of £88,638 since its inception.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Is that after deducting the £175,000 expended on the "Kangaroo"?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is not charged to profit and loss account. I will give you something about that. These figures have been submitted to the accountant of the State Shipping Service, and also to the accountant of the Treasury, and both agree that they are correct. Were it not so I would not use them publicly. It is too much to expect that the State Shipping Service could possibly right itself under existing conditions. The "Kangaroo" was overhauled and insulated a few years ago at a cost of £175,000, or £25,000 more than the original price of the vessel. I am not blaming the previous Government for that; I do not accuse them of any blunder. But ship-building costs were at their pinnacle at that time. The fact remains that this large expenditure on the "Kangaroo" will certainly be a burden on the concern during the time she is in operation, perhaps for years afterwards. The service is penalised in other ways. I am endeavouring to prove that it is difficult to make the concern pay under existing conditions. The "Bambra" has outlived her usefulness, and it is only by abnormal coal consumption that she can be made to keep her time table. The fuel bill of the "Kangaroo" is about one quarter that of the "Bambra." In other words, it costs four times as much for fuel for the "Bambra" as for the "Kangaroo." The "Eucla," on the south-east coast, is in a worse position. She will have to be replaced as soon as possible.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Hear, hear! It is time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Government have already approved of the building of another ship to replace the "Eucla," but before actually building they wish to perfect the plans and specifications in order to introduce the latest improvements.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are you not going to replace the "Bambra"?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We shall see about that later. With the object

of putting the latest improvements into the "Eucla's" successor, we sent Mr. Glyde, the manager of the State Shipping Service, to the Eastern States to see vessels running in a similar service and to make provision in the plans for the introduction of all up to date improvements, in order to have the new vessel for the south-east coast thoroughly well equipped.

Hon. J. A. Greig: Would it not be cheaper to buy a boat?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The intention is to build a Diesel-engined boat a little larger than the "Eucla." Such a vessel could not be purchased in Australia.

Hon. J. Cornell: She requires to draw no more water than does the "Eucla."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Even if there were a second hand vessel available, I would not sanction its purchase. We had a bitter experience over the Labour Government's first attempt to establish a shipping service with second-hand vessels. They were a source of continuous trouble. They have now all gone. The "Bambra" belongs to the Commonwealth Government, and it is our intention before very long to call for tenders for the replacing of the "Eucla." The previous Labour Government saw the necessity for providing an efficient shipping service for the North-West. They were anxious to secure two oil-propelled vessels. I introduced the Loan Estimates on which was included an item for the building of two such vessels, but the item was rejected by this Chamber. It was unfortunate for Western Australia, for if we had those Diesel-engined vessels in operation on the North-West coast, we should be able to carry on that trade economically and with a profit. The Mitchell Government a few years ago approved of the purchase of a Diesel-engined passenger and freight vessel for the North-West. Plans were prepared and tenders called in London, but the cost, £160,000, was too high. The Government abandoned the idea, and I think rightly. At that time ship-building costs were very high. Since then the bottom has fallen out of the boom, and I am given to understand that for a vessel of similar type to-day the price would be in the region of £150,000. The question of better shipping facilities for the North-West coast must soon be seriously considered. Mr. Holmes referred to the Wyndham Meat Works as a trading concern and presumably one of the socialistic enterprises of the Labour Government. That is news to me. Many years before there was a Labour Government in existence, I heard of a powerful advocacy of freezing works for Wyndham. It was not one of the socialistic enterprises of the Scaddan Government. They introduced a measure authorising the construction of the works, but they

were pushed on by gentlemen in this Chamber and in another place who were in no way associated with Labour. I have documentary evidence here to prove my words. The Hon. J. D. Connolly, who was not a supporter of the Labour Government, stated, according to "Hansard" of 1911, page 83—

We heard during the recent campaign a great deal about the high cost of living, and, by what process of reasoning I know not, that was attributed to the late Government. The true reason, of course, is that given by Mr. Moss. You cannot increase wages without increasing the cost of production, and in a large measure that is the solution of it all. But, without interfering with wages at all, the cost of living can be and should be reduced, and it is therefore with surprise that I noticed that no mention was made in the Speech of the freezing works the late Government proposed to establish at Wyndham. If these freezing works were established at Wyndham and the meat was chilled, you could bring it down at a mere tithe of the cost entailed to-day. . . . If the freezing works were put up every head of cattle on the stations would be worth at least double what has been paid for it. . . . It is a very important factor in the cost of living, and if the Government are desirous of reducing that cost of living, I would earnestly draw their attention to this question.

That is, the Wilson Government intended to establish freezing works at Wyndham.

Hon. G. W. Miles: By private enterprise.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Then Sir Edward Wittenoom, who has never been associated with the Labour Party, said—

I think that freezing works should be established for three reasons. The first is for the reason that the price of meat is so high in Perth, and that the establishment of freezing, canning and meat extract works at Wyndham would be the means of reducing the price down here. The second is, as was shown so admirably by Mr. Connolly, that the small man has no chance of realising on his produce under existing circumstances. The third reason is that, unless the work is undertaken at once or quickly, it may be done by South Australia, whereas by doing it at once we shall attract a large quantity of Northern Territory cattle to the works at Wyndham and give employment to our own people up there. I hope the Government will give the matter early and favourable consideration.

Mr. Male in another place said:

The Labour Party have talked about what they will do, and yet if they are not

careful their methods are such that may injure the small squatter. They have always opposed the erection of freezing works at Wyndham.

The Labour Government were evidently not in favour of the freezing works up to that date. They required to be convinced and they were convinced by gentlemen connected with the party which was then strongly antagonistic to the Labour Party.

Hon. J. Cornell: And by Mr. Hamersley.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Hon. M. L. Moss said:

It has been laid down by members of Governments, and has been frequently mentioned in another place, that the way to cheapen meat that has to be brought 2,000 miles from the sparsely populated parts of the State was by the erection of freezing works at Wyndham. It does not require a very brainy person to see this, that if you are carrying animals alive, the space they occupy is very much greater than if animals were slaughtered on the spot and their carcasses brought down here chilled and put into consumption.

The Hon. F. Connor said:

In reference to State steamers personally I have no objection to the Government having steamers, but I do object to the manner in which they have gone about the securing of these steamers. If they had bought one fast steamer and erected meat works, that is, chilling and canning works, at Wyndham, they could have made a huge success of it. And it was during the time of the Wilson Government that these works should have been carried out. We are told it was promised to the people of the far North and to the consumer, by that Government, that these works would be built. I blame the Wilson Government more than the Government in power to-day, and I could blame an individual if necessary.

Now we come to the Hon. J. J. Holmes.

Hon. J. Ewing: I thought you would not miss him.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Holmes made it appear that he was strongly opposed to freezing works at Wyndham. He, too, pushed the Labour Party along. This question was asked me, according to "Hansard" of 1914, page 773:

1. In view of the contract entered into between the Federal Government and an English company for erection of meat works at Port Darwin, and the probability of all cattle from East Kimberley going in that direction, is it the intention of the Government to erect works at Wyndham, and thus conserve the State's trade and the State's supplies for the State's consumers? 2. If so, will provision be made in this year's Estimates to commence the works.

I replied:

1 and 2, Inquiries are in progress and a complete statement of the Government's intentions will be made at an early date. When the matter was debated in this Chamber, this is the view I expressed as representing the Government. I think members will say it was very cautious and betrayed no intention on the part of the Government to plunge into this enterprise:

Mr. Moss stated that the way to cheapen meat is to erect freezing works at Wyndham. I have gone into this matter pretty deeply of late, and I have found that 80 per cent. of the cattle in the Kimberley district are owned by about four or five different persons and no more. If the Government were to erect freezing works there, they would be at the mercy of these four or five owners. That is not a desirable position to be in. There is another matter for consideration, and it is this: will the people purchase chilled meat? It will be something in the nature of an experiment.

That was the attitude of the Government in 1912. Those extracts prove conclusively that the Wyndham Meat Works cannot be classified as one of the socialistic concerns of the Labour Government. In the first place I am found as representing the Ministry taking up an attitude of extreme caution. In the second place we find the advocacy of the project coming from quite a different quarter. For instance, Mr. Connolly attacked the Labour Government for not including the Wyndham Meat Works in its programme; Sir Edward Wittenoom gave three strong and excellent reasons for their establishment, and Mr. Male accused the Labour Government of always having been opposed to the works at Wyndham. He must have had some evidence for making that straight-out statement. Mr. Moss said that anyone with brains could see that it was the only way in which to get cheap meat, and Mr. Connor enthusiastically urged the erection of works and predicted that they would be a huge success, while Mr. Holmes impressed upon the Government the danger of delay and pointed out the effect it would have on the meat industry of the State.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Will the Government try to get rid of them now?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not know that it is desirable to get rid of them now. I do not think they will ever pay with the present high capitalisation.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It seems the Government will never make a success of them.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The capitalisation should be reduced. Personally I cannot understand how these works cost such a large amount. I remember just before the Scaddan Government resigned the Works Department submitted an estimate for constructing the works and, if my memory serves me aright, it was about £211,000. Most of the material and

machinery had already been provided by Nevanas and purchased by the Government, so that there should not have been much extra cost for machinery. Nevanas was prepared to build the works for about £155,000, but not to tender for them publicly. It was decided that the Works Department should carry out the undertaking. After the Labour Government resigned, I do not know exactly what occurred.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They changed their plans every day in the week.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Some blunder must have been made. I do not think the meat industry in the North-West should be saddled with this stupendous impost. It is not fair. At present it is more profitable to carry on the works than to allow them to lie idle.

Hon. J. Ewing: Absolutely so.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is an advantage of about £7,000 a year if we run the works as against permitting them to lie idle. Mr. Holmes referred to the wharfage rates on meat at Wyndham. That matter has been taken up not only by Mr. Holmes but by Mr. Lamond and other members representing the North-West and I have been doing all I can in order that the matter may receive fair consideration. I would remind those gentlemen, however, that there is another side to the question. I have the departmental file and it is worth considering. Mr. Holmes claims that there should be no wharfage charge at Wyndham, because there is none at Fremantle. The conditions are quite different. At Wyndham, a jetty was specially constructed by the Government for purposes of the Wyndham Meat Works, but the cost was not charged against the trading concern. The cost was £60,882 up to 1921. The annual charges not borne by the Wyndham Meat Works are £3,000 for maintenance, and say, £4,260, at 7 per cent., for interest and depreciation, total £7,260, approximately. The wharfage fees for the year ending the 31st March, 1924, amounted to £4,250, of which the meat works contributed £3,450, and other consignees about £800. So the meat works contribute per annum £3,450 for a facility that cost £7,260, and thus gain £3,000 per annum on the transaction after allowing for the £800 revenue from other sources. The general manager admits these figures, but asks for the same privilege for meat works' products as is extended at Fremantle. The difference in the two cases is that at Fremantle the same wharfage facility would exist if there were no meat works' products there, while at Wyndham special wharf construction, almost entirely due to meat works' requirements, has had to be provided at a capital cost of nearly £61,000. This is worked now at an annual loss of £3,000, which would be increased to nearly £7,000 if wharfage fees on meat works products were remitted. On the other hand, Fremantle harbour is returning very substan-

tial profits. That is the view of the department. As Minister for the North-West I am doing my best to prove worthy of the confidence placed in me to see that the representations made by the different members receive full consideration. An attempt will be made to do justice, but the case I have put before the House is the case of the department, and it is as well that members should know the arguments used against free wharfage on meat at Wyndham. The question of a water supply for Port Hedland has been referred to, and I think it was suggested that the Government should make provision for a permanent water supply for that part of the State. I have been going into this question, and I find the scheme outlined by the engineer would involve a cost of £20,000 to £30,000 in order to supply about 250 people, as well as shipping. I think that is out of the question. It will not be possible for the people to meet the financial position that would arise in consequence.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They should not be asked to meet the whole of it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is what it would cost. The people were in desperate straits for water a few weeks ago and I arranged with the Railway Department to supply them. My idea is that the Government should subsidise the people. The water has to be brought by train for a distance of 89 miles, and in my opinion it would be better if the Government subsidised the people and agreed to pay a certain amount every year in order that water might be secured more cheaply than at present. That is a far more reasonable proposal than one to construct waterworks at a cost of £20,000 or £30,000 in order to supply a handful of people. Cases of leprosy at Derby were referred to by Mr. Holmes. The victims are housed in the old Residency, three miles out of the township. They are not locked up, as has been suggested. They are allowed out on the river flats.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They are in the township.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am informed they are three miles away from the township, near the old hospital. They are looked after by a half-caste patient under the supervision of the caretaker of the hospital and his wife. Dr. Cooke is now finalising investigations on behalf of the Federal and State Governments, and the outcome may be that a lazarette will be erected in a central position in the North-West.

Hon. G. W. Miles: On one of the islands?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot say definitely at present. We must await the medical man's report. I was pleased to hear Mr. Kirwan's references to the extension of the railway from Salmon Gums to Norseman. It reminded me of old times. I heard Mr. Kirwan on

the Esperance railway when he first entered the House, and I must say that then he did not impress me on that matter at all. I was prejudiced with regard to the question, and I thought Mr. Kirwan had been carried away by this own enthusiasm. But about ten years ago I visited the Esperance district and made a fairly thorough inspection of the land between Norseman and Esperance; and the wonder to me then was, and the wonder to me to-day is, that such a large area of good agricultural land should have remained so long without railway facilities enabling the produce grown to be conveyed to market and the settlers construction of the proposed railway is introduced into this Chamber, I shall have an opportunity of dealing at some length with the question. I listened with interest to the informative speech of Mr. Ewing. His experiences as a Minister qualify him to speak with authority. I thank him for his assurance of co-operation and help. Knowing him as I do, I feel sure those expressions are sincere. Doubtless from time to time he will express opinions hostile to my own, and hostile to the party I represent, but at all times he will be sincere, I know, and he is entitled to voice his opinions. Mr. Ewing's references to the North-West are highly interesting. He was Minister controlling that part of the State, and I agree with him that the settlement of the North-West is a matter of national concern, and that the rich resources there call loudly for development. Some millions of money will, I think, be needed in order to lay firmly the foundations of what should be a great and prosperous province. So far as I see, the settlement of the North-West will not be attended by any abnormal risks, provided, of course, that it be conducted on wise lines. Even from my brief experience of the administration of the North-West Department, I am firmly convinced that the State will never be able to find funds adequate to carrying out the work of settlement and development. We must rely upon the Federal Government or the Imperial authorities, and it is not hundreds of thousands we require, but millions.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I believe that good results would accrue. My experience of the North-West is limited, being merely drawn from departmental files; but that is the conclusion to which I have come. If sufficient money can be provided to carry out the development of the North-West on wise lines, there will be good returns and successful and prosperous settlement. Mr. Ewing holds that a Royal Commission to inquire into the group settlements of the South-West is unnecessary. The Government deem it advisable that the true position, whatever it is, should be ascertained by a competent and impartial tribunal. Party politics should nowise enter into the question.

Members: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It would be indeed unfortunate if they were introduced at any stage. That the present Government have done anything to hinder the success of the scheme cannot for a moment be asserted. In point of fact, Ministers have left nothing undone to further the scheme. Mr. Angwin has been an enthusiastic supporter of the proposal from the very first. I do not think it can be said of Mr. Angwin that he has neglected any opportunity to push the project along. But the Government recognise that they carry a heavy responsibility in the matter. If the scheme failed to realise expectations, it would probably be said that the failure was due to the incompetency of the Government. From a proper investigation some good results should accrue. Therefore I consider the Government cannot do otherwise than see that there is a searching investigation into the whole affair by men competent to formulate a report on common-sense lines. The necessity for a dredge at Bunbury has been stressed by Mr. Ewing. That want will soon be supplied. Negotiations for the purchase of a dredge are being carried on with the Federal Government. If those negotiations are not completed by now, they will be in a short time, and the dredge will be sent to Bunbury in order to cope with the siltage trouble there. Mr. Ewing questioned the wisdom of granting permits for Kimberley cattle to be sent to the South-West. Every precaution has been taken to prevent the introduction of tick. All the cattle are dipped twice and are certified before being permitted to leave the quarantine ground. But to send Kimberley cattle to the various agricultural centres of the State is no new practice. It has now been in vogue for several years. The cattle are sent down the Midland line and along the Great Southern and South-Western railways without any ill results. I believe that a few years ago, when insufficient attention was paid to dipping, some tick-infested cattle were sent into the South-West. But that has not occurred of recent years.

Hon. J. Ewing: You sent an officer to the South-West to investigate. Have you received any report from him?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am not aware of a report having been received as yet. However, there is no reason to fear that there will be a risk of the spread of tick in consequence of North-West cattle being admitted into the South-West. Mr. Nicholson quoted from the Governor's Speech the paragraph relating to group settlement, in which it was stated that there are now 124 units with a population of approximately 8,776 souls. Mr. Nicholson added—

There we have the sum total of immigrants who have arrived under the scheme. Instead of getting 50,000 additional people, we have 8,776.

The position requires a little elucidation. Mr. Nicholson apparently assumes that the

intention was to settle 75,000 souls on the land.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No: 6,000 to be settled on the land, but 75,000 to be brought here.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The intention was to settle 6,000 and absorb 75,000. The total number of migrants who had arrived under the scheme up to the 30th June, 1924—and in fact they have arrived—number, inclusive of 3,716 paying third-class passengers, in all 17,168. The total number of settlers on the groups is, as has been stated, 8,776. Those figures were given in the Governor's Speech. The people comprise 2,286 men, 2,662 women, and 4,428 children. But all those men do not come under the agreement made with the Imperial Government. The position is that 1,374 settlers who left England after the 25th September, 1922, have been placed on the groups and remain there. Of these some 286 are on repurchased land, and therefore do not come under the agreement. To put the matter clearly, 1,088 migrants have been placed on groups strictly in accordance with the agreement; we have to provide land for 4,912 persons, and have to absorb 52,920 more, though not necessarily on groups. However, we shall have to do that before we shall have fulfilled our obligations under the agreement. Mr. Hamersley referred to the rates of pay of men engaged in repairing roads in the Kalgoorlie district. He quoted the 13s. 6d. per day paid to miners under the award, and then stated that the Government were paying their men employed on road mending 16s. per day. The local authorities on the goldfields, municipalities and road boards I take it, pay their men 15s. per day, some for 44 hours and some for 48 hours, and grant them certain privileges. But the men we pay 16s. per day for road making have no additional privileges whatever.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Is that the reason why they get the higher rate?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The men claimed the 44-hour week as Government policy and in order to equalise matters the Government agreed to pay 2s. 0½d. per hour for the actual hours worked, without any privileges. This was regarded as a fair wage, having regard to the nature of the work, and also having regard to the conditions of living on the goldfields as compared with those in the coastal districts. In the main, those wages conform to the rates of wages obtaining in the district, and also correspond to the working conditions obtaining there. A matter to which Mr. Hamersley referred is engaging the close attention of the Government, the establishment of an agricultural college. I can assure the hon. member that the Government consider the establishment of an agricultural college a matter of prime importance, and that there will be no unnecessary delay in dealing with it effectively. It is hoped that before long a definite announcement

will be made of the Government's intentions in this respect, and the announcement will refer not only to the establishment of the college, but to the whole policy connected therewith. I am sure every member listened with attention and respect to Dr. Saw's opinions on matters affecting public health. The hon. member's views on deep therapy treatment were especially instructive. The line taken by our Public Health Department is that the X-ray therapy treatment is still in the experimental stage. This conclusion has been arrived at as the result of communication with such an authority as Professor W. S. Lazarus, of the Cancer Research Laboratory at the Middlesex Hospital.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: At the Middlesex Hospital there is an apparatus to treat four patients at once.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We have been in communication with two great authorities on the subject, and as a result of the information received from them we have decided that it is a matter in which some caution should be exercised. It is considered questionable that a small State like this should spend £3,000 a year in a direction regarding which results have not been positive. The Government, however, are not sitting down and awaiting developments. They have taken a step in the direction of seeing that sufferers from cancer, whose cases give some hope of being cured, or of being relieved, shall receive attention, and arrangements have been made with two medical gentlemen in Perth who own deep therapy plants to treat patients that may be recommended to them by the medical authorities. On the recommendations that are thus made the Government will be prepared to pay for the treatment of these cases.

Members: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There are two cases being treated under these conditions at the present time. The patients are people who are not in a position to pay and may never be able to pay for the treatment. Nevertheless, if at any time it should be possible for them to recoup the Government, they will be obliged to do so. I think that proposal is reasonable and preferable to deciding upon the purchase of a deep therapy plant at an operating cost of £3,000 a year. Even if only one in ten cases should be relieved, or perhaps cured, the money involved under the arrangement made will be money well spent. I think there is very good reason to hope that the treatment will prove successful. Anyhow, I do not think anyone in Western Australia, who may be in indigent circumstances, will suffer in the future without treatment, at any rate not while the present Government are in power. Mr. Gray is of opinion that a meat ring operates in the State and that its existence is due to the system of letting agents have trucks for the sending of stock to the metropolitan market. The Minister for Railways

has gone thoroughly into the question and he has been unable to come to the conclusion arrived at by Mr. Gray. As a matter of fact, he cannot see that any good purpose would be served by any alteration of the existing method. The Minister got into touch with the parties concerned, the Primary Producers' Association, the West Australian Stockmen's Association, the Agricultural Department and the Railway Department. All are agreed that the present system, which was inaugurated to regulate supplies, is working in every way satisfactorily. In addition, the Primary Producers' Association has circularised the whole of their branches and in not one case has a complaint been received. Trucks are supplied to agents on the principle of the law of supply and demand.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What about the opinion of the consumers?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No complaints, so far as I know, have been received from them; at any rate no complaints that have been founded on a solid basis. I have heard allegations made but there has been no proof. There is nothing to prevent any butcher from buying direct from the grower. If retailers had any difficulty in getting supplies at a reasonable price under existing conditions, they would certainly go into the country and make their purchases. There would be no embargo on the provision of trucks for the supply of cattle and it would be detrimental to the selling interests if the butchers were obliged to go into the country to purchase stock, because the selling agents depend for their livelihood on the commission that they make. I am informed that any reputable person may set up as a selling agent and secure control of trucks. There is no objection to that course.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Mr. Gray might set up as one.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes, if he could convince the Minister that he was genuine. The Minister has gone thoroughly into the question. He made a searching investigation and was unable to find any trace of market rigging, and he is more than ever convinced that the existing system should be continued. If any solid evidence can be supplied by a grower to prove that the high price of meat is due to the manipulation of trucks by selling agents, Mr. Wilcock will be only too pleased to take energetic action. More than one member urged that provision should be made for increasing the number of portfolioed Ministers. I do not wish to express my opinion on that point at this stage but I may be permitted to refer to a cognate subject. The burden of individual Ministers has certainly become more weighty during recent years. After my long absence from administration work I have found that a practice has grown

up which is threatening to make the life of Ministers a burden. At one time the Under Secretary was largely availed of by the public in connection with the work of administration, but in recent years the useful Under Secretary has been pushed into the background and everyone wants to see the Minister. That is not all. Government by deputation seems to a great extent to have taken the place of government per medium of Parliamentary representatives. Whether the question be great or small, there appears to be the idea in the public mind that the only method of securing the ear of the Minister is by organising a monster deputation. Important questions arise from time to time in connection with which representations to Ministers are justifiable, but in many instances the members for the district could present the case in a quarter of the time and with considerably more force by a quiet discussion with the Minister than is possible under the process of attempting to capture the position by storm. At one time also the Under Secretary was the vehicle of communication between the Minister and the public. Since I was in office, the practice of direct communication by the Minister with all and sundry has come into existence. I intend to discourage that practice as much as possible and to confine correspondence direct with members of Parliament and important public bodies where questions of policy are involved. It must be recognised, if the public will only give the matter consideration, that while the Minister is practically conducting a correspondence branch of the service, he is unable to give serious and ample attention to problems affecting the public welfare.

Members: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Gray referred to the cost of conveying country children to school and he said that the amount involved, £13,000, should be reduced by half. He gave no reason for the suggestion. If we adopted it the result would be a considerable increase in public expenditure. If there was no such provision for the conveyance of children to distant country schools, we would be compelled to build new schools and provide them with equipment and appoint teachers. A large number of schools would in this way have to be erected if Mr. Gray's proposal were carried into effect. He states that well-to-do farmers are getting an allowance in this respect. I do not know whether that is so or not.

Hon. E. H. Gray: I will furnish facts.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The people of this country have decided that there shall be free education and, that being so, conveyance should be free, and there should be no question about well-to-do or ill-to-do farmers, or anyone else.

That is the view I take. Under the existing system children are conveyed sometimes 10 miles and upwards to their respective schools. The method adopted is for the Department to obtain quotes from people who own cars, and the cost involved is sometimes as much as £150, sometimes £100, and sometimes perhaps £200 a year. The system, however, has achieved its purpose and enables a large number of children to be educated. That, I think, is conducive to the benefit of the community as a whole. I do not think Mr. Gray was very serious in connection with the matter. My opinion is that he is walking along the wrong track. I thought Mr. Stephenson was going to attack me in connection with the interview I gave to the Press on the subject of the Singapore-Java trade. Some years ago the merchants of Perth and Fremantle, and members of the Chambers of Commerce, made a great outcry against the Government and said that the "Kangaroo," which had been working abroad, should be put on the Singapore and Java trade, in order to develop that trade with Western Australia. The Government carefully considered the matter and, having put on the "Kangaroo," decided to reduce freights so that the producers of Western Australia should be able to compete effectively with the producers in the Eastern States. At the commencement there was reason to believe that the trade with Western Australia would develop satisfactorily. Later, however, it has not been very brisk. There has been an increase in the export of flour but not as much as might have been expected, and matters have reached that stage that merchants seem to take little interest in the direction of developing trade between Java and Singapore and Western Australia. The "Kangaroo" has been losing money on her outward trips, but has to a certain extent recouped herself by the trade on the back journeys. Insufficient encouragement has been given by the producers of Western Australia to the trade. My object in giving the interview to the Press was to induce people to recognise the need for developing the trade between Western Australia and Java and Singapore. According to the remarks of Mr. Stephenson there does not seem to be much hope of developing that trade, and I very much regret to hear it.

Hon. A. Lovekin: We cannot get the goods back under the Federal conditions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have not attempted to deal with every question that has been raised during the debate. That would be a tremendous task, and would promise very little result. Where information has been sought upon important matters I have endeavoured to supply it; and when wrong impressions have been created I have endeavoured to correct them. That is the course I intend to pursue in the future.

This may mean a good deal of work for me as Leader of the House, but I think members are entitled to know how matters stand and the reason for any course of action that is decided upon by the Government. So far as I am able I will supply them with that information. I will do all I can to carry out my duties to the satisfaction of the House and, as I hope, to the advantage of the country.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-reply adopted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move—

That the Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor by the President and such members as may desire to accompany him.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 9th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 20th August, 1924.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, MERREDIN STATION.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that the ex-member for Avon (Mr. Harrison) on the 21st December, 1923, wrote to the Merredin Road Board as follows:—"Loan Estimates provide £1,000 to be spent at Merredin station

and yard. Hope this may be increased?" 2, Will he ascertain which of the ex-Ministers, i.e., the Premier, Minister for Works, or Minister for Railways, authorised Mr. Harrison to make such a statement? 3, Will he see the promise made is honoured and £1,000 placed on the 1924-25 Loan Estimates for the Merredin station and yard?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, The sum of £4,000 was included in the Loan Estimates of the Railway Department for 1923-24 for improvements at Merredin if considered necessary, but the expenditure was not authorised by the Government. The hon. member could doubtless ascertain from the ex-Ministers direct which (if any) of them gave Mr. Harrison the information. 3, No promise can be made at present, but the request will be borne in mind.

QUESTION—TRUSTEES COLONIAL INVESTMENT ACT.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it proposed this session to amend the Act relating to the investment of trust funds? 2, If so, will this be done early in the session?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Elevation Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth) [4.35]: I join with other members in congratulating you, Sir, upon your elevation to the distinguished position of Speaker. I also congratulate the Premier and his colleagues upon their elevation to the Treasury bench.

Mr. George: You will commiserate with them before long.

Mr. HUGHES: I also extend my congratulations to the new members of this House. I am sorry the Leader of the Opposition has been obliged to absent himself from this Chamber for the last fortnight owing to the state of his health, and trust it will not be long before we see him here again. I also desire to extend to him my sympathy. Not long ago he had a great number of friends, but these are evidently not so favourably disposed towards him now as they were. This is one of the things a public man has to put up with. Apparently people must have new gods. It is remarkable how the friends of success leave a man in the hour of adversity. I am pleased to say that Sir James Mitchell's loyal colleague, the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) is still with him and is vigorously fighting on his behalf. I hope that hon. member will remain long enough in the Chamber to become a little modernised.