

Western Australia. I do not know whether all members have yet received copies of the Case. I have received one. The general public, however, have not yet been furnished with copies. To me the distribution contemplated by the Federal Government appears a perfectly unjustifiable waste of money. We have all had an opportunity of reading the Case for Union when it was published as a supplement to the "West Australian." I anticipate that hundreds of people in this State will refuse acceptance of the copies of the Case for Union, or, alternatively, that the copies will be burnt in the streets.

On motion by Miss Holman, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.48 p.m.

PAPERS—COOLGARDIE MINERS' UNION, ANNUAL CONSULTATION.

On motion by Hon. H. Seddon, ordered: That the file relating to the application of the Coolgardie Federated Miners' Union to hold their annual consultation be laid upon the Table of the House.

MOTION—STATE TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION ACT.

To Disallow Regulation.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from 14th August, on the following motion by Hon. A. Thomson—

That Regulation No. 48, made under the State Transport Co-Ordination Act, 1933, as published in the "Government Gazette" on 16th March, 1934, and laid on the Table of the House on 7th August, 1934, be and is hereby disallowed.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.37]:
I move—

That the consideration of this Order of the Day be postponed for a week.

I understand that this matter is being looked into and it is hoped that within the week a solution of the difficulty will have been arrived at.

Motion put and passed.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 21st August, 1934.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, leave of absence for four weeks granted to Hon. H. V. Piesse (South-East) on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Hon. L. B. Bolton (Metropolitan) on the ground of urgent private business.

[9]

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from the 15th August.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [4.38]: While not the possessor of a very good memory, I would have to acknowledge a poor one indeed if my mind on this occasion did not revert to a sitting about six years ago when I rose to participate in the Address-in-reply debate. Animated by a desire conscientiously to carry out my duty to the people who had had sufficient confidence in me to send me to this august Chamber, I am afraid I lent point to a well-worn old saying, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." I rose in my place and spoke with no desire to hurt any member's feelings, but merely anxious to say what I thought should be said: the result was that I did hurt someone's feelings. I would like to state very plainly on this occasion that I realise many old members of this House

have over a period of years endeavoured, as far as they were able to do so, to perform conscientiously a service to the State.

Hon. C. B. Williams: What about the young chaps? Are we not doing so too?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: During my six years in this Chamber, I have endeavoured to continue as I began, and to say what I think should be said, always remembering that I had never any intention of descending to anything of a personal nature. Although in my audacity, born of ignorance through lack of exact knowledge of the customs of the House, I may have said certain things, I have a clear conscience, and can say honestly that I have never attacked anyone personally. When I have spoken respecting such matters, it has been by and large, as it is the right of any member who participates in the political life of the State. I hope I shall be pardoned if I inform members that for a long period I have known the Leader of the House as a friend, and, as far as I am able to judge, notwithstanding our slight differences politically, he and I are as firm friends now as ever before. The first matter referred to in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech respecting which I desire to comment, relates to the most important topic of all—Finance. We are reminded in the Speech that the situation is extremely grave and requires constant attention. We are told that rigid economies are necessary, there being no money available for other than what are considered essential services. Although I do not profess to know much about the matter—who does?—I consider there is plenty of money available.

Hon. H. Seddon: Where?

Hon. E. H. Angelo: You are the man we want.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Tell us where we can get it?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There may be plenty of money, but the trouble is to secure profitable investments for it.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I realise what Mr. Holmes has said quite fully. I know that is the difficulty. We are constantly being told, quite rightly so, that we must be careful not to levy taxation that will be too heavy for the people. I agree with that contention. On the other hand over a period of years we have just been as constantly reminded that the State has been borrowing far too much.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Aren't we lucky?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: We all know that the State has been unable to progress beyond a certain point with respect to our borrowing policy, and we had to stop either of our own volition or because we were informed that we could not borrow any more money. The situation confronting us is that during the last few years we have not been able to earn enough money to enable the State to carry on. That has been because of world conditions over which we have had no control. We have not been able to secure payable prices for our products, which represent the only commodities we can sell in the markets of the world. How, then, can we obtain the money that is so absolutely essential to enable the State to provide work for the thousands of men who are unemployed? The other day exception was taken to the State continuing the practice of borrowing money and spending loan funds. Whilst on prior occasions I have supported Mr. Seddon in his advocacy of greater Parliamentary control over the finances, I find it very difficult to agree with him in his contention on this occasion that it is unjust and unfair for us to continue spending loan money. The complaint was no doubt justified when conditions were normal, but under the abnormal conditions prevailing to-day, we should be justified in spending all the money that we can possibly obtain.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Yes, as much as we can get.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: It is for Parliament to exert every possible endeavour to ensure that the money is spent to the best advantage. We all realise the difficulty of finding that which we are so constantly told is necessary, namely, reproductive work, but we must endeavour to find work for the unemployed rather than allow them to remain in idleness. I agree with Mr. Seddon's suggestion that a committee of members of this House should be appointed to scrutinise the financial position of the State. Such a committee would be well fitted to make the inquiry.

Hon. C. B. Williams: What is the idea of it?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am not satisfied with democracy as we know it to-day. The party who form the Ministry in another place can get their measures passed by that House, but this House is not a party Cham-

ber, at any rate not to the extent that obtains elsewhere. When the composite party formed the previous administration, Country Party members of this House did not attend the combined meetings. That being so, when legislation was introduced into this Chamber by the then Leader of the House, Mr. Baxter—

Hon. C. B. Williams: He found himself opposed by some of your supporters.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes. That, however, does not apply to Labour members. I believe that what applies to Country Party members of this House applies also to Nationalist Party members; I understand that they do not attend party meetings. If democracy is to be saved, it will be through the actions of a non-party Chamber such as this—a Chamber free from the domination of any political party. I think we can claim that that principle is recognised in this House, except by the party I have indicated.

Hon. C. B. Williams interjected.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Some of the most democratic legislation was passed before Mr. Drew ever entered the Chamber.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I think Mr. Miles was the mover of the motion for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the price of Collie coal, a matter that had been crying out for investigation for years. That inquiry disclosed facts that should have been brought to light years ago. The decisions arrived at by the committee suggested by Mr. Seddon would at least be free from party taint. No one can tell the party in power anything at all; the nine or ten men who comprise the Cabinet seem to think they have a monopoly of the brains of the country.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I do not think that is quite correct.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The hon. member is at liberty to disagree with me. Whether the Government would heed the advice tendered by such a committee or give effect to any of the recommendations remains to be seen, but inquiry by such a committee could do no harm and might achieve some good. We have frequently been told by men whose opinions are entitled to respect that this country stands high in the estimation of financiers in the Old Country.

Hon. C. B. Williams: So long as we pay our interest bill.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That is due to the efforts made to keep faith with our creditors. When I read all those expressions, however, I wonder whether we have paid dearly for such praise. Time will show.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Tell us the truth.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Our difficulties are due largely to world conditions. While we strive our hardest to meet our financial responsibilities, we should not forget our duty to our own people. Severe hardships have been and are being borne by many of our people—hardships that some of us, I am afraid, do not appreciate. I admit that people of other countries have suffered more than have our people, but I have often wondered whether conditions locally should have been permitted to become so difficult as they have undoubtedly been for several years. Greater courage on the part of Federal and State Governments would have saved much unnecessary sacrifice on the part of the many as well as the few. There is plenty of money in the country if we only made up our minds to get hold of it. How can we cry poverty when we recall the amount of money that since the beginning of the depression has been invested in consultations, or spent on drink, racing and other forms of amusement? The "Australasian Insurance and Banking Record" is responsible for the astounding statement that during the past ten years Australia has spent a sum of £500,000,000 on motor cars. As the consultations have proved so popular and as so many deserving institutions have been assisted through their aid, I wonder whether it would be possible to raise the funds necessary to pay our interest bill by running an occasional consultation.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: You can have the task.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If the hon. member is afraid of the job, we could get someone else to do it, and I think it would be just as well patronised.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Not too many members of this House would take it on after Mr. Clydesdale's experience.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: We do not want any other member of Parliament to undertake that work; we stand for the principle of one man one job.

Hon. C. B. Williams: And no trouble when you get the job.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Were it not for Parliamentarians' fear of the ballot box, the money required would be obtained. The farmers a little while ago were urged to produce, produce, produce, and the Prime Minister broadcast an appeal to them to grow more wheat. At that time financial institutions and merchants did not hesitate to release credit and urge primary producers to continue development. Then, suddenly, there was a collapse in prices and what happened? Credit was ruthlessly curtailed, development ceased and thousands of people were thrown out of work. During the past four seasons wheat, on a four-penny freight rate, has averaged 2s. 3½d. per bushel. The farmers have been carrying on an important industry at a very grave loss to themselves. What has been done to assist them? I realise that the State could not do very much, but I believe that more could have been done by the State Government. Certainly much more could have been done by the Federal Government. We have been endeavouring to get assistance for essential industries, but the reply has always been that funds would not permit. Now, on the eve of the Federal elections, millions of money are being allotted for assistance to wheatgrowers, for the relief of unemployment, and for defence. Following the convincing statement made by the Premier last week on the report of the State Grants Commission, a motion should be submitted to and passed by both Houses of Parliament. It was an excellent statement of the position, and its main points should be forwarded to the Commonwealth from the Parliament, representing as it does all political parties, instead of from the Government. Unfortunately there has always been the party business running through these sittings, but I am certain that such a motion as I suggest would be passed unanimously by both Houses. Even anti-secessionists, I feel sure, would vote for it. It is nothing short of scandalous the way we have been treated by that Commission. The State indebtedness to the 30th June this year was £85,847,802, and the annual interest bill amounts to £3,352,262. The average rate of interest in 1925 was 4.49 per cent.; in 1930 it was 4.60 per cent. and in 1934 it was 3.81 per cent. I acknowledge that we have succeeded in getting a reduction, but I consider efforts should be made to bring

about a still further reduction in the rate. If the existing rate were reduced by one-fourth, say to 2.86 per cent., we would save £830,000 a year, and that would be a pleasant help in these troublous times. It would be a good move on the part of our creditors, even if they agreed to do it only until conditions improved. Whilst not forgetting the enormous burden the Mother Country is being called upon to carry, it is sincerely to be hoped that her responsible Ministers will do their utmost in the direction of having our claims recognised.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is the private people of England who have lent us this money.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I realise that, but there is a tendency now on the part of the British Government, led by Major Elliott, to exclude a good many of our products, and I do not think that is the way we shall get out of our difficulties. We are assured by many recognised authorities throughout the world that the present monetary system is unsuitable for our altered conditions. In Saturday's "West Australian" there appeared a statement on this subject by Mr. Bennett, Prime Minister of Canada. It read—

Mr. Bennett voiced a warning that while every effort of the Government had been directed towards the maintenance of the capitalistic system, a decision on the part of a nation so closely allied to Canada as the United States to adopt a radically different policy would make a tremendous impression upon the economic life of the Dominion. "I am convinced," he said, that there will be more and not less interference by Governments in private business."

We have heard a lot about that in this Chamber and I think it is a very important statement for a man like Mr. Bennett to make. We must be prepared in this country for a good deal more control than we have had in the past.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What, Government control?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: My opinion is in accordance with that expressed by Mr. Bennett. I do not say necessarily, Government control, but there should be some sort of control, more than we have had in the past. That statement leads me to speak about banking, which is a big factor in our financial system. It is now admitted that one of the finest things ever done for Australia, was the establishment of the Commonwealth Bank, which, since its in-

ception, has earned a profit of over £32,000,000. It is well remembered what awful results were predicted from the establishment of this institution, but the results achieved have more than justified the optimism of the bank's sponsor, Mr. King O'Malley. Before leaving the subject of banking, I wish to make a short reference to the report of the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank. I understand the trustees are replying to the Commission's strictures, and therefore it is advisable to wait until we have heard both sides before we express any opinions. What I wish to say, however, is that the evidence given by the Auditor General before the Commission, and reported in the "West Australian" of the 8th October last, and the 9th February of this year, is, to say the least of it, astounding. As the Auditor General is an officer responsible to Parliament, I submit that Parliament should take some action. At any rate, I should like to hear the views of other members of this House on the subject. I also wish to enter a strong protest against what appears to me to be unpardonable delay on the part of the Agricultural Bank in making wheat bonus payments. Farmers have complained to me, but I do not know who is to blame. In any case, there should be an inquiry to prevent a continuance of the delays which cause so much inconvenience to the people to whom the payments mean so much. I crave the indulgence of the House whilst I read extracts from a few of the letters I have received. One man writes to me—

I have written to the manager of the Geraldton branch of the Bank on two occasions and have not received any reply. Neither am I able to get any satisfaction from the local inspector.

I do not know whether that is the truth, but I should like the Chief Secretary to make a note of this and inquire with a view to finding out where the fault lies.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You will have to give the Chief Secretary the name, otherwise he will not be able to make any inquiries.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I will hand the Chief Secretary the file that is in my possession. It contains many letters and I need not read any more. There is the case of one man whose cheque amounted to £60 and who was informed that this was posted to him months ago. He declares

that he never received it, and he had to indemnify the Government against its being cashed. With regard to the Education Department, the Government are to be heartily congratulated on their decision to reopen the Teachers' Training College. The claims of this department on the finances of the State are considerable, but it is generally agreed that we cannot afford to go back with our education system. All the responsible officers are enthusiastic in their work, and we should endeavour to see that the vote is expended as wisely as possible in providing the children with a sound education. Vocational guidance is what I should like to see encouraged. With regard to the dispute between the Minister and the teachers, I consider that a little forbearance on both sides might have prevented its spreading to the extent it has done. One member in this Chamber expressed himself as being shocked at the attitude taken up by the Teachers' Union in attempting to dictate to the Government; but it has to be remembered that in the past other unions have not only attempted, but have succeeded in dictating to the very same Government. It can thus be understood why the teachers tried to do so. Where the teachers failed was that they lacked the numbers. I fail to see how the Minister for Education can justify the stand he has taken in compelling teachers to pay their own tram fares whilst on duty with the children. It is only a small matter, but it is one that no Government should deny. The teachers are obliged to accompany the children, and consequently the fares should be paid. The present Government, too, wrongly granted long-service leave to many Government employees, and of course the teachers want to know why they also cannot have it. I realise that the teachers get a long vacation at Christmas time, and that they work short hours. That, however, does not affect the position. They wish to be put on the same footing as railway porters and railway clerks. It is not a question whether I or any other member of Parliament is in favour of this concession: it has been decided that it should be removed from political control. That is why the Government are ill-advised in the stand they have taken. If the Government agreed to pay the teachers' tram fares when they are accompanying the children, I consider the teachers should retreat from the

attitude they have adopted. The children, who are to be the future citizens of the State, are being set a very bad example, and every effort should be made to end the existing state of affairs. With regard to the Financial Emergency Act, I hope the Government will see fit to remove the embargo on single men obtaining sustenance work. The Government should not deprive any destitute citizen of the right to obtain work, and no government should insist on a man joining a union or getting married before being able to obtain sustenance. I think if the Government intended to enforce any such restriction of prohibition, a Bill should have been brought down for the purpose. It is callous treatment to extend to single men, many of whom are returned soldiers. It is deserving of the severest censure. I agree that married men should have preference, but I say that no government are justified in treating single men as the present government have done. Mr. Curtin in an article published in the "West Australian" wrote—

If the Governments are to serve us, they must organise the means whereby at least a minimum foothold for existence will be afforded the people whom they govern. Every workman who is not required by private enterprise could be and should be used in a plan of national works. It is either that, or acknowledge that we have reached an age when men are "scrap."

I do not know Mr. Curtin personally, but I understand he is one of the pillars of the Labour Party in this State, and from what I can gather from his writings, he seems to be a very fine man. His Excellency, in his Speech remarked that we would be asked to give consideration to, amongst others, measures dealing with—various things. I had hoped for the sake of all of us that one of those things would have been the long overdue consideration of the inordinate hours worked by nurses in both Government and private hospitals. It is something we should all feel very much ashamed of. We hold an annual Eight Hour Day celebration each year—

Hon. C. B. Williams: Who are "we"?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The people of the State. I am surprised at the hon. member's interjection.

Hon. C. B. Williams: To which union do you belong?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I, in common with scores of other people, enjoy attending the annual Eight Hour Day celebrations. We are all invited to attend them, for in that respect at least the Labour people are not narrow-minded. But although we have secured the eight-hour day, we feel no twinges of conscience about the nurses working 10-hour and 12-hour shifts. I say it is disgraceful. The subject of bulk handling is not mentioned in the Speech, but the Government have announced that a Royal Commission is to be appointed to inquire into all phases of the enterprise. I am all for endeavouring to secure all available information in respect of matters such as this, but surely only those who wish to delay this facility of bulk handling will favour the decision of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission. The present scheme has been found practical and economical and, without disrespect to the Government, I say that a large majority of the growers are entitled to have the system made available to them without delay. However, the Government have decided for a Royal Commission, so there it is. The only thing left for us to do is to request the Government to appoint as members of the Royal Commission men who will be free from all bias and will use despatch in concluding their investigations and furnishing their report. Wire netting is mentioned in the Speech. I have here a letter from the Lands Department, dated the 14th of this month, in respect of an application which is said to have been lodged in January. Addressed to me, the letter reads as follows:—

Dear Sir,—

Re Criddle Bros., Naraling.
Wire Netting Application.

Replying to your letter of the 8th instant, I have to advise that the above-named settlers' application for an advance for wire netting is at present awaiting a report from the Agricultural Bank. Inquiry made to-day revealed that the trustees are unable to submit their recommendation until further information is obtained from the bank's Geraldton office, to which reference was made on the 10th instant. An early reply is expected but the settlers cannot be optimistic as to the result of the application as it is extremely doubtful whether they will be permitted to incur further liability to the department when they are unable to meet their present commitment as regards rent. Inspection of their rent accounts reveals that arrears to 30/6/34 amount to £1,906 3s. 7d., no payment having been received since June,

1926. Immediately the Agricultural Bank's report is available the application will be submitted to the Hon. the Minister for Lands for his decision, of which the applicants will be duly notified.

Those men, brothers, are returned soldiers and of a very fine stamp. They are on a repurchased estate, and their arrears of rent amount to £1,906. How much longer are we going to hold up an amount such as this against settlers such as those?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What are you going to do with them?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: What is the use of maintaining accounts like this against men who are really trying? The present Leader of the Opposition, when Minister for Lands, paid a visit to the Yandanooka Estate—the Chief Secretary knows all about that estate—and it was thought that as a result of that visit certain ministerial action would be taken. However, the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank refused to recede from the position he had adopted. What is the use of breaking the hearts of men with a load of debt such as this?

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are not advocating the granting of further concessions, are you?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: No, but I am advocating that those men should be given a chance to make a living on the block on which they have put in years of hard work. They are being eaten out by rabbits, and this application of theirs for wire netting was made in January last. Apparently it has taken all the elapsed time to find out that those men are £1,906 in arrear of rent. Railways are mentioned in the Speech, and I remind the Chief Secretary of his answer to certain questions I asked as to reflections made on certain officers of the department. He promised me that an inquiry would be held. I think the House should know the nature of the inquiry and its results; otherwise I shall consider it my duty to take further action. I cannot omit reference to the Transport Board. I agree with Mr. Craig who, the other evening, pointed out the danger of overloading Mr. Munt, the Under Secretary for Public Works, a post which surely provides him with quite sufficient work for any one man, without his other duties relating to irrigation and transport. At the time, I congratulated the Government on the appointment of Mr. Bath to the board as representative of the

primary industries. I consider those interests will be protected as far as he is able to protect them. Also I feel sure that if Mr. Bath finds he is not able to secure the consideration he thinks the primary producers are entitled to, he will not remain on the board. I support the Address-in-reply.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.25]: Before addressing myself to the subject matter of the debate, I should like to welcome you, Sir, on your return. We have all noted that during your absence in the Old Land, you have not been unmindful of this State and its possibilities, which can be availed of by those who come here. I note that the Speech makes reference to the proposed visit of His Royal Highness, Prince Henry. That so important a visit should have been arranged, shows that His Majesty the King appreciates what we are doing in this part of his great Empire. I am certain that a loyal, generous-hearted welcome will await the Prince's arrival. I should like to deal with some of Mr. Hall's statements. It is strange that he should have started out to get behind the Federal Government in the matter of secession. The hon. member suggests that both Houses of Parliament should approach the Federal Government. Presently he will be urging the appointment of a Royal Commission to decide whether we should appeal to the Imperial Government or the national Government of Australia when these matters crop up. The hon. member referred to money being available. There is any amount of money available, but there is no profitable investment, the cost of production being so high, and the value of the product so low. Consequently no one is prepared to invest his money. Of course the Government can invest money irrespective of whether it earns interest, but that is not so with private enterprise, who have a limited capital to conserve. The hon. member advocated control—I do not quite know what manner of control—of banking in this State.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: On a point of explanation. I am glad the hon. member said he did not know, for I did not say anything about it. I eulogised the Federal Government for having established the Commonwealth Bank.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The hon. member said a new system would have to be adopted. My answer to that is to point to the failure

of the State Savings Bank of New South Wales, and the practical failure of the State Savings Bank in this State, together with the disclosures contained in the report of the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank. If the hon. member wants Parliamentarians and politicians to interfere with the financial institutions of Australia, I shall not be found with him, because immediately political influence is introduced into banking institutions, it means inviting disaster. Much has been said for and against the report of the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank. Out of evil, good will come. We know the policy before the country of socialising and nationalising the banking interests of Australia. Anyone who runs and reads must conclude that this policy would only mean disaster. Mr. Hall referred to those who have come under the Soldier Settlement Scheme. He suggests that the amounts owing by them should be written off. It would be easy to write off the amounts from the settlers' accounts, but it cannot be written off from the Treasury. The money is owed to the Treasury, and interest must be paid upon it sooner or later. I have never had anything to do with the Agricultural Bank, but I have had to do with the other banks. Because of the drop in the price of wool and wheat I have been as hard hit as anyone, but have never asked that anything should be written off my account.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: You did not settle on a repurchased estate.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I got on to a lot of stuff I would rather not have touched. My obligation is to meet my liabilities, in order that the State in turn may meet its just dues. It is not quite fair to suggest that the Government should write off these amounts from the settlers' accounts. Mr. Hall also referred to the action of the teachers. I hold no brief for them, and do not approve of what they have done. If the House had adopted the report of the select committee on the financial emergency agreement, and given everyone a little back instead of giving everything back to one section of the community, there would have been no trouble with the teachers. That was the foundation of the difficulty. I admit that they are on the wrong track. The Speech declares that "the financial situation is still extremely grave, and requires constant attention." I presume these words have been well thought out, and will be pro-

perly applied. The more I look into the position, the more convinced I am of its gravity. Finance is government, and government is finance. It is around the question of finance that the whole prosperity or failure of the State stands. Everything depends upon the policy adopted in handling the finances of the country. From the 30th June, 1930, to the 30th June, 1934, the public debt of the State increased by £15,000,000, namely, from £71,000,000 to £86,000,000.

Hon. T. Moore: They were four very bad years.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes. I admit that. The State per capita indebtedness increased for the same period from £163 to £193, quite apart from the Federal per capita indebtedness. I have from this seat for the last 15 years quoted men well versed in finance, who declare that the highest per capita indebtedness any community can carry is in the vicinity of £100.

Hon. J. Cornell: Ours is about the highest in the world.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We answer that by saying we have a lot of money invested in trading concerns, although these are more of a liability than a benefit. During the four years in question there was a decrease in the annual revenue of one and a quarter millions, that is, comparing 1934 with 1930. In June, 1930, the revenue was nine and three-quarter millions, and in June, 1934, it was eight and a half millions. The taxation, included in revenue, for the year 1932, was one million in round figures, and in 1934, it was £1,370,000. The Commonwealth grant for 1933 was £773,000, and for 1934 it was £1,073,000. In taxation for last year compared with the year 1932, we received an increase of £370,000, and from the Commonwealth we received an increase of £300,000, making a total of £670,000.

Hon. A. Thomson: And more will be obtained from State taxation this year.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: This amount, taken into account with the reduction in general revenue, makes a reduction in general revenue of £1,920,000 for last year, as a result of the expenditure of an additional £15,000,000. It is an alarming position. If we take taxation from revenue, that is the difference between the one year and the other, and the difference in the Commonwealth grant, we find a short-

age in general revenue of £1,920,000 compared with the previous year. The taxation receipts for last year were £1,369,000, compared with £1,129,000 for the previous year. The increase in taxation over the former year was therefore £240,000. This means that the emergency tax is coming home to roost. I think the Government denied that the estimated increase in taxation put forward by members in this House was likely to be realised. However, compared with the previous year, we have an increase in taxation of £240,000. If we work that out on a population basis, the increase per head in taxation for last year in this State was 11s. We borrow and we spend. If we were getting anywhere I would not mind, but not only are we getting into debt but are proceeding from bad to worse. No doubt we are hoping for the best, but are not preparing for the worst. I have no hesitation in saying that these figures show an appalling state of affairs, almost a hopeless state. The Premier has gone very close to saying the same thing himself. It is his responsibility to see that the position improves. Apparently nothing has been done to improve it, except to borrow more money and spend more. If the money borrowed were spent on reproductive works, some good might be accomplished.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: You admit it is difficult to find reproductive works.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: For private enterprise, not for the Government. Government enterprises do not pay taxes. If the money were spent by the Government in reproductive works, there would be some sense in borrowing and spending as we are doing to-day. This policy is creating an ever increasing liability. People say we are turning the corner, and are getting out of our difficulties. An analysis of the position shows that the prosperity is a fictitious one, brought about by the extravagant expenditure of loan money. Boiled down that is the position. How can it be otherwise, when our primary products are being produced at a loss? The so-called prosperity that people are visualising is the result of reckless expenditure. I wish also to refer to the pernicious system of paying loan moneys to employees who are members of unions, taking that money back from them, and putting it into party funds. That is the most pernicious system

ever adopted. Surely in times of stress and difficulty the poor wretches who are earning this quota from week to week are entitled to the lot.

Hon. T. Moore: You taxed them.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We did not tax them from the union standpoint. They are entitled to the lot, and this loan money should not be taken from them for union funds. It is the most abominable thing ever put over a community. I take off my hat to the working men and the men on the land in Western Australia. They have been through a great crisis during the last three or four years. The manner under which they have behaved and battled along has proved that there are no revolutionaries in Australia, at all events no more than one could count on the fingers of one's hand.

Hon. T. Moore: Although they are very much spoken of at election times.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not speak of them. The one thing that stands out in this crisis is the way the rank and file have behaved themselves, and battled on in the hope of something better turning up. My regret is that so far we have not been able to accomplish much to help them. Perhaps the most surprising feature of the Speech is the almost complete absence of any reference to the great northern portion of the State. If there is one section of our people that is up against it, and has been up against it for many years, it is the section in the far North. Seeing that out of four northern representatives in another place three are members of the Labour Party, one might have hoped for better things from the present Government; one might have hoped that something would be done for the North when three out of four representatives of the North were sitting behind the Government. However, I cannot find in the Speech anything relating to the North except a reference to the pastoral industry generally and a slight allusion to what has been done at Gascoyne. There is little if any reference to the future of the North. This fact carries me back to a period some six years ago, when there was a proposal that the Federal Government should take over the northern portion of Western Australia. Mr. McCallum, the present Minister for Works, then said that he refused to allow the people of the North to be sold like sheep, to be slaughtered by the Commonwealth Government; that the development of the North was the State Gov-

ernment's job. Mr. McCallum, with his party, got into power. Then the Labour Government woke up to the fact that the job was too big for the State, and that it should be a Commonwealth matter. So it goes on from time to time, and the North never gets anything. I know it was a surprise to the members of the State committee appointed to consider the question of the North to find that there were about ten places in the North-West where considerable amounts of gold had been obtained—a sign that there must be plenty of gold in the North, and that the metal only wanted looking for. Yet I find no reference in the Speech to any development of the mining industry of the North. Let me analyse the position, so that hon. members may understand it. I shall begin at Wyndham. The latest figures I have relating to the Wyndham Meat Works are for the year ended 31st December, 1932. In that year the Wyndham Meat Works took over from the cattle growers of the North 28,459 head of cattle. They treated those cattle, exported them, sold them, and then handed back to the cattle growers £2 18s. 11d. per head. In view of the conditions under which those cattle were grown, and the expenses attendant thereon, there is no one on God's earth who can herd cattle for four years, pay all expenses, find about one-third of the four-years branding fit for market, and sell them at £2 18s. 11d. per head, after paying droving charges of from 3s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. per head to bring the cattle to the port. All the other charges have to come off the £2 18s. 11d. The wicked part of it is that the growers do not know how that amount is arrived at. All the grower gets is a sheet of paper setting out the total proceeds of the 28,459 head of cattle and "your proportion" and "your cheque." That is all the information the grower gets. I am still responsible for my utterances, though perhaps hon. members might think not. The grower gets a slip of paper showing three items—the total value of the cattle, his proportion, and his cheque.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No particulars?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: None. The Wyndham Meat Works will not furnish particulars. They shelter themselves behind a clause which the grower is compelled to sign before his cattle are accepted. The clause reads—

The meat works shall furnish a certificate from the Auditor General as to the correctness of the amount, and the vendor shall accept such certificate as proof of such correctness.

The vendor must sign that clause before his cattle are accepted. All the Auditor General does is to make sure that the expenditure has been incurred. How the amount is made up does not concern the Auditor General, who only satisfies himself that the expenditure has been incurred and that the balance is so much. I repeat, all information as to details is refused. The works will not answer letters, and will not give any information over the telephone. I can speak more freely now than I did on previous occasions, because I am no longer interested in the cattle industry of Kimberley. I am now speaking only for the people I represent. In any case, even if I were interested, surely if the returns were good enough for me they would be good enough for the other fellow, and if they were bad for the other fellow they would be bad for me. I made an attempt to ascertain what handling charges amounted to. The Harbours Department inform me that the wharfage on meat, frozen or chilled, is 5s. plus 20 per cent., or 6s. per ton. Will Mr. Thomson please note that there is no wharfage charge on wheat at Fremantle, wheat being the primary product of the south, whereas the wharfage on meat at Wyndham is 6s. per ton?

Hon. A. Thomson: Do you suggest the imposition of a charge of 6s. per ton on wheat?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is as much reason for doing that as for putting it on the poor wretches in the North.

Hon. A. Thomson: I am asking the question.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The hon. member can answer his own question in his own way. I obtained from a proper source, not from the Wyndham Meat Works, the information that the handling charges in addition to 6s. wharfage on general cargo at Wyndham are 7s. 6d. per ton, and that the haulage charge there is 2s., a total of 9s. 6d. per ton for sending general cargo from one end of the jetty to the other. Those handling charges do not apply to meat. I cannot ascertain what handling and haulage charges on meat are because, I am told, that work is done by the Wyndham Meat Works.

Hon. A. Thomson: Have you not protested against those charges?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Hon. members can draw upon their imagination to find out

what the charges may be when it is borne in mind that the men at Wyndham are paid high rates of wages from the time they leave Fremantle until they come back, and get their steamer fares and other expenses. Hon. members will understand, from that factor alone, what handling charges are likely to amount to. Hence, presumably, the necessity for refusing to disclose them. In the early days, when private enterprise was handling goods over the jetty, handling and haulage charges on general cargo were 2s. 6d. per ton—not 9s. 6d. The men were then paid 4s. per hour for doing this work.

Hon. T. Moore: How long ago is that?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Before the Government came on the scene.

Hon. T. Moore: Is it 30 years ago?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The figures I have quoted will give hon. members who complain about transport charges something to think about. Let me refer to the Wyndham jetty, which was built for the Wyndham Meat Works and East Kimberley requirements. It is stated that the jetty requires 30 new piles annually, and that it costs £100 per pile to put them in position. I do not know what is the practice now, but at one time that expenditure was charged against the cattle growers, on the ground that the jetty was there for the Wyndham Meat Works. Imagine a wash-away on the Great Southern railway and the wheatgrowers being called upon to repair the line at their expense. What a howl there would be from the wheatgrowers!

Hon. A. Thomson: And rightly so.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Then why do not those who would complain about that help us in the North?

Hon. A. Thomson: You have never asked us to do so.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have talked of this here until I was black in the face.

Hon. V. Hamersley: This is the first time I have heard of it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Hamersley can only hear when taxation is mentioned. The present Government are no worse than any other Government, but successive Governments for the last 20 years, ever since I have been a member of this Chamber, have had these matters brought under their notice, and yet practically nothing has been done. The meat is exported. A selling agent is appointed in London.

The terms and conditions upon which he sells the meat have never been disclosed. We know that chilled meat upon reaching its destination, London, has to be put into immediate consumption. Selling agents who handle chilled meat run two or three thousand shops in London, and push it on to the market. The present agent, I understand, has no such facilities. Frozen meat can be held, but chilled meat cannot. In the matter of chilled meat we have accomplished something that we did not think could be accomplished, namely sending it from Australia to London. We do that now, but when it gets to London it has to be sold, and the people who produce it should have some say, at all events, as to how it is to be disposed of, but they do not know, and cannot get any information. Now let me point out that to transport a ton of flour from Fremantle to a station 100 miles in from Derby or Wyndham, quite apart from the price of the flour itself, costs £13 per ton.

Hon. A. Thomson: And what does the 100 miles land transport cost?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I know that the cattle growers have not a railway.

Hon. A. Thomson: But what proportion of the total cost of transport is represented by the 100 miles of land transport?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I want to be as brief as possible, and therefore will give the hon. member that information to-morrow. Western Australians complain about the way in which the Commonwealth treats this State, but this Parliament should be ashamed of itself for allowing such treatment of the North by the State to go on so long.

Hon. J. Cornell: I do not know that the Commonwealth would treat the North any worse if it were under the Commonwealth, as it ought to be.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If hon. members have any conscience at all, if they have any desire to help the North and other outlying portions of the State, let it be done now, before it is too late. Every time I go North I find sections of the country going back to the blacks. I make that statement with a full sense of responsibility. Leases abandoned in the North are going back to the blacks because the holders cannot exist under present conditions. Then we come down to Derby, where thousands of cattle are shipped to the South. It costs

over £5 per head to transport live cattle from Derby to Fremantle and to sell them. If you, Mr. President, were to look up the results of the sales, you would find that occasionally there is a margin of a few shillings left, but more often there is a debit note sent back to the producer. In the latter case, the cattle have not realised sufficient to cover transport charges, and pastoralists who have spent four years in getting the cattle into a condition suitable for market, are able to make nothing out of them and, on the contrary, have a debit note sent back in return. There is one way only by which these cattle can be transported to the South. They have to be sent to Fremantle by boat. They can be sold only in quarantine at Fremantle. That means that a handful of buyers can purchase the cattle at their own prices. The cattle naturally deteriorate during the voyage south and, instead of being sent out to fatten, so as to regain their condition for the market, they are held in quarantine, where they are sold, without having an opportunity to fatten up. The area back from Derby is clean, but the cattle drawn from there have to be travelled through tick country to the port of shipment. The effect of travelling clean cattle through tick-infested country is that the cattle become infected with the tick and develop tick fever, which causes tremendous losses. I understand that yesterday a ship arrived on which 500 head of cattle had been shipped, and she lost about 100 on the voyage. If those cattle had been overlanded, they could have been taken through clean country, and there would not have been such a heavy loss.

Hon. T. Moore: Why were the pastoralists not allowed to travel the cattle in that way?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Because it is said there is pleuro in the district.

Hon. T. Moore: But the cattle are coming through now.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That is so. One big firm spent a lot of money in importing some well-bred bulls that were placed on the Anna Plains station and the cattle that were bred there have been held for three or four years.

Hon. T. Moore: The cattle are coming down from Anna Plains now.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That is so, and that is largely due to the action taken by

the officers of the Department of Agriculture and others, which is greatly to their credit. It is work that I think should be made known. Every bullock was adequately tested before it was allowed to leave the station. Samples of blood were taken and placed in a sealed bottle, which was numbered with the number of the particular animal from which the blood had been drawn. The blood was analysed and tested by the departmental officials, with a view to ascertaining whether there was any sign of pleuro present. Out of the whole mob of about 1,500 dealt with, it was thought that about 50, roughly about 3 per cent., showed some sign of pleuro in the blood. Those animals were slaughtered.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It was found that it was not pleuro; but the owners lost the 50 head.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Derby is sandwiched in between the tick country and the part where there is the restriction line to the South. The only way by which the growers can get their cattle to port for shipment is by travelling them through the tick-infested country. Cattle become immune from tick fever if tick is present in the area where the animals are reared. A cow that has had tick fever can suckle a calf and the calf will seldom, if ever, develop tick fever. It becomes immune. Tick do not kill the cattle. They may be troublesome, but it is the tick fever that causes such enormous mortality amongst stock. Then we come to the next port—Broome. The position is so serious there that a conference of North-West members of Parliament has been arranged in order to ascertain what can be done. Unless something is accomplished, Broome, which has been referred to by the Federal authorities as the light-house protecting those large areas of water, where our wonderful pearls and pearlshell are produced, from Japanese invasion, will be wiped out and there will be a lot of trouble in that part of the State that can be avoided if the matter is handled properly now, as I hope it will be. Then at Port Hedland, there is a decent port and a good railway; they have had a decent season there. The result is that there is not much to complain about at the port. The position is not so satisfactory at Point Samson, where the jetty was blown away seven years ago and has never been reconstructed. The position there is very serious.

The then Minister for Works (Mr. McCullum), in all good faith, promised at the time that if a suitable site for a jetty could be found, a new jetty would be built. The site was chosen and necessary preliminary work carried out with a view to the construction of a new jetty. The Labour Government went out of office; the Mitchell Government were elected to power; the depression set in, and the work was held up. It has been held up ever since. There are thousands of sheep available at Point Samson for sale at prices ranging from 3s. to 5s. The sheep could be sent to markets in the Eastern States and turned into money, but the sheep cannot be lightered from the shore. Boats have to run on the tide there, and it is too far away to travel the sheep to the South. So the growers in that wonderful sheep-producing country have been without their jetty for seven years. It is true that the Government have agreed to pay the lighterage charges.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Government pay 75 per cent.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: After all, that is of very little use to those people who pioneered the area outback; they have produced the goods but cannot deliver them. Despite that fact, we find, depression or no depression, that at Esperance there was a jetty that, if we are to pay attention to the report of the Agricultural Bank Royal Commission, could have coped with all the traffic available from the hinterland. Notwithstanding that fact, the Government have gone full speed ahead with the provision of a new jetty at Esperance, in order to provide for the requirements of a district that, according to the Agricultural Bank Commission's report, will not produce anything. Esperance was already adequately served with jetty facilities and Point Sampson, the outlet for a rich pastoral area, has been left without jetty facilities for seven years.

Hon. J. Cornell: The work will be commenced about 1936.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Members complain about transport difficulties down South! Surely they will admit that the transport facilities down South represent paradise compared with what is available in the North and North-West. I have seen women lowered over the sides of a ship when the wind was blowing half a gale, and those

women had to be dumped on lighters. One dear old lady told me that she had been down a rope ladder, had been lowered in a coal basket, and also in a horsebox. She added that she preferred the horsebox.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Yes, it would be safer.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That sort of thing has been going on along the North-West coast to my knowledge for the last 20 years, and yet members complain in this House about the way in which the State Transport Co-ordination Act is operating! I lose all patience when I hear such complaints, particularly when I recollect that members representing country constituencies and provinces—I do not refer particularly to the Country Party—were responsible for that condition of affairs. Year after year they have voted to authorise the construction of railways that they knew would never pay. They adopted the policy: "You vote for my railway and I will vote for yours." Because of that attitude, we find all these new railways constructed and failing to furnish profitable returns. That was bad enough, but then the farmers wanted their wheat and super transported by rail and all their other products and requirements to go by road. When that position arose, it was time the Government stepped in. For my part, I shall give the Transport Board a chance. They will get a fair deal and a fair run from me. They are confronted with an almost impossible position, which has been made impossible for them by the legislators of the State. We have more than £23,000,000 invested in our railways, and those who were responsible for the investment of the money in the first instance, must be equally responsible to-day.

Hon. V. Hamersley: How much was invested in road construction?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I was speaking about the railways. Another suicidal policy was adopted with regard to road construction. We had our railways and then we set out to build roads parallel to the railway lines.

Hon. A. Thomson: How else could it be done? You surely would not have isolated the railways?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: When the hon. member advocated the construction of a railway, he should have been prepared to

see to it that the people in the localities tapped, patronised the railway.

Hon. A. Thomson: Of course they do patronise them.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Some members are trying to read into the Transport Act something that does not find a place in it.

Hon. A. Thomson: It was a mistake.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The statement has been made that Parliament made mistakes when dealing with the Transport Bill. There was no mistake regarding what Parliament intended. The trouble is that people are trying to read into the Bill something that Parliament would not allow them to include in it. The Transport Co-ordination Act is all right, but the hon. member has tried to read into its provisions something that Parliament never intended, and then people blame the Transport Board because the members of that body interpret the Act as we intended.

Hon. J. Cornell: There is quite a lot in that statement.

Hon. A. Thomson: And quite a lot in the other version.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Next I will deal with the position at Beadon Point. The jetty there was blown away and I give the Government credit for getting to work at once on the reconstruction of the jetty. The position at the North-West ports is so serious that half measures will not do. Something practical must be done at once, or the North will steadily revert to the blacks.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Before leaving the North-West, I should like to thank the Government for the attention they have given to tropical production in the Carnarvon locality and also for their appointment of an expert to advise on tropical agriculture. These things may be considered small, but they all help towards local production, and are an asset to the other industries of the North. I thank the Government for the changes they are making in the medical staff in the northern parts of the State. Hitherto men of mature age were sent there, and some of them were not all that could be desired. The Government now recognise the difficulties of the North, and are appointing younger and more experienced men. They, of course, could not be paid except

from the proceeds of the primary products of the North. When we remember that cattle, sheep, wool, meat, pearls and pearl-shell are all primary products, that they pay high handling charges, and a high wharfage rate plus 20 per cent. on the wharfage, and that wheat, a primary product of the South, is taken over the wharf free, we realise some of the disadvantages under which the North labours. Representatives of agricultural constituencies have complained of transport restrictions in the South. In view of what I have said, they may realise some of the difficulties of the North. Some of them claim they have not heard of those difficulties before. For the last 20 years, from my seat in this Chamber, I have been preaching the doctrine of neglect of the North, and it is not my fault that they have not heard and understood. It seems to me that my 20 years of advocating the claims of the North have been almost wasted. Still, I belong to a nationality that will box on, and I suppose I shall continue to do so as long as the people of the North Province desire it. I shall deal only briefly with the report of the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank, because I understand that later an opportunity will be given fully to discuss it. The matter is so urgent that I hope the opportunity will be afforded at an early date. It is useless to exonerate Ministers or Parliament and to try to shelter ourselves behind the Managing Trustee or the other trustees. Ministers and Parliament have known the position for the last 16, 18 or 20 years. Eighteen years ago, from this seat, I charged the Treasurer with misappropriating the funds of the Agricultural Bank. He was present and was listening to me. When the House rose he waited for me outside and we had a very warm discussion. However, nothing happened. I spoke then as I spoke this afternoon regarding the North. Parliament cannot say it did not know anything about the matter. Ten and a half years ago I was chairman of a select committee appointed to inquire into the Peel and Bateman Estates. The committee consisted of Mr. E. H. Gray, Mr. J. Cornell, Mr. A. Lovekin and Mr. E. H. Rose. We reported that the Managing Trustee had said that he would not have a large percentage of the so-called settlers on his mind; the policy of the Government was to put them on the land and he was there to carry out the policy of the Government. We have to

remember what has happened to public servants of this State who have attempted to set the Government at defiance in order to do their duty. In some instances they have ceased to be members of the civil service. This brings me to another point. For years I have argued that all such positions of importance should be filled by men with life appointments so that they could be in a position to set the Minister at defiance if necessary. Reverting to the Peel Estate inquiry, we found that a board were appointed by the then Minister to investigate the proposed purchase of some land. The board reported against the purchase. A second board were appointed, and they reported against the purchase. Then a third board were appointed who recommended the purchase. To say that the Managing Trustee and the other trustees are responsible for the present position of the Agricultural Bank is wrong. The responsibility must rest with the respective Governments and Parliaments of this State. On page 123 of the report of the select committee on the Peel and Bateman Estates the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank, Mr. McLarty, is reported as follows: "The strain necessarily has been a severe one and I am beginning to feel the effects of it." In the concluding paragraph of the report we pointed out that the Managing Trustee was carrying four major departments—the Agricultural Bank, the Industries Assistance Board, the Soldier Settlement Scheme and the Group Settlement Scheme, and we stated that any one of those positions was enough for any one man, and urged that Mr. McLarty be relieved of some of his duties. Nothing was done. To come back now and say it is not the responsibility of Parliament or of Ministers is merely to side-track the issue. It is our responsibility and has been from the start. Right through the select committee's report we requested and begged the Governor to do certain things, but the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank, in their report, have assumed a different attitude. I do not think they understood the position. They say, in their report to His Majesty's representative, the Lieutenant-Governor, that certain things must be done. I have not yet heard of anyone who could tell the King or his representative what must be done: yet the commission have gone out of their way to say what must be done. Their duty was to suggest respectfully what should be

done, and not use the word "must." I do not propose to deal further with that matter except to say I hope an early opportunity will be given to discuss the report. As for Mr. McLarty's co-trustees, Mr. Moran and Mr. Maley, I ask members to put themselves in the position of those gentlemen. Let them consider what has happened to other public servants, and what happened to the first two boards appointed to consider the purchase of Peel Estate land. The trustees had to carry out the policy of the Government or seek positions elsewhere. I have spoken somewhat severely about the position of affairs in the North, and the position justifies my action. I feel that after battling for 20 years, I have accomplished hardly anything. I hope Ministers will view the position seriously and see whether something cannot be done to ease the burden of the people of the North in order that they may exist, and not pile charge after charge upon them until nothing is left for them. Let me give an instance. I understand that the Commonwealth authorities have assumed control of the lighthouse service throughout Australia. Yet, if we send a pearling boat out from Broome, the State Government charge £2 8s. for lights. In spite of what has happened regarding the Agricultural Bank and in view of what Mr. Hall told us about men being eight years in arrears of their rent, this House last year was guilty of passing two more agricultural railways, and the policy of the Government, I presume, was to develop the land along those lines. The Agricultural Bank has to carry out the policy of the Government, and more difficulties, I suppose, will be piled on the bank, and the trustees will be asked to accept the responsibilities. It is not my idea of justice. I have no more to say except that I support the motion.

HON. C. B. WILLIAMS (South) [7.45]: I have just heard the latter part of the speech of one of the oldest members of the Parliament of this State, one who held a portfolio in a former Government and who has been a private member for many years. I will say for him, not in any offensive way, that he is one of the most conservative men in this House. I have heard him speak against Bills in this House and criticise them severely, particularly the financial agreement between the Commonwealth and

the State. On that occasion he told us that it would be a retrograde step if Western Australia accepted that agreement. I was a bit with him, although I voted differently. For the moment I represent one of the most prosperous parts of Western Australia, if not of the Commonwealth, but I candidly admit that I am somewhat worried over that representation. You, Sir, represented that part of the State when I was a boy, and did not have a vote. That part of the State, too, voted in favour of Federation, and now I am worried about the Commonwealth. I have been through quite a few rows and arguments, and I owe an apology to this House for not having been here on the occasion of the opening. Whether members take what I say seriously or jocularly, I wish to declare that Western Australia today is the I.W.W. or the communistic State of the Commonwealth.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I do not believe it.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I did not interject whilst the hon. member was speaking, for I was afraid you, Sir, might put me in my place. I repeat that I owe an apology to the Lieutenant-Governor and to the House for not having been present on the occasion of the opening, and again to say that I am worried over the dissension that exists in Western Australia. For the past 20 years, I have been in the forefront of most things affecting the workers and the party with which I am associated. I did not go to the war, nor do I intend to take part in the war that is going to take place in this State. I know what it is to be in the rank and file of any army, and I know what the chap in the secession ranks has to expect. I am not even a believer in anti-secession, and I am going to admit candidly that I do not intend to come to Perth too often. What is going to happen in this State has me worried. The present Minister for Defence, Sir George Pearce, was Minister for Defence during the period of the Great War, and carried to a successful conclusion the duties entrusted to him, successfully I should say, to his own satisfaction. But he is not game, in fact he does not dare to visit Western Australia during the forthcoming election campaign. So I ask, why should I, an anti-secessionist, leave my safe home on the goldfields and come to Perth? I put that up quite seriously.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You look very serious.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I have already arranged with Mr. Holmes that when leave of absence is applied for on my behalf, it will be sought on the ground of urgent private business.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I will give you a pair.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I thank the hon. member. I take my politics from the local paper, the "Kalgoorlie Miner." I often get the "West Australian," and I buy the "Sunday Times," and reading in those periodicals that the hon. Sir George Pearce does not intend to visit Western Australia, I do not see why Charles Bennett Williams should come to Perth too often. I have a vivid recollection of the period when conscription was talked all over Australia. At the present time I have no ambition to be ducked in the river, nor to be thrown into the ice-chest at Weld Club.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Don't you want to be present at the burning of the Case for Union?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: No, and unless I can be one of the leaders I have no desire to be in the rank and file. When Sir George Pearce, Minister for Defence, is ashamed—perhaps I should not say ashamed—is afraid to come to this State—

Hon. R. G. Moore: Why do you say he is afraid?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: He has been steeped in nationalism as far as my memory takes me back. He has been the most successful politician Australia has ever known. He has been in every Ministry except one, and he got rid of that one as quickly as he could, and now his being afraid to come to Western Australia, has me very worried. So I shall not be visiting Perth until the elections are over. That is going to be my position. We on the goldfields do not want secession, and I want to know from the Chief Secretary exactly where we stand. Mr. Holmes has told us that probably our water supply will be cut off.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We will supply you from the Leopold Ranges.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: No, you will not get the chance. As we know, there are still many unemployed in this State. The Premier told us a few days ago that 12 motor drivers are coming to Western Australia from the Eastern States and what I want to know is whether they are to be

the nucleus of the defence force the Federal Government are sending across to down secession. Why should the Federal Government send anybody at all to this State? They have sent for distribution the Case for Union in reply to the Case for Secession. I do not intend to be mixed up in any revolution or war in the State unless I am a leader. Mr. Holmes wrote a letter to the "West Australian" which circulates in Perth. The "West Australian," I believe, is the leading newspaper in the State. The leading paper in my electorate is the "Kalgoorlie Miner." I did not see Mr. Holmes's letter in that paper, but I saw it in the "West Australian." I am not attempting to belittle those who write for the "West Australian," for they are of my own class; they are workers. We know that Mr. Holmes told the anti-Labour people to get together. If ever Mr. Holmes told the truth in his life it was when in this House he said that the saving provision in the Federal Constitution was that for the Senate, the States' rights House. Mr. Holmes emphasised that, and I agree with him. The hypocrisy of politics was shown when Mr. Holmes made that speech. He said the Senate was to have been the salvation of all progress, but that it had become a party House. I do not wish to refer to what Mr. Hall said, because after all that was so much hypocrisy. Mr. Hall on the hustings denounced all politicians, yet he had prominent members up there to support him. I think Mr. Baxter was amongst them.

Hon. G. W. Miles: No, he was not there. The seat would not have been won had he gone.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Oh, yes. He, too, has kissed the blarney stone. I understand that the Leader of the Country Party and indeed all Country Party members went up to assist Mr. Hall in his candidature, and they successfully fought the issue. However, I do not want Mr. Hall, no matter how friendly we may be, to declare that Mr. Drew has only to nod his head and I would follow him, just as Mr. Hall followed Mr. Baxter when that gentleman was in Mr. Drew's present position. I do not wish to differentiate between members of the House, but I must say that Mr. Holmes and Mr. Miles are the biggest narks I have known in any party; in other words they are the most independent members in the House. Mr. Hall, when he found he was

opposed, was just as bitter a party man as I am myself. He was a Country Party man, and I think he quite agreed with me that his loyalty to the ex-Leader of the House was not nearly so great as my own. Mr. Baxter said I had referred to the farmers as mugs. They are the best mugs I know. For, after all, the unemployed get sustenance; they have to work for it, but only eight hours per day, whereas the farmers have to work unlimited hours. Mr. Hall did not say a word about them. I call them advisedly the mugs. They were mugs to elect Mr. Hall. I do not say that offensively. They were mugs enough to believe what he told them about the politicians. He got away with that, and there were other politicians to help him get away with it. Good luck to them.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Be careful. We got you a walk-over.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I have never been vainglorious about that; as a matter of truth I have never referred to the fact that I emulated you, Mr. President, you with all your experience of Parliamentary practice and your speaking ability; I have followed in your footsteps, although I have not your diplomacy. Neither have I your blarney, for I was not born in the same country. But I have been baited, and you did not stop those who were baiting me. Still, I have made friends with everybody here and have fought the fight as I thought it should be fought. I do not even scratch the head of my leader, yet like you I have been returned unopposed and for the same province. We shall have it out some day alone, but we will not take the House into our confidence. The point is that we are both here. Of course it may be that I am regarded as the humorist of the House. During your absence, Sir, one member of the House said it was a toss-up whether he or I was the keenest humorist in the House. I am a member of the Labour Party and I am apprehensive about what is going to happen to the anti-secessionists. Unless Mr. Drew will write to me, I am not coming down next week. Mr. Holmes has arranged all that for me. Unless I am guaranteed that there are not going to be any insurrections in Perth, and that I can safely come through the railway tunnel without having a shot fired at me, I will not come down. I notice Mr. Seddon and Mr. R. G. Moore are both stopping in Perth

longer this year than ever before. They are bringing down their wives now. I do not know the reason for it, whether they are just as much alarmed about the anti-secession business as I am. However, that is the position. I do not want to transport my family down here. If the Chief Secretary will give us an assurance that we are all right, I will come down, but I am not going to come down on any other condition. The Labour Government opposed this emergency deduction of 22½ per cent. If anything hurts me it is that reduction in our allowances. I have never got over it, and never will until I get it back. I trust it will be retrospective when we do get it back. The same thing applies to the great proportion of Labour's supporters. There is talk of a motion in which it is to be declared that wages should come down and taxation should come down. We have visions of the last time we stayed here all night. I had to vote against my convictions. That is worth £3 a week to me, so it is worth stirring up. The railway men are dissatisfied. I am not worrying about the school teachers, because after all they do not work any longer than members of Parliament do. I admit they have a more tedious job than have members, but they do not work very long hours. But I say that if Labour wants to get in—I am not worrying about the Federal arena at all—I have drawn attention to the fact that between this and the Federal elections there may be a revolution. We have heard of it and read of it. We have heard to-night from Mr. Hall that Mr. Drew has only to raise his finger and there are seven Labour members who have agreed to follow him to the grave. Generally speaking, we do. We would not then have heard of an ex-President of this Chamber not being game to stand for a Federal election. Had it not been for the members of the Labour Party at that time scabbing on me when Senator Sir Walter Kingsmill got into Parliament, I would have been a senator to-day, because the other two Labour candidates, Mr. Graham and Mr. Needham, got in, and Sir Walter Kingsmill got in in my place. In my view politics are a sheer hypocrisy. Sir Walter Kingsmill now has to withdraw as a candidate for the Senate after many years of service. I wish to express my regret at the retirement of Sir Edward Wittenoom and Mr. Rose. Those gentlemen retired be-

cause they thought it was time younger men took their places. Sir Charles Nathan has also retired. Despite our disparity in ages and in wealth, he and I were of the same opinion. If I could have walked into the job I left to come to this Chamber, I would have done as Sir Charles Nathan did, and, given up my job here. I realise it is futile. I started out as a working man, and I exist here as a working man. It is my life, but it was not Sir Charles Nathan's life. To him I pay the compliment of knowing when he was out of his place. If I could get back the job of organising men into the union, I would be there now. Of my two opponents one was the secretary of the union, and the other was a workmen's inspector. I would not have changed jobs with either of them. Had I been defeated, I could have obtained the secretaryship of the union. A Federal election is pending. If I am called upon to speak for any member of Parliament in this State in connection with the Federal election, I shall have to twist on my convictions and be a hypocrite. The workers and the people generally are fed up with politics. "Be to others kind and true, as you would have others be to you." I said something last session and owe an apology to two people. I said the ex-Commissioner of Railways and the present Secretary of Railways had 1,000 shares each in Peter's Ice-cream Company. I made a mistake; they had 500 shares each, whereas the ordinary public could only get 18. The ex-Commissioner retired on a pension, but the secretary is still in his job. Another man with 100 shares is Mr. Hickey, of the Transport Board, an ex-railway man. The railway men have been reduced in wages, and the politicians stand for it. That is not breeding good feeling towards politicians or politics. The railway men have had to sacrifice 22 per cent. of their wages, less what they have received back since. The Commissioner could get 500 shares in the ice-cream company, and his secretary could get the same number. Mr. Hickey secured also the 13 shares he applied for in the first place. Wages have been filched from the workers, while men in good positions have the money. It is up to the Government to do something. The railways are not paying, although last year they showed greater receipts than ever before. What can the State expect? Take our licensing laws, which were framed in the dark ages. We put the police in charge of

the laws of the country, in charge of the rottenest graft civilisation ever saw. The riots in Kalgoorlie arose out of graft, and the police inspector in charge should have been disrated before Parliament. The licensing laws provide for trading hours between nine and nine, and nine and eleven on the goldfields for closing time on Sunday. People on the goldfields have no recreation and nothing whatever to do in their spare time. We are pandering to the wowers.

Hon. R. G. Moore: Not too much.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: The hon. member does not understand. The workers in Perth have the river and the ocean. Most of them finish work at midday on Saturday. On the goldfields the men work three shifts and do not meet on Saturday till about 5 o'clock or some time on Sunday. They are all engaged on piece work, and frequently argue about their jobs. A row or brawl ensues. There is one saving grace about the British race. After work the men say, "Come and have a drink." The worst quarrel is settled over a pot at a cost of 1s. It is all finished then, without any inquest or inquiry. That is our race. Maybe we have a squash or an ice-cream soda. That is how we settle our arguments, without revolvers or knives. Instead of putting the control of our laws in the hands of men who will graft, the Government should see that they are administered honestly. There is no reason why Smith, who can buy his way out on a Sunday, should be able to sell beer on that day when Jones cannot do so. I have seen it and I have been in it. Is it better for a man to have his pot on a Sunday and go home to his meal than to take bottles of beer into his house, or than that the licensing laws as they are to-day should be strictly enforced, and that the shanties at Wiluna and in Perth—the convictions show this—should have a profit 33 per cent. above ordinary rates? We are stuck for revenue. The hypocrisy of Governments! Would it not be better to charge £5 per week per license throughout Western Australia for permission to trade on Sunday during limited hours? If there were a thousand licensees in Western Australia, the return would be £5,000 per week. And let the same course be adopted with regard to the bookmaker. Hypocrisy again! We employ pimps—men we would not recognise in ordinary life—to catch bookmakers. Which bookmakers

are caught? Those who do not graft with the police. Not all of them are caught. I defy contradiction from the Chief Secretary when I say that not all the bookmakers in Western Australia are caught. Why not charge starting-price bookmakers £5 or £10 per week for the right to bet? Between the publicans and the starting-price bookmakers in Western Australia I can see £20,000 a week of revenue. We say we do not bet at all, and do not drink after hours or on Sunday. What hypocrisy! Kalgoorlie ministers signed a round robin. We know what they would say. It is a bit of a knock to the Protestants when they see that round robin. The document was signed only by Protestants. No priest signed it. Priests have too much sense. That round robin is absolutely hypocritical. It referred to Sunday trading on the goldfields, and it is a disgrace to the goldfields. Moreover, the round robin was signed in winter. What is to happen in summer? It is better for any man to get drunk occasionally. It is a relief to the brain. Just think of the calamities under which the workers suffer! Fancy me taking home half a dozen bottles of beer on Sunday in the summer—a thing I have never done yet. And that is what hypocrites want me to do. The Salvation Army cadge in hotels and from the bookmakers on the racecourse, and therefore are also hypocrites. I object to the hypocrisy of the whole business. Mr. Collier will easily be returned in Boulder at any time, but for the sake of the Government I urge them to acknowledge that there is revenue in Sunday trading and in bookmaking. I do not think the most Conservative member of this Chamber would vote against a taxing measure of the kind I have suggested. A friend of mine, and a namesake, told me "Anyone can get beer on Sunday in Wiluna at 3s. a bottle." I know that Mr. R. G. Moore would not agree with me. However, starting-price bookmaking being rampant in Western Australia, why not capitalise it as sweeps have been capitalised? We swank to certain persons, and then we sit back. Fancy Kalgoorlie ministers running down drinking in Kalgoorlie! Being a Labour member, I object to the proposal to close the hotels. I may mention that I am a member of a club with a subscription of a guinea a year, and I can go to that club at any time and get as much drink as I

like. Is that right? There are such clubs as the Hannans and the Weld. The existence of clubs means that laws exist for the benefit of a select few. The Labour Government have another 12 months to go, and they have many sins to atone for.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They have two years to go.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Twelve months next March. The Labour Government have to prove to the workers of Western Australia that they have done justice by them. I have glanced at the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. Sir James was just as genial on this occasion as on the last. He did as he was told. It is a wonderful compliment to this State that the policy of the Western Australian Government was proclaimed by a son of Western Australia rather than by someone coming from whence our forefathers came. The Labour Government never did anything better than they did when appointing Sir James Mitchell Lieut.-Governor.

Hon. G. W. Miles: A master stroke of diplomacy!

Hon. C. B. Williams: A fine compliment to an opponent, an even finer compliment than the Federal Government paid to Australia in the appointment of Sir Isaac Isaacs. I am not a native of this State, but I will die here and be buried here. The Federal elections are on, but it is useless to talk on that subject to hon. members of this Chamber. Indeed, goldfields members when travelling usually talk about football, and not about politics. Here let me say that I want my £3 a week back.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You want some of those "Scullidore" notes!

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: As to "Scullidore" notes, Mr. Miles is a wealthy man and has a motor car, in which he has frequently given me a lift; but he will be no more wealthy than I am when the people kick over the traces. The hon. member's wealth is, after all, merely paper. We are merely concerned about paper. What is a pound note worth? Although it is merely faith that makes us accept a piece of paper as worth £1, there are some members of this House who claim we cannot upset the present order of things. That means that we must borrow money. What does that mean? Simply that we have to get money from ourselves and pay some of

us four per cent. for doing it; and yet the pound note is a mere nothing; I could put a match to it for all that it is worth.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are not game to do so.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: We are told that the banking institution is a wonderful organisation. We are told that the Commonwealth Bank is a wonderful concern; so it is. But what is this flimsy bit of paper worth to the miners who delve in the ground and win the gold that is of real value? Yet those very workers have to take this bit of paper because the butcher, the baker, and the storekeeper accept it. The note is worth nothing, and it is worth 25 per cent. less than purports to be its value if it is presented outside the Commonwealth. We borrow this type of money and that means we borrow credit in order to construct railways and carry out other works. What we really ask of the people is merely faith. Mr. Mann suggested that I should put up something comprehensive in advocacy of my contention, but I would not waste time doing anything of the sort contrary to the interests of the orthodox system by which so many people are content to abide. If I went round the country telling the people that the pound note was of no value, I would probably be shot, as I would be regarded as a menace to civilisation. I am supposed to be a Labour man. Unless the Labour Party alter considerably, I am not a Labour man. I said that before, and I say it again. The people should have a fair deal from a Labour Government and they are not getting it. I will not waste time in discussing that phase; it is patent to everyone. While the workers are prepared to take a flimsy slip of paper as valued at £1, notwithstanding the laws of the country, it will have to go on. There is not one man in the community who has money in the bank who would get full value for it, if he called upon the bank to pay him to-morrow. That is the position that confronts the working class movement to-day. They will not get a fair spin from the Labour Party, and they certainly never could get it from the National Party. To-day it is all a matter of faith. Why is not the Commonwealth Bank what we had expected it to be? It is because it was ham-strung by Bruce and ham-strung again by renegade Labour men, some of whom to-day are appealing to the people. The most versatile and successful

politician in the world, let alone in Australia, is afraid to come to this State. There is one man in this Chamber for whom I have the greatest respect—I refer to Mr. Holmes—but I saw a letter from him that was published in the Press in which he suggested to the people of Western Australia that they might forget what Sir George Pearce, Bertie Johnston and others had done, and thereby vote for the Labour candidate; whereas he wanted them to vote anti-Labour.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I never said that.

Hon. B. C. WILLIAMS: Yes, you did! I would certainly not misconstrue what you said. When Mr. Holmes claims that this Chamber is non-party, it is not so. If there is a Chamber that is a better party House than this, I do not know of it. In the ranks of the Labour Party, we are pledged to stick together, unless we twist, in which event we are entitled to do as we like. I could tick off those who have twisted on Labour, but I do not want to make this a personal matter. They stick to their new political party, without which they would not be members of this Chamber. Why be hypocrites? If the Labour Government will do what I want them to, they will suit me down to the ground. I want them to dissociate themselves from the Premiers' Plan right away. If they do not do so, they will not be returned at the next election.

On motion by Hon. J. George, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 21st August, 1934.

Question: Bird trapping	PAGE
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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTION—BIRD TRAPPING.

Traffic with Eastern States.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Premier: 1, Is the Fisheries Department aware that Eastern States bird trappers are alleged to be trapping in the Kimberley district, and using motor trucks to transport birds through the Northern Territory to the South Australian market, to the detriment of West Australian dealers? 2, Is it a fact that 1,200 birds were shipped from the Zoological Gardens to a dealer named Turner, in Sydney, this year?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, No.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the 16th August.

MISS HOLMAN (Forrest) [4.33]: I was interested in reading in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech a very promising paragraph about the timber industry. It means a great deal to the State for the timber industry to be in a prosperous condition, and it is a fact that during the past 12 months or so many of the mills in this State have been re-opened. My own electorate, Forrest, has shared in the revival of the industry, and many of Millar's mills have now been re-opened. There are several that have not yet re-opened, Jarrahdale and Marrinup being two of them. It means a great deal to the State to have the men employed in the timber industry, and it is of great credit to the Government that sustenance and relief work have been reduced by so much, and that by their encouragement the timber industry has come to life again, so to speak, and taken into employment so many of those men. I expect there are over 1,000