

Australian soldiers experienced when they arrived in Blighty during the 1914-18 war, and saw women drinking in London hotel bars. To present-day soldiers that occasions no shock whatever. In those days women went into bars of their own volition, but today they are taken there by the youth of Australia and all the liquor they can consume is poured down their throats. The psychological aspect has completely changed and later-day thought obviously is reflected in a certain degree of laxity in various directions. I naturally agree that if an undisciplined armed force were to meet a disciplined armed force the latter inevitably would prevail. On the other hand, if the soldiers get a job to do they can be entrusted to carry it out. A lot of the bravado and swank would receive a salutary lesson should the men experience the real horrors of war. That experience will knock discipline into them as will nothing else. Until that time arrives, I doubt whether we can hope for much change.

I trust that the present Government, or any other Government that may take office during the war period, if it is concerned with the conservation of the sovereignty of the State, will endeavour to administer the country's affairs, or such of them as may be left untouched by the Commonwealth, wisely and well and that it will be content to abide by the decisions of the State Parliament even though some of the decisions may be such as the Commonwealth Government may consider not to be in the best interests of the prosecution of the war effort. If that position should arise, then let the Commonwealth Government and Commonwealth Parliament effect the necessary changes—without any invitation from the State Government. I stand today as I stood previously on the question of excessive drinking and what arises therefrom. There is only one way of dealing with the position. It is not a question of the hours of trading or whether the soldiers are consuming too much drink. The question centres on what they drink. Let members consider what was done in the Old Country and in France during the 1914-18 war. Let the Government follow suit and decrease the alcoholic strength of liquor consumed by the troops. When the men cease to get a kick out of the liquor, their swagger and bravado will go. Until that is done, we shall always have trouble. We must get down to tin-tacks and deal with the cause of the trouble

that led to recent disgusting scenes. The evil arises not through over-indulgence but through the strength of the liquor. That is what does the damage. Reduce the alcoholic strength, and the problem will be solved!

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

House adjourned at 3.59 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 26th August, 1942.

	PAGE
Questions: Road making, soil cement process	318
Rubber, economy in use	318
Address-in-reply, eleventh day	319

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2).

ROAD MAKING.

Soil Cement Process.

Mr. McDONALD asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has the soil cement process, as developed in the United States of America for road making, been tested in this State? 2, In view of claims for speed and cheapness of construction by this method, can he inform the House of the views of his officers as to the suitability of this method for use in this State?

The MINISTER replied: 1, No. 2, Considered unsuitable owing to relatively high cost of construction.

RUBBER, ECONOMY IN USE.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is everything possible being done by the Government to ensure economies in the use of rubber? 2, Is it realised that adoption of moderation in loading and speed of motor vehicles ensures big savings in rubber and petrol? 3, Is it his intention to take steps to secure the minimising of acceleration and brake work, correct tyre pressure and wheel alignment, also the retreading or capping of tyres prior to canvas destruction, and table regulations relating thereto.

The MINISTER replied: 1, Yes, so far as Government vehicles are concerned. 2, Yes. 3, No, but the motoring public has been continuously advised by experts in re-

gard to these matters. Steps have been taken in regard to Government vehicles. There is no statutory authority for making regulations regarding the retreading of tyres.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eleventh Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. HILL (Albany) [2.18]: Today we have one job and everything must be subordinated to that task. This is not a time for platitudes; it is a time when we must face facts, no matter how unpleasant those facts may be. In war-time the enemy has a very unpleasant habit of searching out our weak spots and hitting at those weaknesses. This Parliament cannot produce a new monetary system; it is not our particular job to control the Empire or even the Commonwealth, but it is our job to do all we can to fit our State to play its full part, to permit our State to have as few weaknesses as possible, and to make the most of the State's strength and natural advantages. The time has come when we must put all parochial ideas on one side, and place the needs of the Allied Nations above all other considerations.

Military science, or perhaps I should say the science of war, is divided into four main branches or arts. These are strategy, tactics, military engineering and logistics. Strategy has been defined as the art of the admiral and the general, and it should be the art of the statesman. It is strategy that decides how, when and where to fight. Strategy should be the art of the statesman because it is the Government that decides the defence policy. In our State we should have statesmen to formulate our development because we need to develop the State not only on sound economic lines, but also to develop it so that when war comes the State will not be placed at a disadvantage. I have heard it said that a statesman legislates for the next generation, whereas a politician legislates for the next election. As one looks around the State, one cannot but feel bitter against the politicians past and present that have considered places politically strong but strategically weak instead of places of strategic importance but with few votes. The mistakes of our past and present politicians are very severely handicapping our Fighting Forces today. I fully realise that recri-

inations are not going to help us at this stage, but I intend to refer to past mistakes, not because I wish to indulge in recriminations, but in order that we may catch up with those mistakes.

Napoleon truly said that the study of strategy was the study of history and as one studies strategy, one sees how history repeats itself. A study of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 is very interesting today. Unfortunately our leaders apparently did not benefit by the lessons of that war. In 1904 the Japanese declaration of war was a sudden and surprise attack on the ships at Port Arthur. Last year we had the Pearl Harbour episode. In 1904 the Japs sank the Konietz and the Veriag at Chemulpo. Last year they sank the Prince of Wales and the Repulse off Singapore. In 1904 there was the Battle of the Yellow Sea; this year the Battle of Java. The Japanese captured Port Arthur by the back door. Members know what happened at Singapore. The Japs are more daring in this war than in 1904-05. They landed their army in Manchuria before the Russian fleet was definitely destroyed. The tremendous sacrifices made by them to capture 203 Metre Hill at Port Arthur were made because the view of the harbour from that hill permitted the fire to be directed from 11-inch mortars, which destroyed the battleships at the port. Togo realised that his position would have been most critical if he had to face the Russian Baltic fleet before the destruction of the ships at Port Arthur. The Japanese General Staff realised that the existence of the armies in Manchuria depended upon the destruction of Russian sea power. The battle of Tsushima of this war has yet to be fought. It will be this coming battle that will decide our fate.

Tactics is the art used when contact with the enemy is made. It is the art for all ranks of the Fighting Forces. It is definitely not our job, so I shall leave that phase alone. Military engineering is self-explanatory; it deals with fortifications, road and bridge building, etc. Logistics is a term rarely used, even in military text books, so I shall explain that it is the art of transport and supply. Obviously then our Fighting Forces here must have the wholehearted co-operation of our civil administration. "The West Australian" of the 13th August published an article dealing with the supplying of armies, showing what an immense job it

is. I shall not quote it because it appeared only a few days ago. I have consistently directed the attention of the House to two of our greatest needs in this State—a sound transport administration and a sound port policy. Transport experts are almost unanimous in recommending that all transport should be placed under one Minister.

Imagine what a task a military transport officer would have if he wanted to discuss with our Ministers the very complicated problem of transport! To discuss our motor licensing authority, which is the high-sounding title of the State Transport Board, he would have to go, I understand, to James-street to meet the Assistant Minister for Works. Our railways are under the Minister for Justice, whose office is at the Supreme Court buildings; the port of Perth is under the Premier; the Fremantle Harbour Trust is under the Chief Secretary; while the Bunbury Harbour Board, harbour and lights and shipping are under the Minister for the North-West. If any work is required at the ports, these come under the Minister for Works. Bulk-handling facilities at the port are under the Minister for Lands, while cool store facilities are under the Minister for Agriculture. Efficiency under these conditions is absolutely impossible. In my own electorate a matter recently arose which shows the need for a co-ordinated transport administration. The Main Roads Department recently constructed a nice new road to a very important parking area, which area is on railway property. It is used as much per day now as it was used in three months last year. I was asked to approach the Railway Department on this matter and received the following reply:—

It is appreciated that this work will not fulfil all of the desires of those who use the parking area, but this Department does not consider the improvement of the approach or the parking area an essential railway necessity and does not regard them as works upon which railway funds should be expended. Although the approach and parking area are established on railway land, this department would have no objection to any approved improvements thereon being undertaken by the Municipal Council or the Main Road Board, providing it is carried out to the satisfaction of the District Engineer, and it is suggested that these two bodies might be approached for that purpose.

The municipality is not allowed to spend money on railway property and the Main

Roads Department is in a similar position. One of the Federal Ministers was also approached; he interviewed the Minister for Railways, but received the same reply. I then took the matter up with the Premier, to whom I wrote about six weeks ago, but so far I have not received a reply. As I said, that parking area is used extensively. Incidentally, I may say that two vehicles using it are the "Miss Yanchep" and the "Miss Westralia." In its present condition, the area is exceedingly bumpy and therefore I sincerely hope the Government will have it put in order. I shall not argue what department is responsible for doing the work, but definitely the improvement of that area is a Government responsibility.

The Minister for Mines: Is "Miss Yanchep" a bus?

Mr. HILL: Yes. We also need in this State a sound port policy. In peace-time ports are the mediums or clearing houses between sea and land transport. On ports, their efficiency and their proper location, the whole system of transport largely depends. Our unsound port policy in peace-time severely handicaps us; in war-time it is a tragedy. In war-time, ports may be havens of refuge for our shipping if there is a raider about. On the other hand, a bad port may be a trap. A good port could be used as a base for our ships and as protection for our trade routes and shipping. It could also be used as a base from which to attack an enemy. A bad port is likely to be an inconvenient back door. In peacetime, a multiplicity of ports may be uneconomic; in war-time, it is a serious danger.

I now propose to deal with the supply of foodstuffs. Napoleon said that a soldier marches on his stomach. That maxim holds good today, but with still greater force. Today it is not simply one army fighting another; it is one nation against another, and the supply of foodstuffs is one of the biggest problems to be solved. I congratulate our Agricultural Department and the Under-Secretary for Agriculture, who are doing their best with this exceedingly difficult job. We are today, however, paying a big price because in the past there has been lack of encouragement and organisation on the part of our primary producers. Last year a Bill was introduced with the object of providing for the registration of the potato-growers of this State. One would have

thought that the real object of that measure was to enable the potato-growers to fleece the people in the city. I assure members that the man on the land does not want to fleece the people in the city, but he is entitled to a standard of living comparable with that of the city. If we want to keep up our food supplies, we must consider the question of manpower. We must also make the production of foodstuffs as attractive as is the work in the Forces and work in munition factories. I am not an advocate for big munition works in this State. I certainly am of opinion that we should avail ourselves of every workshop capable of producing munitions. My own opinion, however, is that the establishment of large munition works in this State would be a mistake.

Not only are we a long way from the sources of raw materials, but our position is a vulnerable one. There is nothing between Fremantle and enemy-occupied territory. Apart from that, if a six-inch gun were mounted at King's Park today, half the population would be within its range, including the Midland Junction Workshops, the Welshpool Munitions Factory and the oil tanks at Fremantle. We have two convenient back doors, one at the North and one at the South. At the back door of the South there are thousands of tons of wheat ready for the enemy should he decide to take advantage of the access to it. What is urgently required in Western Australia is a properly-equipped naval base and a dock. We have neither at present, and that is because two ports are in the running for the base. Some people have suggested—the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie did so a few days ago—the resumption of work at the Henderson Naval Base. Work on that base was abandoned after the expenditure of £1,000,000, the reason given being that the estimated cost of completing it was £18,500,000. Notwithstanding that £1,000,000 was expended on that base, it is not possible to base a motor dinghy there today.

I shall now deal with the base which has natural advantages. I was there the other day, talking to a senior naval officer. "Why is it," he asked, "that this place has been so sadly neglected? If £1,000,000 had been spent here, we could base the British battle fleet here today." Those who advocate the continuance of work on the Henderson Naval Base quote three authorities, Admiral

Henderson, Sir Maurice Fitzmaurice and Lord Jellicoe. I might explain first that Cockburn Sound has a fine anchorage and I would like to see it used in preference to Gage Roads. However, there is a great deal of difference between an anchorage and a naval base. To assess Admiral Henderson's report at its true value, one must consider the events which led to his coming to Australia. He came here in 1910, when a Labour Government was in power. When that Government was in office a few years earlier, it practically told the Admiralty that it would do only what it, the Government, wanted. Admiral Henderson did not come here to advise our Australian Government. He came to draw up a report upon which the Government might act.

All the available information regarding Cockburn Sound was given to the Admiral at Colombo; but when he arrived at Fremantle he was told by "The West Australian" that he had to put the naval base at Cockburn Sound. He was met by our District Naval Chief Gunner Mullon and Admiral Cresswell. The Chief Gunner asked Admiral Cresswell, "Shall I go to Albany?" "No," said the Admiral, "there is no need to go to Albany; this has to be the place." Admiral Henderson paid a flying visit to Albany. He was there long enough to send the following telegram:—

Unnecessary to inspect Cockburn Sound. Albany in every way suitable for a base.

Sir Maurice Fitzmaurice was an engineer. He was brought to Australia largely because of the enormous engineering difficulties associated with the construction of a naval base at Cockburn Sound. I feel confident that, could we obtain his report, we would find he was largely responsible for the closing down of the work at Cockburn Sound. Lord Jellicoe came to Australia. As far as I can ascertain, he merely assumed that the Commonwealth Government was carrying on with the Henderson naval base. I do not think his opinion was asked for. We have accordingly to consider Admiral Jellicoe's actions if we wish to ascertain what he thought. They were very significant. Admiral Jellicoe passed by Fremantle in the "New Zealand" and came to Albany, and he went to and from Fremantle by rail. I now come to the important question of dock sites. I have a cutting from "The West Australian" of the 19th July, 1939. It is headed, "Dry Dock for Defence.

Claims of Albany Reviewed. From Our Special Correspondent." I will not read all of it. It states:—

There is a growing opinion in well-informed circles that Albany may be selected as a site for a dry dock suitable for battleships. It is considered possible that Albany may be selected as well as Sydney, or alternatively the Sydney plan may be abandoned and Auckland substituted, giving a triangle of bases—the existing dock at Singapore, a possible base at Albany and a possible base at Auckland. Alternatively both Albany and Sydney may be chosen.

This special correspondent had evidently come in contact with Sir Leopold Saville because he reports Sir Leopold as saying—

I might add that, although I have not been to Albany myself, I know its advantages very well as the result of my service at the Admiralty, and also that Mr. Jacobs, who is assisting on this mission, knows Albany well and is completely informed on its possibilities. You may be assured that we are fully alive to its claims.

Further down we read:—

The strategic advantages of Albany were considerable, a high naval officer told me, and, taken in conjunction with another dock at Sydney or Auckland, would provide the Empire with an impregnable backbone of naval defence in the southern hemisphere.

I should say that strategically Albany has it all over Sydney, he declared. It would be far less liable to attack and therefore much more easily defended. It would make little difference to the Royal Australian Navy where the dock was situated, and, from the point of view of the Royal Navy, I should say that Albany would be better, as in the event of a fleet action against Singapore it would be much easier for a battleship to make its way down the north-west coast to Albany than have to face the fire of a hostile navy in order to come down the coast to Sydney.

Another factor is that, in the event of a major action against Singapore, it might be necessary for reinforcements to be sent from the South African station or via South Africa in the event of hostilities in the Mediterranean. Such ships would find the Albany base much more convenient than a Sydney base. Actually both bases are necessary and I should certainly not like to have to make the decision if only one base is possible for economic reasons.

Further on the report states:—

In any case, the ultimate building of a dry dock at Albany is regarded as certain, but whether it will take the place of the Sydney dock is another matter. Cost and immediate construction favour Sydney, but a long view, combined with a willingness to authorise slightly higher expenditure, favours Albany. I did not meet Sir Leopold Saville when he was here, but I had the pleasure of discussing the dock site with the late Brigadier Street, who described Mr. Jacobs as a rather

wonderful man. Brigadier Street told me Mr. Jacobs had assured him that he knew Albany backwards. A week or two later I met Mr. Jacobs, and we discussed not only Albany but the various ports that were possible sites for a naval dock. He explained to me that one essential consideration for a dock site was that there should be engineering works in the vicinity. He said that it would not be an economical proposition to construct a dock and then provide engineering works specially for it. He also said that Albany was like Port Stephens which was a natural harbour, and incidently I might explain that Lord Jellicoe had reported on the congestion of Sydney Harbour and had suggested Port Stephens as a naval base. Mr. Jacobs said that while Port Stephens was a natural harbour there were no engineering works nearby. There were such works at Newcastle, but as a site for a dock Newcastle was hopeless, so it would have to come to Sydney.

I have here a report made by Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners, and prepared by Sir Leopold Saville. As this matter is so important to Western Australia today I will read one or two extracts. Paragraph 2 is headed "Essential Site Requirements" and states:—

As a guide to what was considered necessary as a suitable site for a graving dock of the required dimensions, and to meet the Naval requirements for its efficient use, we assumed the following civil engineering conditions—

- (a) that a site should be recommended for the graving dock which could be levelled, either by cutting away ground above quay level, or by reclamation to the required quay level;
- (b) that satisfactory foundations, preferably of rock, should be available at a reasonable depth;
- (c) that a navigable channel 800 ft. wide with a depth of water not less than 45 ft. at mean high water should be available or that such a channel could be provided and maintained at a reasonable cost by dredging;
- (d) that repair shops sufficient to meet all conditions with the necessary facilities and skilled labour should be available at or within a convenient distance of the site of the graving dock, as it was proposed that only limited additional shops should be provided to meet the special requirements of capital ships.

That is the only condition which Albany could not fulfil.

- (e) that a repair and fitting out wharf with necessary cranes and other equipment should either be available in the vicinity or be provided;

- (f) in order to meet the requirements of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, as finally agreed, the graving dock should have the following dimensions:—

Width of entrance at coping level ..	137 ft.
Length of dock from inner caisson ..	1,000 ft.
Depth of water over keel blocks at m.h.w.s. ..	45 ft.

- (g) in addition to the above site and engineering requirements, the following matters should also be kept constantly in mind:—

1. Strategic position;
2. ease of access and exit from point of view of navigation;
3. defence;
4. accessibility of a protected anchorage.

Albany has all these requirements but one. The same thing applies to Albany as applied to Port Stephens. This same report in paragraph 76 states this about Port Stephens:—

This port provides a fine natural harbour, but as, however, it is entirely isolated and no repair facilities exist in the neighbourhood it cannot be considered as suitable for the construction of a graving dock of the nature on which we are asked to report. Should, however, the construction of a complete self-contained naval base at any time be under consideration, this port would warrant further investigation.

When dealing with Fremantle in paragraph 120, the report sums up the position in these words:—

In these circumstances, and as we anticipate some difficulty would be experienced in providing and maintaining approach channels of the required depth at all states of the tide, we cannot recommend this port as suitable for the construction of the graving dock. Further, as previous experience gained in the attempted construction of a dock at Fremantle, and a general survey of the borings and strata in the vicinity indicate, the construction of a graving dock at this port might encounter serious engineering difficulties and no reliable estimate of its cost could be given.

The report of that expert should be a sufficient answer to those people who continue to advocate Cockburn Sound or Fremantle as a site for a dock. A few remarks about other dock sites in the Empire may be of interest. I understand that they had to go down 80 feet at Singapore to obtain a sound foundation. I had the pleasure of discussing Port Stephens with one of the members of Sir Leopold Saville's party when they inspected that port.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Are you referring to the dry-dock at Singapore?

Mr. HILL: Yes.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I heard that it was gravel all the way down.

Mr. HILL: I understand they had to go 80 feet to a sound foundation. This gentleman informed me that millions of pounds would have to be spent on the approach to the docksite at Port Stephens. I had the pleasure of going over the docksite in Sydney with the Engineer-in-Chief of the Maritime Services Board. I am not an engineer and will not be dogmatic in my statement, but I should say that the cost of the actual construction of a dock at Albany would be much cheaper than that involved in the building of the dock for Sydney. I also travelled up the Port Adelaide River with the General Manager of the South Australian Harbours Board. The provision of a dock there has been suggested, and reclamation work is already in progress. Extensive dredging operations would be required in connection with the selected site if the dock were built there. At Cape Town the provision of a docksite is also associated with a reclamation scheme, but before that can be done it will be necessary to construct a harbour. At Albany we have a harbour already provided by nature.

The conditions at our southern port are, as far as I can ascertain, ideal with regard to the essential foundation, and Mr. Jacobs assured me that the necessary dredging would not be a very big job. The Minister for Works has stated that only one man desires expenditure at the port of Albany, and even he had not been able to indicate how the money should be spent. I suppose the Minister has entirely forgotten his first visit to my home on the Kalgan River 15 or 16 years ago. I showed him a file of the Albany Chamber of Commerce, and I find it commences with an article I wrote regarding the Albany harbour. I then suggested that the Commonwealth and State Governments should co-operate in the development of the harbour as a naval and commercial base. On the 4th January, 1937, I wrote to the then Minister for Works, and in the course of the communication I said—

I have sound reasons for believing that the Commonwealth Government would co-operate with the State Government to develop Albany as a naval and commercial port. I would suggest that the Commonwealth Government be approached with this object. I would also suggest that officers of your department, the Harbour and Lights Department, representatives of the Albany Chamber of Commerce and

myself meet with the object of considering a suitable harbour scheme. This is not a request for further expenditure other than a site for the super works, but we must consider future requirements.

In 1912 the P.W.D. considered the reclamation of the foreshore at Albany. As far as borings were made, bedrock was found at an almost uniform depth of 42 feet along a line parallel and about 900 feet from the foreshore. Sir George Buchanan recommended the progressive reclamation of the foreshore along approximately the three-fathom contour. This is a little further out, and there is room for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of front, 590 acres of reclamation and requiring about 7,500,000 cubic yards of reclamation. Reckoning the cost as the same as the reclamation of the Swan River, this would cost about £187,500. It seems too good to be true, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of water front with 590 acres of level land alongside for only £187,500—but this is, of course, a scheme for the future.

In Sydney the people are very proud of the fact that their docksite will include a reclaimed area of 35 acres. In Cape Town the new harbour scheme includes reclamation work, and the big dock to be constructed there will be included in that area. Many years ago, a man who afterwards became one of the world's leading statesmen, Herbert Hoover, visited Albany. When he was there he said, "If we had this harbour, we would reclaim the foreshore with level land alongside the deep water." I headed a deputation to the Minister for Works a few years ago, and asked him to consider a reclamation scheme along the lines indicated by Mr. Hoover. The Minister replied, "Why do you want new land there? We have plenty of vacant land in Western Australia." I left the building with a very poor idea of that particular Minister. He did not appreciate what it would mean to have a considerable area of level land at Albany with deep water right alongside. We have vast stretches of vacant land on the Nullabor Plains, but they are not suitable for graving dock purposes. We could construct a dock at Albany at a very nominal cost. All that is necessary is for us to have a Parliament in Western Australia that will work for the State and not in the interests of one part only. We require a Government that will utilise our natural advantages for the benefit of the State, the Commonwealth and the Empire.

Another matter to which I shall refer concerns the serious drink problem that affects the whole State. I associate myself with the remarks made by the member for Katanning, who discussed this topic. I was rather

surprised to hear one Minister interject, while that hon. member was speaking, "We have introduced 6 o'clock closing." I would be sorry indeed to think that that is the only contribution the State Government could make to the control of the drink traffic. One of the most serious features of the problem is the sale of bottled beer and other liquor in bottles. That phase should be dealt with and restrictions imposed. The other day the member for Beverley and I travelled in a first-class sleeping compartment, and we noticed four sailors who boarded the train at Spencer's Brook with 28 bottles of beer in their possession. In fairness to those sailors I must admit that, although beer was spilt over everything, they did not interfere with the passengers.

While our first job is to win the war, we must bear in mind the post-war problems that will arise. In the Lieut.-Governor's Speech reference is made to a scheme for the settlement of the northern portions of the State. While that is to be commended, I remind the Government that we also have a southern portion of the State that requires development. Here I associate myself with the remarks of the member for Nelson, whose home town is on the Blackwood River. If members look at a map of Western Australia and draw a line commencing on the western coast and extending from the Blackwood River, thence following the line to the rabbit-proof fence to the coast, they will find that they have enclosed an area that bears some resemblance to the shape of Victoria. Within that portion of the State we have about 45,000 people, whereas it should be carrying a population of at least 1,000,000. I understand that area contains the largest acreage of undeveloped land in the temperate zone in any part of the world. While that section of our State has many of the advantages characteristic of Victoria, the development of that State was dependent upon the development alone of the port of Melbourne. The development of that part of our State must be considered in the light of its obvious advantages.

Mr. North: But you need immigration.

Mr. HILL: Yes, and also Government assistance for the development of the area. After travelling throughout the Eastern States, I feel most confident about the future of the southern portions of Western Australia. What struck me forcibly, when I was journeying between Sydney and Brisbane,

was the enormous expenditure that had been incurred to provide transport facilities in New South Wales. The Hawkesbury River bridge was being re-conditioned and a new bridge was being constructed at a cost, I was told, approaching £1,250,000. If members peruse returns submitted to us in this Chamber, they will see that the cost of the railway line from Beverley to Albany was only £800,000. Practically nothing effective has yet been done to provide adequate transport facilities for the south. Nature has provided Western Australia with one of the finest harbours in the world, with easy grades for transport over the hinterland. Yet we have no railway communication worthy of note to that port. I hope that in the near future we shall see the completion of the Pemberton-Nornalup railway, or the construction of some other line more effectively to connect the South-West with the Great Southern areas. The port of Albany is already there, and if the State Government will only set out to make up for past mistakes, I am sure the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments will be only too pleased to co-operate with it. Dealing now with party politics I agree that this is not the time to indulge in that policy.

Mr. Thorn: Why not?

Mr. HILL: I would like to see party politics forgotten in these days, and a National Government placed in office. The responsibility for a move in that direction must rest with the Government of the day. Last year two Ministers of the Crown visited my electorate and, while it may have been a coincidence, it was strange that subsequently rumour had it that the Albany electorate had suffered because it had returned an Opposition member to this House. It was also suggested that I had antagonised Ministers and departments. When I look back over the years, I find that the electorate has suffered most when we tried to assist the Labour Government by returning a Labour candidate. In 1911, a very fine harbour scheme, including reclamation operations, had been prominently before the authorities, but it was scrapped when we assisted to place the Scaddan-Johnson Labour Government in office. In 1914 we were provided with a jetty. In 1924, we assisted to keep the Collier Labour Government in office. Since that time, I think only one Premier of the State has taken the trouble to visit the southern portions of the State, and he was Sir James Mitchell.

We certainly received more from the Mitchell-Latham Government than we ever had from the Collier and Willecock Governments. As for the suggestion of antagonism, I value the friendships I have made with Ministers and with various members sitting on the Government side of the House. Nevertheless, I do note that for some reason antagonism has been displayed towards the southern portions of the State.

Mr. North: You are breaking it down a bit.

Mr. HILL: Unfortunately the Government's attitude was disclosed last year when the Minister for Works was in Albany. The Minister was speaking to Mr. Lloyd Williams who, in a very courteous manner, asked him if he would send engineers down to help in the preparation of a harbour scheme. The Minister replied: "I may as well tell you straight away that we are going to do nothing down here." I had an interesting experience last week. I went into portion of my electorate and was pleased to see that some of the predictions I had made had come true.

Albany has been kept back in the past but it will not be kept back for all time. Politicians can fight against nature but the time will come when nature will prevail. One Minister of the Crown has also stated that the people in my electorate will take no notice of me. About ten days ago we held our annual conference of fruitgrowers. For the fourteenth time in succession I was elected president. When last March I received the Premier's letter to which I referred earlier, I discussed the matter with representative local people and later had a conference at which, as usual, most kindly feelings predominated. I assure the Government that the people of my electorate are prepared to do everything possible to assist in the war effort and, what is more, they are prepared to do their bit in developing the State when the war is over. They cannot do very much unless the Government is prepared to assist. They are ever ready to co-operate with the Government, but in that co-operation the first advance must come from the Ministers themselves.

MR. HUGHES (East Perth): Now that the member for Albany has been elected president of the Albany Fruitgrowers' Association for the fourteenth year in succession, may I suggest that he and those associated

with him attempt to do something for the metropolitan area by arranging that occasionally the fruitgrowers will forward supplies at a price that city people can afford to pay?

Mr. Hill: Give us the transport and we can do that.

Mr. HUGHES: Then perhaps the Government will attend to that phase.

Mr. Doney: Do growers control prices?

Mr. Thorn: Of course they do not.

Mr. Hill: The trouble is the cost of transport.

The Minister for Mines: Is it the cost of transport or the Apple and Pear Board?

Mr. HUGHES: There are other fruits besides apples and pears.

Mr. Warner: There are the fruits of labour!

Mr. HUGHES: There are dried raisins, but unfortunately that commodity seems to be under the control of the member for Toodyay, for dried fruits cost 1s. 8d. per lb. That is beyond the capacity of the people in the metropolitan area to pay.

The Minister for Mines: I suppose the growers get the 8d. and the member for Toodyay the 1s.!

The Minister for Labour: The member for East Perth wants the forbidden fruit!

Mr. HUGHES: I do not know why the member for Albany is always harping on his suggested national government. I do not see how a Government consisting of two discordant parties could function efficiently in any case. It is possible to have democracy, but only where the Opposition, instead of always wanting to get half the Government, makes up its mind to fight for the lot. By fighting vigorously, the Opposition eventually gets to the Treasury bench; and thus good government is secured. But we are threatened with the abolition of this Assembly. For that I think there are solid and excellent grounds. That has been brought forcibly to public notice as the result of uniform taxation. Indeed, there is now a movement throughout Australia for the abolition of State Parliaments. Three outstanding reasons can be advanced. Firstly, the great majority of the people in the Commonwealth of Australia speak the same language, have similar aspirations, and a common destiny. In the great majority of affairs touching daily life, the problem of the man in Victoria is that of the man in South Australia, and the problem of the

man in South Australia is that of the man in Western Australia.

Mr. Doney: You are wrong in that last comment.

Mr. HUGHES: A discordant element already!

Mr. Doney: That is what you say you want.

Mr. HUGHES: I acknowledge that it would be a dull old world if everybody agreed, and there would not be much progress.

The Minister for Labour: There would not be much progress for the lawyers!

Mr. HUGHES: I do not think there would be any progress at all. Therefore, I hold that, Australia being in the main a nation with common aspirations and one destiny and common problems, the natural form of government for Australia would be one Parliament giving common legislation for the whole of this Continent. If Australia had one Government only, we would not have three or four railway gauges. In large measure the war has proved that for, from the aspect of defence, it is agreed and always has been agreed since the establishment of the Commonwealth, that there should be only one authority in control of all matters relating to defence. Basically or ethically, therefore, there should only be one Government throughout Australia; and consequently I hold that in practice there are other and more cogent reasons for the abolition of State Parliaments. The outstanding feature as regards Western Australia and also some of the other States is that the Federal Parliament is elected by the people, and that it is the only Parliament in Australia that is so elected.

The Federal House of Representatives is chosen on a sound democratic basis of one person one vote, and can claim to represent the Australian people; for although it is not possible to have exactly the same number of electors in each electorate, the Commonwealth has the fine expedient of a 20 per cent. margin up or down. Accordingly the Commonwealth Parliament does not show such diversities as one electorate with 200 or 300 voters, and another electorate with 10,000 or 12,000. Federal constituencies are so arranged that they approximate to an average number of electors. Thus the 75 members of the Federal House of Representatives do each of them represent approximately the

same number of electors, and therefore the basis of their election is democratic. There is a chance of securing democratic government by election methods such as those. In Western Australia, on the other hand, we have an electorate like Kalgoorlie, taking in a tremendous area, the bulk of which has no population. In order to get in its quota of electors, the Kalgoorlie electorate takes in more than half the total area of Western Australia.

The Minister for Justice: Nine hundred odd square miles!

Mr. HUGHES: But in those 900 odd square miles I suppose all but about five square miles has no population. There are thousands of square miles in the desert without any population whatever; and under any system of government claiming to be democratic, broad acres have no right to representation and people alone have the right to be represented. So the Australian people through the Commonwealth Parliament can achieve whatever form of government they desire; and so long as the people can get the form of government they desire, they have democracy, and whether the government is good or bad does not enter into the question. If the people want a certain kind of government, they can have it. Thus the Commonwealth Parliament lends itself to complete democratic representation of the people, and can claim to be the voice of the people.

Mr. Thorn: Does that apply to the Senate?

Mr. HUGHES: I do not get much support on my right. The Commonwealth Parliament has another outstanding feature. Whilst it gives complete democratic representation in the House of Representatives, it provides an adequate safeguard for the various component parts of the Commonwealth, because the Senate is not elected on the basis of adult franchise and equality of numbers in electorates. The adult franchise applies to the Senate, but each State elects six Senators and no more than six, and thus each State of the Commonwealth has equal voting power to declare whether or not any proposed legislation shall become law. The result is that the States enjoy adequate protection.

If the House of Representatives should legislate in a way antagonistic to any territorial part of the Commonwealth, then, since each territorial part has equal voting strength

in the Senate, the interests of each part are adequately safeguarded. I do not think the world can show, in theory, a more equitable or better planned system of government than our Federation. We have complete democratic adult suffrage with equal electorates, and for a House of Review we have representation of the States on an equal basis. Western Australia has exactly the same power as New South Wales has to veto legislation in the Senate; and New South Wales has ten times our population. The three small states—Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia—can by means of their 18 representatives in the Senate restrain the three larger States from doing anything that will injure the smaller States. Therefore, in theory the Commonwealth Parliament is an ideal system of government, safeguarding the people and protecting the States.

Comparing that situation with the situation as regards State Parliaments, what is the position? Let us take the case of Western Australia. This Legislative Assembly does not represent the people and never has represented them. In this Assembly we have constituencies with less than 1,000 electors; indeed, constituencies with less than half that number return members to this Chamber. On the other hand, we have one constituency with over 11,000 electors. That means that we have not democratic government at all. If 1,000 electors in one part of the State are to have exactly the same representation as 11,000 in another part, we simply give one person 11 times the voting strength of another person. I believe it will be agreed in all parts of the world that the intellects are to be found chiefly in the metropolitan areas.

Mr. Sampson: That is amazing conceit!

Mr. HUGHES: Where are all the scientists and professors and literary men and economists to be found? All in the metropolitan area!

Mr. W. Hegney: And all the crooks!

Mr. HUGHES: Instead of taking all voters on an equal basis, we go away into the country and give residents there 11 times the voting strength of people elsewhere. Therefore, the people as a whole are entitled to say, "We can get from the Commonwealth Parliament the voice of the people, but we cannot get it from State Parliaments because of the enormous disparity in methods of election." The position would

not be so bad if the margins in electorates provided for somewhere near the average number; but, when we come upon such margins as I have quoted, it is plain that our system of government is not democracy at all and that there can be no hope of the people getting the democratic government they want unless the Parliament is elected on something like a basis of equal numbers.

Although the position is bad as regards our Legislative Assembly, it is much worse as regards our Legislative Council. In the latter House we have a constituency with nearly 30,000 electors on the one hand, and on the other hand a constituency with about 800 electors, and there is a restricted franchise. It does not matter what is wanted by the people of the State as a whole; whether we can have legislation or not is determined by one-third of the electors. Only about one-third of the electors have a vote, and out of that one-third nearly one-half is in one constituency. There are nearly as many electors for the Metropolitan-Suburban seat in the Upper House as there are for all of the remaining provinces put together. Surely that is an absurd state of affairs! Surely it is ridiculous to say that it takes 28,000 electors in the metropolis to equal 800 outside the metropolis. The position has been going from bad to worse. The people of this State must face up to the fact that they never can get government by the people from the Parliament of Western Australia unless this Parliament itself is prepared to tackle the problem and redistribute the boundaries of the two Houses, so that we can at least have something approximating a democratic Parliament.

Recently there was an election for the Metropolitan-Suburban Province. Out of 28,000 electors, only about 6,000 voted. Had the Government wanted to win the Metropolitan-Suburban seat it could have done so. There is not the slightest doubt about that. All it needed to do was to display a little activity and it could have won the election. Amongst those 28,000 electors at least 10,000 are dyed-in-the-wool Labourites, but apparently the Government did not want to win the seat. No effort was made to win it. We know from the areas covered how easy it would have been for the Government to have taken the seat.

Mr. Sampson: A leading Labourite lost his deposit.

Mr. HUGHES: He was not leading in that case.

Mr. Sampson: He was recognised as a very thoughtful member of the Party.

Mr. HUGHES: I think there was a good deal of misunderstanding about the gentleman who lost his deposit. I do not think it was because the people did not have the utmost regard for him, or because they did not think he would make a worthy representative in Parliament. In my opinion this was the trouble: The Labour Party and the Labour Government have religiously made everybody retire from work at 65 years of age, notwithstanding that the labourer and the mechanic and the wage-earner might be fit mentally and physically to carry on his work, and might need the work to maintain his standard of living. Hundreds of people have been placed in that position and they have relatives living in the electorate of which I am speaking. Consequently it was too much to ask them to vote for a Labour candidate for that electorate who is over 70 years of age. It was too much of a contradiction. I have heard people say, "If you cannot be a railway man at 65 you cannot be a legislator."

I am not saying that a man cannot be a legislator at 65. I do not agree that there is any set age at which mental or physical powers diminish. Some men are senile at 25, and some are physically worn out at 40. Other men are vigorous, mentally and physically, at 70. Vital statistics will come to my aid in that respect, if necessary. The fact that a man is 65 or 70 does not mean anything to me, but if a policy is laid down and enforced against a man on the lower rung of the ladder he will naturally say, "If it is good enough for me, it should be good enough for the other fellow." I think that is one of the reasons why that particular gentleman was not elected. The other is that he is a doctor of some sort, and that is much too high-brow for the electors of the Metropolitan-Suburban Province.

Mr. McDonald: There is one doctor already in the Upper House.

Mr. Sampson: I am afraid that many did not know there was an election.

Mr. HUGHES: That is a nice admission from those who control the Press!

Mr. Sampson: How do you explain their not voting?

Mr. HUGHES: Surely with eight candidates in the field they should have known!

After the election we find that although the successful candidate represents 28,000 electors he has only the same voting strength as a gentleman who was previously elected to represent 800 electors. There can be no democratic government under such conditions. I do not know that these disparities are so marked in any other State but, to a lesser degree at any rate, they do operate in the Eastern States. We know that in certain States there are nominee Upper Houses, and the result is that the people cannot give expression to their wishes. I think that is why there is a very pronounced movement towards seeking relief from the Commonwealth Parliament, and why people are saying we do not need State Parliaments any more.

Mr. North: Would you enlarge the Commonwealth Parliament slightly?

Mr. HUGHES: I would exterminate portion of it! It might well be enlarged, if the day ever comes when a revised scheme of government for Australia is formulated. Probably it will take the form of enlarging the powers of local governing bodies throughout the Commonwealth to enable them to take over certain functions now being performed by the State Parliaments. They could probably undertake the administration of water supply and metropolitan transport, apart from main roads. In order that greater representation might be given to the people I think that the strength of the Senate could be doubled seeing that it is the States' House and is a safeguard for the States. That will probably be the revised form of government that will operate if the time arrives when State Houses are abolished.

Unfortunately, when we signed the Financial Agreement, we started the rot so far as State Parliaments are concerned. We gave away our right to control the purse and limited the power of State Parliaments. Ever since the Financial Agreement of 1928 the power of this Parliament has been curtailed and it has been subsidiary to the Commonwealth Parliament in practice, whatever it might be in law. Now we have uniform taxation for the duration of the war, but I am afraid that when the war is over uniform taxation will continue. There will be plenty of reasons—good solid reasons—that the Commonwealth Government will be able to submit for the continuance of uniform taxation. It will be an established fact and the people will be used to

it. Undoubtedly from the taxpayer's point of view it has advantages, and there will be no difficulty involved in the Commonwealth Government's putting forward cogent reasons for retaining the system. That being so—with the borrowing powers of the States gone under the Financial Agreement and the taxing powers gone under the uniform taxation scheme—this Parliament is reduced to a very minor place in the governmental scheme throughout the Commonwealth.

Those are more or less theoretical reasons why State Parliaments are likely to be abolished. There is another reason so far as this State is concerned. Our Parliament has done more than any other institution or body to establish a case for the abolition of State Parliaments. For years and years this Parliament has been shedding its responsibilities.

Mr. Warner: This Government!

Mr. HUGHES: This Parliament, because after all the Government cannot do anything unless Parliament allows it to do so. This Parliament has been giving away its powers to boards. We no longer have the old healthy form of democracy under which the Government relied on a majority in the House, and was subject to the control of the House on an adverse vote; under which Ministers accepted ministerial responsibility and answered to the House for the various governmental activities, and the Opposition carried out its duties by drawing attention to shortcomings in administration and legislative defects. I can remember when, even in my time, Ministers took responsibility for the various departmental activities. In the last 20 years, however, there has been a constant shedding of ministerial responsibility, and powers rightly belonging to Ministers have been vested in boards of various kinds. These boards have relieved Ministers of their responsibilities but have destroyed the power of Parliament to control the activities concerned.

We have a Milk Board. Instead of a Minister of the Crown being responsible for the administration of that governmental activity, a board has control and whenever a question is asked in Parliament about milk matters the answer is "Well, that is the board's function." So Parliament has parted with its right to control a governmental activity. The Transport Board is another example; there are numerous boards

and commissions. Very little is left for the State Parliament to do, because it has shed its powers and duties. The Government—and particularly this Government—has completely abandoned the functions of government. This Government has positively refused to govern the country. For the last 10 years, so far as government is concerned, there has been nothing but chaos in Western Australia. The Government has resolutely refused to enforce the law. Parliament has passed laws but the Government has refused to enforce them. Worse than that, it has stood by and allowed shocking discriminations in the enforcement of the law. Take the absurd position previously mentioned during this debate. If a person commits an offence against certain sections of the law by running a common gaming-house in Perth he is fined £75. If he commits the same offence at Fremantle he is fined £5, and if he commits the offence in Victoria Park he is not fined anything.

Mr. Marshall: They are not fined on the racecourse.

Mr. HUGHES: Even if Parliament did not promulgate that law it has remained quiescent, and the Government has remained quiescent whilst allowing the law to stay on the Statute-Book. That is a bad way to administer the law. It would be much better to have no law against gambling. It would be fairer to have no enforcement of such law. If the Government cannot bring about an impartial enforcement of the law it would be fairer to everyone if it said that that portion of the law would not be enforced, that it would be regarded as dead. A man in one part of the country would then know that if he committed that kind of offence he would be treated in the same way as would a man who committed it in some other part of the country. It may be said that the responsibility does not rest with the Government but with the judiciary. I submit it is a Government responsibility.

The Government must maintain the laws of the country above all else. The Government itself can appreciate the attitude of the public on this matter and, when it realises that atrocious discriminations are being made, its duty is to say that something is wrong with the law, that it is obsolete, or that there is something wrong with the administration of it. The Government should do one thing or the other. On the contrary it acquiesces in what is going on

and does nothing. The public has come to the belief that the whole thing is run by graft. What else can be deduced from the present position? What are the facts, apart from any inside knowledge concerning them? Let us look at them from the outside. A man who is charged with an offence in a Perth police court is fined £75. Another man who commits a similar offence 12 miles away is fined only £5.

Mr. Wilson: Who gets the graft?

Mr. HUGHES: I do not know.

Mr. Wilson: Neither do I.

Mr. HUGHES: There is a feeling abroad that graft is the basis of this discrimination. The public is justified in drawing that conclusion. We had the extraordinary spectacle of a Fremantle magistrate threatening to send a person to gaol if he came before him for the same offence the following week. When that time came the following week two Justices of the Peace were sitting on the bench and over-ruled the magistrate. The farce has been going on ever since. The responsibility rests with Parliament as much as it does with the Government. The responsibility is also cast upon every member of the Opposition to take such steps as it can to compel the Government to act where action is necessary, and in cases where the Government will not act.

One of the weaknesses that tends to the belief that we will get no redress except from the Commonwealth Parliament is that the Opposition is too easy-going. I never saw a Government which was blessed with such an easy-going and placid Opposition as that which it has at present. I would be happier if there were no prosecutions for these offences. We should tell the people that we are going to place everyone on the same footing. Everyone could then go to any gaming-house he felt inclined to visit and would suffer no interference. There is strong evidence in support of that suggestion. Efforts have been and are being made to stamp out the small gaming-house keepers for the benefit of the big ones. There are records in the Police Department to establish that. Whereas big gaming-houses have been allowed to run for 13 weeks the little fellow has been brought in seven times in nine weeks. We have reached the stage when the law is being badly administered, and the Government must accept responsibility for that. All the Opposition can do is to bring these matters under notice. If

the Government will not accept the responsibility for maintaining the laws it has abandoned the right to govern, and in so doing has destroyed the prestige of the State Parliament and provided an excuse for its discontinuance.

The same thing applies in connection with our licensing laws; they have not been enforced even reasonably well. The law cannot be enforced one hundred per cent., although I would like to see that excellent result. The Criminal Code contains over 700 sections. If we cannot get one hundred per cent. efficiency at least we should not be satisfied with only ten per cent. I have seen hotels selling liquor after hours to girls of 16 years of age under police protection. I have seen the police come into an hotel to protect wrong-doers in the continuance of their unlawful trading. I was in an hotel about half an hour after midnight on a Sunday night when a party was going on. There seemed to be several girls under 16 years of age drinking alcoholic liquors. A little disturbance arose and the proprietor rang up the police station. A sergeant and two plain-clothes men immediately visited the place. They quelled the disturbance so that the girls under 16 years of age could be supplied with liquor in peace after midnight.

It is an extraordinary state of affairs that those who are breaking the law can send for the police so that they can break it in peace. The licensing laws have not been enforced. Periodically some obscure person has been prosecuted. People have flouted the law openly for a long time. It is well known that one can go into any hotel lounge in this State and be served with liquor to one heart's content whether during trading hours or after. The Government has refused to accept the responsibility of government, and Ministers have abandoned their duty to the heads of departments. It is extraordinary that a junior police officer, who may have held his position for only two or three years, should decide whether or not a law-breaker should be prosecuted, and should know that one person can be prosecuted but not another. No better argument for the abolition of the State Parliament can be found when we know that Parliament is prepared to stand by year after year and allow a junior servant who has been on the job only for ten minutes to decide whether or not he will en-

force the law that Parliament makes. The present Government is not the only one at fault. The present system of non-enforcement of the law did not come into being with the present Government. The position has been intensified and has progressively deteriorated down the years until it has become a positive scandal. If the Government does not intend to enforce the law I would favour the abolition of that which relates to licensing. If one man can sell liquor contrary to the law his neighbour should be allowed to do so.

Mr. Seward: Abolish the Government.

Mr. HUGHES: Whom would we put in its place?

Mr. Seward: A better one.

Mr. HUGHES: As soon as a better one is available I shall lend my aid to the substitute, but I want to be sure that it is a better one. This is not a growth of yesterday, the setting up in the community of privileged law-breakers, of allowing certain people to trade contrary to the law and make big profits, and of blocking out by means of law enforcement smaller competitors. This sort of thing has been going on for years. It is only because circumstances have arrived at a particular stage that the position has been accentuated and brought into the public Press more than has been the case in the past. The third very strong argument for the abolition of this Parliament, and for handing the control over to the Commonwealth Government, is that this Parliament although responsible for the actions of the Government has abandoned its right. It does not want the right to govern. If we do not want that right and do not stand up for it we deserve to lose it. Were I a citizen of New South Wales or Victoria I would vote for unification. I see no reason for a Parliament in either of those two States. There is one solid argument against unification as it applies to this State. That is based not on the theoretical principles of government but upon our experience of the administration of the country from Canberra.

If we had no State Parliament we would get a raw deal, and Western Australia would, I think, be in a very bad way. We have always experienced the difficulty that so far as the Eastern States are concerned, particularly New South Wales and Victoria, Western Australia never enters into their view. They have never given a thought to whether the people of Western Australia

are living or dead. To them New South Wales and Victoria constitute Australia, and all government in their view should be directed to benefiting the people of those States. Consequently we suffer in a very pronounced way. Unification would be calamitous for us. Very likely in five years after its consummation, we would have lost one-half of our population. The people would simply have to go to the Eastern States. I am told that in the Midland Junction Workshops 14 or 15 machines are lying idle at present although they are capable of making munitions. Yet every day we hear talk about the need for munitions. Would that be happening if those machines were in Melbourne or Sydney? It would not be difficult for the authorities responsible for distributing the war work to arrange for those machines at Midland Junction to be used. But no, there is always paramount the idea of dragging everything to the Eastern States. Consider the number of tradesmen and other skilled workers who have gone to the Eastern States since the war began, looking for employment, bleeding us of the services of skilled men.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And our population, too!

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. Naturally a man will not consent to starve in Western Australia if he can get something to eat in Victoria. When I came here, the positions were reversed. My people came to Western Australia because they could not get enough to eat in Victoria, but they were able to get something to eat when they came here. There is an urgent need, particularly for Western Australia, to grapple with the problem of unification. We should show the people that it is to their interests to have a local autonomous government, and the way to do that is for Ministers to go into the country. I believe the Government would get the backing of Parliament if it would assume the responsibilities of government. Instead of allowing junior civil servants to decide important questions of policy, and instead of passing all administrative responsibility wherever possible to boards and commissions, if we could have Ministerial responsibility with the attendant responsibility to Parliament, we could establish a right to the continuance of this Parliament. I suggest that we take heed before it is too late and show the people that if there are solid reasons for unification, yet

so far as this part of the Commonwealth is concerned those reasons are not sufficiently weighty to combat the grounds for having a local autonomous Parliament. If we do not take this action, there will be no State Parliament, and we, its members, will be responsible for that state of affairs.

One very unfortunate feature of the abandonment of the responsibility for government by the Government has been the bringing into operation of what is known as the vice squad. The member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe very cleverly drew a red herring across the track because he, probably aware that the Government might be subject to censure for its shortcomings, put up something which we could all discuss and which would be a matter of public interest. I think the vice squad has created more public interest than did the uniform taxation proposals. The position of most people to-day is that as soon as they get one tax assessment paid there is another in the post, if they have not received it already. They seem to have settled down to a realisation that the Commissioner of Taxation is a permanent creditor. I agree to a large extent with what the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe said about the vice squad. There was much justification for his remarks. Juvenile drinking had developed to such an extent unchecked that it became a regular thing for juveniles to congregate in certain hotel lounges, notwithstanding that the law is very stringent against supplying persons apparently under the age of 21. The licensee is not required to go to the trouble of proving that the person is under 21; if the person is apparently under the age of 21, the licensee commits an offence by serving him with liquor. But licensees have been serving juveniles openly with the knowledge of the police, the knowledge of Cabinet, and the knowledge of every member of this Parliament. In the past we know that Cabinet Ministers have been the owners of lounges where liquor was consumed.

When the war broke out, what could be more natural than that young men, thousands of miles from their homes, their people and the female companions with whom they had a right to associate for social amenity, should gravitate to a place where they would meet members of the other sex? So the problem was not discovered by the member for Subiaco. I do not agree that the member for Subiaco discovered it because Caesar

and his predecessors had to deal with it, and Caesar dealt with it on lines different from those in which the hon. member believes. Suddenly we get a burst of righteousness. I know as a fact it is not true that every girl arrested by the vice squad has venereal disease. If necessary, I could produce some girls to prove it. Because a few had venereal disease, there was a lot of trumpeting of crime unnecessarily. The police have no right to put a girl in gaol or charge her under the vagrancy provisions because she has venereal disease. Time after time I have protested in the courts against the improper use of the vagrancy law. Under it, an accused person may be put in gaol for associating with convicted persons. That is a terribly harsh provision. If a person serves a term of imprisonment, as soon as he is released, all respectable people have to shun him. If they fail to do so, the police may prosecute under the vagrancy law on a charge of being an associate of a convicted person. Surely that is not a civilised method! When a man has served the penalty imposed upon him, that should be the end of it until he commits another offence.

Mr. Sampson: It is never the end.

Mr. HUGHES: No, because we have the vagrancy law. We all know there are houses of ill-fame, and that the real estate of some of them is owned by most righteous and respectable people who do not turn a hair when taking the rent for those places, notwithstanding their knowledge of the source from which it comes. These places are carried on with the cognisance of the police, the Government and every member of Parliament. Periodically, however, a policeman, for some unknown reason, will arrest one of these women and charge her under the vagrancy law. She is brought before the court and is either sent to prison or fined. I consider that to be a very wrong use of the vagrancy law.

There is a practice that has become very pronounced in recent years. If a crime is committed and the police have not found the offender but suspect somebody, they arrest him and charge him with being a vagrant and keep him in custody. If they cannot pin the crime on to him, or if the evidence shows he did not commit the crime, they bring him before the court on a vagrancy charge. They say, "You were seen talking to Bill Smith in the street, and Bill Smith is a convicted person." On that

charge he is fined or ordered seven days imprisonment, probably after having already spent three or four days in gaol. That is a shocking abuse of the vagrancy sections of the Act.

There was a public demonstration because a few young girls were drinking in hotel lounges and fraternising with soldiers, and police activity took place. Had the police carried out the law governing those lounges, this problem would not have arisen, because girls of 15 or 16 years of age would not have been drinking in the lounges. It was only because the police had not carried out their activities, and because the Government had condoned their inactivity, that the problem arose. Because one section of the police made a few arrests and got good publicity, we got this fantastically named vice squad and all this talk about venereal disease, including a statement that 60 per cent of the male population is affected by the disease. I do not think that percentage is true. I have moved about a lot in the last 30 or 40 years, and I would say that if we knocked the nought off and made it 6 per cent. we would be somewhere near the mark. Of course, the youth of today is not as good as he was in your day, Mr. Speaker, but I do not think he has gone too far down the scale.

With all the glamour and all the publicity about the vice squad, the problem has not been solved. The major problem is still with us. The problem is one of biological impulse, and we cannot control that with theological precepts. We have been trying to do so for 2,000 years. This problem can be solved only as other problems have been solved. I think the Commonwealth Government tackled the problem in a very wise way. I do not know to what extent Federal members were playing up, but the Commonwealth Government decided to give members' wives priority in travelling to Canberra. That is solving the problem in a practical way. If husbands get out of hand, send over someone who can control them. I understood the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe to sound a note of warning that, since this reformatory impulse had come, we must take steps to ensure that it was not carried to the other extreme. We have to be on the alert for that. This vice squad reminds me of those sudden revivals like missionary or religious revivals.

Nobody wants to interfere with the vice squad, nobody wants to put obstacles in the way of those police officers doing their duty; but I think we ought to recognise, and I believe the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe recognises, that these police officers are merely human beings. They are very useful human beings, but there are no mature men in the vice squad; the members of that squad are only lads, with a lot still to learn about human nature and perhaps about theology as well. They are keen and anxious for promotion—and in the Police Force promotion goes by numbers of convictions secured. I suppose that cannot be helped; but under the system the good officer is one who shows a good record of convictions. In their youth and enthusiasm the members of the vice squad, anxious to do their job, are apt to go a bit too far. It is utterly wrong that people who are doing no wrong should have their liberties curtailed simply because something wrong is liable to happen.

For instance, I consider it most objectionable for a police officer to go into the lounge of an hotel where there is a decent, respectable married woman nearly 60 years of age, one who is living with her husband and bringing up their family, and ask that woman, "How old are you?" That is a downright impertinence. Nine women out of ten would resent being questioned in an hotel lounge by a police officer—especially if the woman had nothing at all against her, so that the police would have no ground whatever for questioning her. Is the woman to tell her age for the information of all within earshot in a hotel lounge? I know of a case where a woman who had 12 children, half of them girls, discovered that one of the girls was getting a bit out of hand. She remonstrated with her daughter. The daughter gave some cheek and the mother boxed her ears. Next day down came the women police and told the girl, who is 17 years of age, "You leave home and go to live with relations." The women police induced that girl to leave home. They said to her, "You can leave home." But the girl had no right to leave home at 17 years of age simply because her mother boxed her ears, being well entitled to box them. The mother pointed out to the women police that there were six daughters younger than this girl, and that with a family of twelve she could not allow a girl of 17 to set a bad example to the

younger sisters. Then, as I have said, the girl gave the mother cheek, and the mother boxed her ears. Thereupon the women police, without inquiring whether the mother was in the right or in the wrong, told the girl, "You can leave home if your mother hits you; go and live with some of your relatives." Incidentally I may say that I used to think the "Mother of Ten" who wrote to the newspapers was a myth, but here was a mother of twelve! This woman did not know otherwise than that if the women police told the girl she could leave home, she, the mother, could not stop her. The girl was taken away.

What chance have parents of controlling their children if, upon their applying some parental discipline to a child, the women police come along and advise the child to leave home? What was the result in this case? After the girl had been away from her home for four or five months the mother went to the police and told them that the girl was getting into bad company. The police did nothing. The relative with whom the girl was living was doing her utmost to keep the girl straight; but what chance has a cousin of controlling a child whom the father and mother cannot control? It is absurd to expect a distant relative to exercise parental control when the police would not allow the very parents to exercise it. Notwithstanding that consideration, when the police were informed of the position by the girl's cousin they did nothing. Eventually the vice squad picked the girl up and charged her with vagrancy. Although, on police advice, she pleaded guilty, I am convinced that she would not have been convicted had she pleaded not guilty. All that the police could prove against her was that she had been seen drinking with an American sailor in a saloon bar. The sailor was a respectable lad. She has no V.D., and has never had it; but she was picked up by the vice squad and charged with vagrancy. Having pleaded guilty on the advice of the police she now has that conviction recorded against her. The police sent her back to her parents with the stigma of a conviction for vagrancy plus the stigma of having passed through the hands of the vice squad.

Next, the relative with whom the girl had been staying was prosecuted, the charge being that of contributing to the delinquency of the girl. This cousin is a young married woman, with four children of her own, and

her husband is a working man. The police dragged the young woman to the police court and made her answer a criminal charge. The case against her was so weak, however, that it was dismissed at the conclusion of the evidence for the prosecution. She, however, has no redress. She pays for her defence in addition to suffering the indignity of being dragged to a police court without even a *prima facie* case against her and of having her name, probably, blazoned in the Press. That is a case of which I know the facts. The conduct of the police officers, I consider, was scandalous. The case affords complete justification for the warning given by a member of the bench. In my opinion he did a public service when he told a member of the vice squad, "In your reformative zeal, do not run amuck and injure innocent members of the public."

The question may be asked, "What injury has been done to the woman, seeing that she was acquitted?" But it is not a very nice thing for a respectable married woman who has four children to be dragged to the police court to defend herself against a criminal charge. I consider that police officers, especially the women police and some officers of the Child Welfare Department, should make some kind of investigation before adjudicating on disputes between parent and child. In my electorate there are women who have borne five or six children and brought them up, and who have forgotten more than some of the officers of the Child Welfare Department have learnt about rearing children. But both the Police and the officers of the Child Welfare Department should pause and consider before advising children to leave home. The fact that there has been a row between a parent and child is no ground for saying to the child, "You cannot get on with your parent; leave home." I think the opposite attitude ought to be adopted. In this case the officials should have said to the girl, "You got what you were looking for. Your mother has the responsibility for bringing up her younger children and also her older children and, if she boxed your ears, she did not do it for nothing." In my opinion the mother was quite justified in the action she took. The problem cannot be solved in that way. It is a biological problem and cannot be solved by theological precepts.

I have looked at the young girls who have been presented at the Police Court. I saw

them in the dock—not privately—and they are merely silly kids, most of whom were carried away by emotionalism.

The Minister for Lands: And flattery.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes; and, unfortunately, by finding their companions in lounge bars. It is a curious thing to note that in all these prosecutions a police officer goes into the box and testifies, "This girl is 16 years of age. I saw her drinking in this lounge bar." Yet there has not been one prosecution of a hotelkeeper for supplying liquor to a person under 21 years of age! I heard a police officer admit that he asked a woman of 24 years how old she was, while at the same time there was present another girl under 21 years of age of whom he did not make the same inquiry. The only inference is that he did not want to prosecute the hotelkeeper for a breach of the Licensing Act. That is why he did not ask the younger girl her age; she might have replied, "I am 19," and then he would have had to take action against the hotelkeeper. He therefore picked out a matron—a winner—and asked, "How old are you?" He said the other girl appeared to be under 21. To question her, however, might have involved a prosecution for a breach of the Licensing Act. There has not been one such prosecution, notwithstanding that day after day this testimony has been given about these young girls drinking in hotel lounges. I am not suggesting for a moment that that would help to solve this problem.

I happen to be working in the building where the American Administrative Forces are congregated. Consequently, around the building there are always American sailors and soldiers. I think the "blitz" that the American sailors and soldiers had to stand when they arrived from the women of Perth was pretty tough. They were absolutely "blitzed" by our womenfolk. One could not go round the corner without falling over an American soldier or sailor and an Australian girl. There has been some clamour in the Press about this matter, but there is a much deeper problem. These silly little girls can be sent to better places than to the police court. Other women acting in exactly the same way are not being interfered with in any shape or form, because they happen to be in a better social position and perhaps better off financially. There is no suggestion that we should round

them up. The Police do not charge them under the vagrancy laws.

The only explanation I can offer is that these women are better placed and probably can wield some influence. But if one group is selected I think other groups should not be exempted. We should not pick up a little factory girl because she has gone silly for a fortnight or so and commit her to prison, especially when there is ample power under the Health Act to deal with the problem. If it were thought that the girl was suffering from a certain type of disease and required attention, the matter could have been dealt with under that Act, without any police court prosecution. These girls now have a criminal record, and a very nasty one. They are classed as rogues and vagabonds, legally so, because they have been convicted under the vagrancy laws. In my opinion, it was using a sledge hammer to solve a problem that did not need a hammer at all.

Mr. Watts: A sledge hammer to crack a peanut!

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. There is nothing so bad that it has not some good in it. The vice squad has made quite a topic of discussion for members of Parliament. Except the war, there is hardly anything for us to talk about. I sometimes wonder whether there is really a war on. I have, of course, seen a proclamation in the "Commonwealth Government Gazette," but I doubt if this country is really at war, because I cannot conceive of any country at war doing the things we do and leaving undone the things we ought to do. Men are being gathered into the Army, the Air Force and other services. From what people tell us, we know that half of these men are walking about doing nothing. They are not being trained to handle the equipment which they will be called on to use when on active service. They are marching over sandhills, but learning nothing. They are idling their time. These men will say, "If we only had something to do to fill in the day, it would not be too bad."

I know the psychology of the Army. For 15 years I was in the public service and the psychology of the Army is the psychology of the public service. If one is the head of a branch in the public service, the object is to build up the department. So the secretary gets a typist, the typist an assistant and the assistant an office boy. There are

thus four people under the control of the head of the department, who then goes to his senior and says, "I am controlling these people and should get more money." That is the way public servants get rises, and that is the psychology of the Army. Every captain wants his unit up to full strength. He then goes along to the colonel and says, "I ought to be a major. I have five sergeants, 11 corporals and two privates." The colonel says, "Of course, you should be a major. Then I should no longer be a colonel. I should be promoted to brigadier." That is the psychology of the Army, and that is what is going on today.

The Army is gathering in men. I do not know what method it adopts in the selection of officers, but it was put to me in the Terrace the other day—and I think there is something in it—that the first qualification a man needs to become an officer in the Fighting Forces, and particularly an administrative officer, is that he should have been a failure or inefficient in private life. I know of people who would not be paid 30s. a week in ordinary life, but they are strutting around as majors and with more swank than Napoleon had. I am told that Napoleon lay down on the ground and put an overcoat over himself. I bet that one of these men of whom I am speaking would not do that. He would ring up headquarters for a bed to be sent out to him, if he were in the same position as Napoleon!

The Minister for Mines: I would not blame him—if he could get the bed!

Mr. HUGHES: I do not know what is the radio-active structure of brass, but it seems to me that as soon as we put two brass buttons in front of a man's coat, he becomes quite a different person. If these men were out of work when war occurred, or if their business was not prosperous and they had the chance of a more remunerative job with the Defence Forces, one cannot blame them for taking it. What gets under my skin is that although I know their former circumstances, some of them want to tell me how patriotic they were, and how they gave up an income of £5,000 a year, to accept a mere colonel's pay. There should be an amendment of the Criminal Code providing for murder in self-defence against such people. When they get a couple of brass buttons, they are different people altogether. Formerly these men were quite normal citizens who could

be talked to and reasoned with, and could be relied upon to do anything to help one; but as soon as they got a couple of stars on their shoulders they became arrogant, and as soon as one asks them something they inquire whether one knows there is a war on. One person replied, "Yes, and won't you know there has been a war on when it is all over!"

Mr. McDonald: You said that?

Mr. HUGHES: No. Somebody else did. It seems to me that a wrong psychology has been built up, particularly in the administrative officers. They should realise that when civilians have got to do business with them, they do not go to annoy them or harass them, but because they have business on their own behalf or on behalf of somebody else. I do not say that all these officers are the same. Some behave today just as they did before they received the radio-activity of the brass buttons. However, it seems to me that fifth columnists are not the trouble in our war effort but that our enemy's best friend is the old school tie. So far as I can gather, appointments have been made not because people have qualifications for the jobs, not because the nation wanted their services in its hour of need, but because they wanted a job and had some influential friend able to give it to them. The sooner they get out of it, or the sooner they realise that it is not a matter of brass buttons, majors' crowns, or brigadier-generals' epaulettes, but that they are just public servants, and the sooner they recognise that a man is not a dog because he is a private, and adopt a different attitude to the man below, the better it will be.

I heard one man ask, when it was a question whether he knew if a certain person was an officer or not, "Did he speak like an officer, in an arrogant way?" That was the test of whether a man was an officer or not. In the year 1942, that psychology should be thrown overboard. There should be a closer alignment between the ranks. One thing wrong with our officer class is that they are enervated with rich living. They live too well. One cannot live in luxury and undergo strenuous physical exercise. If one is to undergo strenuous physical training, one must live under rigid and austere conditions and not have seven-course dinners. I wonder whether the Japanese army, when it calls for cooks, tests them by asking them to prepare a seven-course dinner!

Mr. McDonald: They have more courses than that in Moscow.

Mr. HUGHES: Do they?

The Minister for Mines: That was only when the British Prime Minister was there!

Mr. HUGHES: There is too much discrimination between the officer class and the ranks. There should be either a levelling-up or a levelling-down. The rates of pay are out of all proportion, and the officers should adopt a different outlook towards the general public. I am not quite sure whether we are at war. I will give members one strong reason for believing we are not. If we were at war, those in authority would realise that this is a mechanical war, and the determining factor will be the superiority of the victorious nation and its ability to maintain its mechanical equipment. There is something that is more valuable than gold. It is the very lifeblood of our defence. I refer to petrol for driving vehicles. From my observations, I would say that the first business of the Military Forces in Australia is to consume as much petrol as possible as unnecessarily as possible. One has only to live where I live to come to that conclusion.

Walking around the district between 9 and 10 o'clock in the morning, one would be unlucky not to see half-a-dozen military vehicles, driven by attractive young ladies, going north and coming from the north. One never sees two gentlemen in the same vehicle. The driver never takes two or three at the one time, which I suppose is as it should be. Notwithstanding that there are trams running up and down and that there is only a mile to walk to town, one can see precious petrol—for I should say petrol is precious from a military point of view—being burnt up day after day by officers, some of whom in private life did not have a lady chauffeur in their own business but drove their cars themselves.

Mr. Mann: A lot of them walked.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. I do not know whether my words are likely to carry any weight, but I protest against this wanton waste of petrol, day in and day out. I have counted while I walked to town no less than six heavy vehicles—about 35 cwts.—in five minutes. These vehicles consume a fair amount of petrol and use up a fair quantity of rubber tyres. They are driven out to suburbs to bring in various people. We cannot afford that. From the meagre infor-

mation at our disposal, we must come to the conclusion that in the present circumstances we cannot afford to waste precious petrol and rubber. But it seems to me that this war has produced a crop of celebrities out of nonentities, and they have to demonstrate by ostentation that they are celebrities. Instead of going about their business as the rest of us do and getting it done, they have to make a display of ostentation and theatricalism, and that and the old school tie, permeate our Fighting Forces, and seem to be the major reasons why we are not doing as well as we should. We, as members of Parliament, should raise our voices in protest against the present waste. We continually hear complaints in connection with manpower. I would like to know how many departments the Commonwealth Government has established in this State to overlap departments already in existence and which could have done the work.

Everyone who owned a motor car—or even if he only hoped to own it by paying the instalments as many of us do—had it registered at the Traffic Department which had a complete record of it and its equipment. The department had the information indexed under the owner's name, and it would have been a simple matter for a typist to have gone there and extracted a list of the cars in this State. What they could not have got from the centre they could have got from the outside. But no, we get the Liquid Fuel Control Board, and all the information has again to be supplied to that board. So there is a duplicate record in Government departments in this State—one Federal and one State. The next thing we know is that the military authorities compel us to render the same return, so that three departments are looking after these cards, and in some cases there is a soldier walking up and down with a fixed bayonet outside the building housing the records. What would be the use of stealing one of the triplicate cards? The other two would be extant. Then when we licensed our cars last year we had to send in a fourth return. I do not know who got it. That means there is a quadruplicate service. I suggest that these authorities are not in possession today of one bit more information than was in the possession of the Traffic Department in the first place. I do not know whether the State Government refused to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government, but I do not think so.

The Minister for Mines: We offered every assistance.

Mr. HUGHES: All this manpower business could easily have been handled by the State Labour Department. Why could not that department, which was already in existence in this State and had the machinery to handle this business, have done so? In King-street on one corner we have the State Labour Bureau dealing with the finding of employment for people, and about 20 yards up the street the Commonwealth Government has set up a similar office and called it the Manpower Office. Men have been called up for service. The Area Officer in each area, or at least in my area, sends out notices to people as they come of military age, and he has been doing it for three years. As far as I know he has been doing it efficiently and it has been working all right. Now we find that a Civil Construction Corps has established itself and taken a nice big building in Murray-street. It has torn all the inside down and started to remodel the building, and is sending out notices to people in my electorate calling on them for service in this Civil Construction Corps. Why could not the Area Officer who sent out everyone else's notices have sent out the notices to these people? But no, once again departments are duplicated! Now that we have the Civil Construction Corps, I suppose it will duplicate the services already in existence. We could go on quoting instances of duplication ad lib.

On the other hand, while we see all round us waste and duplication we are again told by the Press that the Commonwealth Government is going to borrow another £100,000,000. I suppose in these days I will have to add my little bit. What is another £100,000,000? I would like to ask a question of those gentlemen who go on the public platform and urge people to subscribe to these loans. Do they honestly believe that the loans will be repaid? Every person who gets on that platform and urges people to lend money should answer that question. If they did they would raise their voices in protest against the waste that is going on. They would say to the people organising these war loans, "We cannot go on the platform and urge the people to lend their money when they can see it wasted all around them. If you would curtail the waste you would not need half this money."

Curiously enough although we have the invader at our front door we have never had such prosperity in Australia; not in my life at any rate. I have never known this country to be so economically prosperous, and I have seen some of the good days. I saw the roaring nineties, and there was prosperity then, but today the town is flowing with milk and honey and in the Eastern States it is very much better. We have a war on and what we could not get in peace we have in war. We have child endowment, pensions for widows, pensions for defacto wives—and that is an economic step beyond our wildest dreams. We have no one unemployed. If we want somebody to do some work we are unable to get anyone.

We have no destitution. I am, economically, overwhelmed. I thought I knew something about economics, but this is extraordinary. In my electorate where, unfortunately, destitution was very rife, I have not met a destitute person for the last 18 months. I have not heard of anybody who was without food because he could not get employment during that time. And we have a war on! We have the enemy knocking at our door. That side of the war is a wonderful proposition, and so far as it is concerned it is a pity that we could not stop half the war; that is the destruction half—the killing of humans—and allow the other half to go on. If we are going to get that prosperity with war, what a pity that we could not have dummy bullets and fire them across the borders at nations and keep this game going all the time, and maintain untold prosperity! If in time of war, without production and when people are going out of production, we can have all these advances in social legislation and amenities, what should be the minimum we could achieve in peace? We should be able to have a basic wage in real goods ten times what it is today.

That is the lesson of the last three years. The basic wage, not in terms of money, but in terms of purchasing power should be ten times what it is at the present time. It is all right while we are living on borrowed money, but when the war finishes and we still have these enormous borrowings of £100,000,000 at a time, I am afraid that the people will still want their interest, and then we will be facing this problem: So long as we can go on borrowing

£100,000,000 at a time it will be all right, because the game will go on. The same £100,000,000 will be borrowed next month as was borrowed a few months ago. Those people who say the war loan must be a success are either fools or knaves; they know it must be a success because the £100,000,000 that went into the previous loan is now out again and the people having it will want to lend it. If no one took the platform in support of the war loan, it would be subscribed just the same because the £100,000,000 is back in circulation. It returns each time. The only point is that every time it revolves, it gets into the same hands and they acquire the right to a further interest contribution. I have noticed the publication of the names of large subscribers to the various war loans.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There are large subscribers, such as insurance companies.

Mr. HUGHES: If I subscribed £1, my name would not be published in the newspaper, although that might be a greater sacrifice to me than a subscription of £50,000 would be to somebody else.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is only your modesty that leads to your name not appearing.

Mr. HUGHES: No, I have not yet reached a stage when I can invest in a war loan. As I was saying, the money goes into the same hands. Look at the subscribers to each war loan and we find the names of the same financial institutions and of the same people. It has to be that way because, in the circulation, the money has to go back into the same hands. If the process continues, we shall eventually have a debt on which we shall be unable to meet the interest charges. Suppose the war lasts for ten years and there is no increase in the population of Australia, and suppose we borrow at the rate of the last three years, what will be the interest on the war debt? We shall not be able to pay it. I wonder what those people who are urging others to lend their money intend to do about re-paying. When the war is over, do they intend to inflate the currency and destroy the value of those war bonds, or do they intend to deflate and make the people accept a much lower standard of living? Notwithstanding all the promises about a new order, I am afraid they have in mind a mental reservation that they will deflate and put us through the mill as they did in 1930-36. They have no intention of inflating and destroying the value of the bonds; they

are going to deflate. We cannot stay put; we have to inflate or deflate. In the deflation process we are going to pass through the same ordeal as before only in a worse form.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Minister for Railways thinks we will have inflation.

Mr. HUGHES: There has been a certain amount of inflation already, which is hardly fair to people who are lending their money. It is hardly fair to ask a person to invest £10 in a war loan, which may entail a big sacrifice by that person, if we have a mental reservation that we are going to inflate and the £10 will disappear.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Then what is the alternative to winning the war? I hope we do not in my lifetime have to live under Japanese domination.

Mr. HUGHES: I hope so, too, though it might not do the hon. member any harm to have a little Japanese discipline for a week or two. There is a remedy, but I do not know whether the Leader of the Opposition will agree with it. When a country is at war, the remedy is to take from any private person whatever he has that is required for war purposes, and without giving him bonds. A boy of 18 might be training for a career; his life has scarcely begun. Yet we say to him, "There is a war on. We are going to put you in camp and train you as a soldier, interrupting your life's training, which you may never recover, and possibly you may lose your life. We are going to take from you everything you have, including, if necessary, your life." Then we go round the corner and say to a middle-aged or an old man who has had his life, "You have £500 which we want to help us win the war. We do not propose to take it; lend it to us and we will pay you good interest and exempt you from taxation."

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is not right.

Mr. HUGHES: That is not a fair break. Let us do with the man of money as we do with the boy.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I agree with that.

Mr. HUGHES: Let us say, "You have certain property that is wanted to win the war. We have taken the boy of 18 years, who may afterwards return to his career if he does not lose his life in the war. If he is a married man and is killed, his widow will be paid a couple of pounds a week so long as she lives. We want your money." If the

man gave his money interest free, he would not be making as great a sacrifice as the boy.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I agree with you in that.

Mr. HUGHES: That is the way we could face up to the problem. I object to this continuous borrowing on two grounds. If those who are urging the people to lend intend the money to be repaid, they can do it only by a stringent deflation period after the war which is going to crush the proletariat. If they do not intend to repay the money and if they intend to destroy it by inflation, it is not fair to many lenders who would be giving up money they could ill afford.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It would not be fair to the worker, either. If he received £1 on Friday, it might be worth much less on Monday.

Mr. HUGHES: The workers of East Perth have no need to worry about the value on Monday of a pound they received on the Friday, because it would be gone. I venture to say that after they had received their pay, 80 per cent. would not have a pound left over and above their living expenses. I fear there is going to be deflation, that when the urge is gone, the war being over, and we have all this burden of debt on us, those holding power in Parliament will change their attitude. I have no faith in the promise of a new order. Only the other day we heard a terrific howl from certain quarters because the basic wage was put up. That fact does not augur well for a new order. The pay these people were receiving merely maintained the status quo. Nevertheless there was a howl! I am afraid of the deflation which is bound to ensue after all the tribulations and privations the people have suffered.

We should never borrow money whilst at war. One does not fight a war with anything that is not created in the generation during which the war is fought. Apart from such military equipment as was in existence at the beginning of the war, everything needed to fight the war has to be produced in the contemporary generation. The food has to be produced today. The munitions and equipment of war have to be produced today. Therefore, if anybody is going to stand for accumulated heritages as the result of a war, he is battenning on the distress of his fellow-citizens. There should be no

such thing as borrowing money at the present time; no such thing at the termination of the war as saying to a young fellow whom we put into camp—causing an interruption during the best years of his life, when he should be learning a profession or a trade—and who has been lucky enough to come out with his life, “Boy, you have done all that was expected of you, and now you represent £1,200 of debt. Before the war started you owed £800, but now you owe £1,200. Now start and pay back the £1,200” There is nothing very equitable about that.

I have no intention of trespassing on the financial megalomania of the member for Murchison, but may I say that I agree with him that there is a method, and a perfectly proper method, of financing a war. In something the hon. member stated yesterday, I think he was not quite right. He said that gold as a currency unit was not stable. I am inclined to think that gold is stable, and therefore I would not like to see gold destroyed as a currency unit. Of course I cannot be accepted as an expert, but if I were in England and wrote these things out to Australia, people would probably say, “That is an expert; he is a long way off.” Very likely gold is the best medium for settling balances, but rigid adherence to gold as the one basis of currency is the cause of all the trouble. If we limit our currency to gold and work on that basis, we shall cramp progress. I am inclined to believe, possibly without having thought very deeply on the subject, that gold has had a stable basis. I go back now to the days when Western Australia was opening up its goldfields, when we blazed the track and took the rough stuff and then established social amenities and made it nice for people to come here, when the member for Hannans and the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe and the President of the Legislative Council came to Western Australia, after the track had been blazed, and saw the goldfields—

The Minister for Mines: What had been the goldfields.

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. In those days the basic wage in Perth was 48s. per week; and on the goldfields, as the Minister for Mines would probably recollect, it was 10s. 6d. per day.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: It was 10s. on the goldfields and 7s. on the coast.

Mr. HUGHES: The standard price of gold then was £3 17s. 6d. per ounce on a

basic wage of 47s. per week. The basic wage now is 95s. per week, or twice the former amount; and the price of gold is about £10 per ounce. I contend that in the main gold has kept a fairly constant ratio to the basic wage. It can be argued that gold has remained stable inasmuch as its ratio to an average of prices of index commodities has been fairly constant. The member for Murchison possibly was a little in error from that aspect. On the other hand, we have enormous borrowings. I learned from the Press that a deputation consisting of the cream of the Opposition waited on the Minister for Lands with the suggestion that he should write down the rate of interest on debts owing by farmers to the Agricultural Bank. I am absolutely convinced that the time is long overdue for farmers to get some relief from the enormous interest burden they have borne and are now bearing. I agree with my friends on the right that there is nothing so good for a country as the possession of a contented and prosperous yeomanry. We do not want numerous large holdings. If we have a considerable section of our community getting its livelihood from farming and pastoral pursuits, living in touch with Nature, getting good health from the pure country air very unlike that of the city, rising with the sun, living a life that is worth more than all the money that can be got in St. George's-terrace, then we have the backbone of a great country.

I am aware that the farmers and agricultural workers of Western Australia are a section of the community that ought to be encouraged. They have had a bad time. They are overburdened with interest charges because, when wheat was £1 per bag, salesmen went out from the city and sold the rural community anything whatsoever. Residents of agricultural districts were urged by high pressure salesmanship to commit themselves to liabilities which otherwise they would never have dreamt of incurring. They borrowed money from the banks. I know of cases where bank managers actually suggested to farmers that they should have an overdraft—in the good days when wheat was £1 a bag. At that time the bank manager would say to a farmer-client, “How much do you want? Open an overdraft. Smith round the corner has an overdraft.” In those days it was the hallmark of respectability to have an overdraft. And so the farmers were induced to have overdrafts.

But when they made those contracts, they made them on the basis of wheat at £1 per bag. Had wheat been down to 6s. per bag, the farmers would never have committed themselves to those contracts with the banks. The basis of the contracts was the status quo. The farmer meant to pay, but when wheat dropped from £1 per bag to 6s. per bag he could not pay.

Unfortunately, the very people who induced him to incur those liabilities do not come along and say magnanimously, "We induced you to enter into this contract, but now that the status quo is gone and you are not in a position to pay, we are going to relieve you of your burden." No, they want their pound of flesh. I know of city firms which, during the economic depression, squeezed every shilling of interest out of their farmer clients, whether the farmer, his wife and children had clothes and food or not. The time has arrived when farmers should get some relief from interest payments. A complete review should be made of all those contracts. There should be an equitable distribution of the loss between the farmer and the first and second mortgagees. But to ask the Agricultural Bank to write off interest is quite another proposition. It is good for a country to have farmers—the farmer a most desirable citizen—but it is a calamity when farmers turn legislators. It would be all very well if the Agricultural Bank, after writing off £1,000,000 of interest, could approach the people from whom the State borrowed the money and get them to write off the amount also.

If the Agricultural Bank were to write off £1,000,000 owed by farmers—much as I would like to see that done, and it is what the farmers' representatives are asking for—the shop girl, the tramway worker and the labourer of East Perth would have to pay the interest, because the Government will still have to find the interest on the borrowed money. Any rebate of interest allowed to the farmer would have to be made up by the other taxpayers of the State. Why should the shop girl, the tramway worker and the labourer in East Perth be asked to find that additional money? Most of them are in a position similar to that of the farmer; they bought homes at the peak period, entered into contracts, just as the farmer did, thinking that the status quo would remain, and then had to stand

up to their obligations. Thousands lost their homes and equities during the depression. I suggest to the gentlemen who waited on the Minister for Lands that they presented him with a proposition, but not with the answer. I do not know whether the Minister has in the meantime worked out the answer; if he has, I shall be interested to know it.

This interest problem must be tackled. It affects not only the farmer, but the businessman and the worker buying a home. Even the shop girl who buys a radio has a big plaster of interest to meet. If we are to have a better order after the war, if we are then to have a system based on credit, we must find ways and means of providing people with credit free of interest. Whether it is done by the method suggested by the member for Murchison or by some other method, in my opinion makes no difference. The alternative is to say, "Let it go. Borrow all we can, spend today, and let it burst of its own weight." Then nobody will be paid. Unfortunately, such a course would inflict untold hardship. It would rob the starting-price bookmaker of the money he has invested in mortgages. He would be deprived of the fruits of his labour. Members will recall that when the proposal was put forward to reduce profits of companies to 4 per cent., it was said that the poor starting-price bookmaker would be ruined.

Mr. Marshall: What about the £900,000,000 that Russia did not pay?

Mr. HUGHES: Unfortunately, the people who lent that money to Russia had their asset destroyed. That was very unfair. Repudiation strikes at one section of the community, making it bear the whole burden: consequently much hardship ensues. That is why I consider repudiation is not the remedy, nor is inflation—the inflation that merely prints paper money.

Mr. Marshall: That is just as criminal as repudiation.

Mr. HUGHES: The remedy is, I think, so to re-arrange the financial system as to permit of the loss being equally distributed. If we were to write off £1,000,000 of debt, or £1,000,000,000, it would be very hard on those who have lent their money and are depending on payment of the interest. Surely it is not beyond human ingenuity to formulate a scheme that would distribute the loss equitably. I myself have suggested a solution to this House before; but,

being close at hand and not bearing a foreign name, I am not accepted as an expert. I do not propose at this late hour, to repeat what I said. Gold as a currency is all right, but it is insufficient of itself. We must have some other basis jointly with gold, so that we may re-adjust interest payments that have accumulated, and make provision for people—if we are to continue to trade on credit—to secure credit free of interest. If this State is to be developed after the war, we must have these two things. I do not think we shall be allowed to remain stationary after the war. We shall be told, "You cannot leave all that territory unoccupied." Are we still going to say to 400,000,000 Chinese, "You fought our battles, but stay in China and starve?" while we allow millions of acres, on which they could get a living, to remain idle?

As an Australian nation, we shall have to face very awkward problems and questions when peace comes, particularly this question of unoccupied spaces. What Western Australia wants is at least 7,000,000 people; that would solve 90 per cent. of our problems. We would get control of the Federal Parliament. Then we would show them! In concluding a long and wearisome speech, I would suggest that as the Commonwealth Government apparently will not allow the State Government to handle these matters, but sets up extra Federal authorities, and as the State Government is not allowed to meddle in defence matters, we ought immediately to set about ascertaining the maximum number of people that this State can feed and clothe at a given standard of living. I do not know whether 7,000,000 is a high or low figure.

The Minister for Justice: A low figure, I should say.

Mr. HUGHES: Whatever the figure, we should endeavour now to work out a plan for securing that population; we will have to get some people from overseas. America took immigrants from all over Europe, and apparently has built up a strong nation. Its people have not suffered in physique or intellect as a result of mixing with European stock. In Europe many people must be sick to death of having their homes blasted up through war. It is only 28 years since fathers and mothers in France and Belgium saw a major war. Now the present genera-

tion is seeing war for the first time, and their parents are witnessing it for the second time. I think we could go to those countries and say to the people, "Ours is a country miles away from war where you can live in peace and plenty."

Even now we could start to plan perhaps for only 1,000,000 people in five years from these European countries and settle them in Western Australia. To say that we can get and feed 7,000,000 people may be just an idle dream but, if we never have an objective and never define it for ourselves, we shall never get anywhere. We shall never do anything in Western Australia until we make some step of that kind. So long as we have a paltry 400,000 people we shall never be a force in the Commonwealth. We shall always be out-voted and always be begging for the crumbs off the Federal table. Instead of crying and moaning about the Federal people in the East not doing this or that, we should make a vigorous effort to do things for ourselves. We should say that we are going to do things, that we are going to create a position whereby they will not be able to exercise such power and if there are any crumbs they will get them from our table. The only way to do that is to increase our population.

I do not know whether it is possible but I would like to see a committee of five or seven members from this House appointed to plan a post-war economy for Western Australia, and to consider above all other questions what is the possibility of getting 1,000,000 or 5,000,000 people from another part of the world to populate this land. It would be something if we only adopted a 25-year programme and set out to get 5,000,000 people in that time. The point is that if we never have an objective we shall never get anywhere, and we shall never be a force until we have a population. When we have more population in Western Australia than there is in all the Eastern States we shall control the Commonwealth Parliament. Then we shall tell the Wards and the Dedmans where they get on and where they get off! But until that time comes they will be on the box seat.

Mr. Doney: You are finishing well!

Mr. HUGHES: I hope the House will appoint a committee to go into these questions and plan a post-war economy, including a

proposition for increasing Western Australia's population.

On motion by Mr. Mann, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.15 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 27th August, 1942.

	PAOR
Questions: Industries, financial assistance	344
Agricultural Bank, assistance to clients	344
Address-in-reply, tenth day, conclusion	344
Adjournment, special	362

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2).

INDUSTRIES, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What amount of financial assistance has been granted to industries, factories, and undertakings during the last five years? 2, How much of such assistance has been repaid? 3, What amount has been written off? 4, What are the names of the industries, etc., so assisted? 5, Which ones have repaid the advance in whole, and the respective amount repaid? 6, Which ones have repaid only part of the advance, and the respective amount?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, £41,089. 2, £2,448. 3, Nil. 4, Electrical engineering, general engineering, clothing, fire extinguisher manufacture, flooring manufacture, instrument making, meat works, charcoal briquettes, canning and food manufacture, butter manufacture, fertiliser manufacture, woollen and textile mills, salt production, gas-producers, refractory minerals grinding, optical munitions. 5, Electrical engineering £500, clothing £500, fire extinguisher £200, instrument making £300, optical munitions £350. 6, Canning £150, refractory mineral grinding £100, salt £48, general engineering £300.

AGRICULTURAL BANK, ASSISTANCE TO CLIENTS.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Were all non-interest bearing sustenance advances made by the Agricultural

Bank to its necessitous clients for the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1942, made solely from drought relief money granted by the Commonwealth Government? 2, If not, how many settlers received sustenance from: (a) drought relief money; (b) State money; and what were the totals of the money involved in each category? 3, Is the 1½ per cent interest-bearing sustenance money now being paid for the current year a charge upon drought relief funds only? 4, If not to what extent are State funds involved? 5, Is the free of interest sustenance money now being paid to marginal areas settlers for the current year derived from Commonwealth money only? 6, If not, what other money is being used for this purpose?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes—12 months for season 1941-42. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Advances for 1942-43 season from Commonwealth Drought Relief loan moneys will carry interest at 1½ per cent. 4, Answered by No. 3. 5, Yes—money has been granted to settlers from Commonwealth Funds derived from Commonwealth Wheat Industry Assistance Act 53 of 1938. 6, Answered by No. 5.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Tenth Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [2.20]: I desire in the first place to express very sincere regret and deep sympathy with His Majesty the King and members of the Royal family, at the severe loss they have recently sustained in the tragic death of H.R.H. the Duke of Kent. The Empire has suffered a serious blow as a result of this tragedy, and we in Australia, perhaps, feel it more deeply, because of the fact that we looked forward to the time when the Duke of Kent would have been directly representing His Majesty as the Governor-General of the Commonwealth. This loss simply goes to show that the Royal family is not immune from tragedies which so frequently befall so many others in the Empire in these times. We must recognise that every member of the Royal family is playing his or her part in the grim struggle in which we are engaged. So I feel sure that members will agree with me when I say that we feel deeply for the Royal family in their bereavement, and I trust that the struggle in which we are engaged will eventually come to a successful