

I am sure will give an effective answer. A private concern has spent a large sum of money on boring the deposits and inquiries have been made from America for the alunite. Apparently, something has come of the samples that were sent there. It would appear that some effort is being made to stop the production of alunite here. Possibly a factory could be established at Collie, because the production of aluminium involves a plentiful and cheap supply of power. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion of Hon. H. L. Roche, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.57 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 14th August, 1941.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

Surcharge on Bulk Wheat.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Railways: 1, In view of the fact that the Midland Railway Company has abolished the surcharge of 1s. 6d. per ton on bulk wheat, will the Government Railways also discontinue charging 9d. per ton on bulk wheat carried over the Government Railways? 2, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, The additional rate per ton does not reimburse the department for the extra cost involved in transporting bulk wheat as compared with bagged wheat.

QUESTION—WATER SUPPLIES.

Capacity of Reservoirs.

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Water Supplies: What is the holding capacity, to overflowing, of:—Mundaring Weir, Canning Dam, and Wellington Dam?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES replied: Mundaring, 4,650 million gallons; Canning, 20,550 million gallons; Wellington (Collie River), 7,555 million gallons.

QUESTION—DROUGHT RELIEF.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Lands: As he stated in reply to a question asked by me on the 12th inst., that Agricultural Bank clients who are holders of wheat certificates for the 1940-41 season, and who received assistance from Drought Relief Funds are not compelled to hand over those certificates, will he instruct the Agricultural Bank Commissioners accordingly, and to refund to the Bank clients any wheat dividends already collected?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: The answer to the original question is "No!" The procedure adopted when reviewing settlers' accounts for carry-on purposes is that full finance is arranged mainly from drought relief funds, stock account and cash in hand. The value of the wheat scrip is not known at time of review, but when known it is used to replace drought relief approved to the value of the sum received.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motions by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence granted to Mr. Styants (Kalgoorlie) for one month on the ground of military service; to Mr. Marshall (Murchison) for two weeks on the ground of urgent public business; and to Hon. P. Collier (Boulder) for two weeks on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Pilbara) [4.35]: I think it was Shakespeare who said, "Be checked for silence but never be taxed for speech." I shall endeavour to strike a happy medium. It is not my intention to deal with

all the matters outlined in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech, but I would like the indulgence of the House while I refer to a few matters of local importance and then to one or two items which to my way of thinking will stand discussion. I desire to express appreciation to the Minister for Health and the Commissioner of Public Health for retaining the services of the Resident Medical Officer at Port Hedland, Dr. Dick. On behalf of the people of the Pilbara district I wish also to express thanks to the doctor for remaining as resident medical officer for a further term. We know that owing to war requirements the supply of doctors is somewhat limited and, as a result of an arrangement made between the parties Dr. Dick, who is a qualified pilot, will fly a plane to be made available to him and will cover the Roebourne district in addition to the Marble Bar and Port Hedland areas. I bring under the notice of the Minister for Health the need for endeavouring to arrange for a travelling dental surgeon in the Pilbara district. The nearest dentist is 700 or 800 miles from Marble Bar and Port Hedland and when dental attention is required one is subject to considerable expense. If the innovation I have suggested could be made, results would be beneficial from the district's point of view and I think that the financial aspect would be regarded as satisfactory by the department.

A matter to which I would draw the attention of the Minister for the North-West is the need for the completion, at the earliest possible moment, of the bridge over the De Grey River. We have heard much lately about the construction of the east-west road which is a defence measure now being undertaken. The De Grey River bridge is on the main north-south road from Darwin to Carnarvon and Geraldton. One section of the bridge has been constructed, but the Minister who, like myself, has been over the bridge only recently, will recognise the need, both from the State and the defence points of view, of constructing the remainder of the bridge. I know he is sympathetic and I believe that an approach might be made to the Federal Government for a special grant to carry out this essential work.

I wish to touch briefly on a taxation matter that is exercising the minds of a number of people in the Pilbara district. I shall not enter into details of the taxation laws except to say that district allowances received by

Federal and State civil servants, by railway men, miners, construction workers and others are taxed as income. The district allowance is granted as compensation for climatic and other disabilities to which those employees are subjected. They have informed me that they do not object to paying their fair share of taxation, but they think it unfair to be taxed on the district allowance apart from the basic wage.

Mr. Sampson: Very unfair!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Not only is the district allowance taxed, but, when it is added to the ordinary wage, it often brings the rate of tax to a much higher plane. If the Government intends to introduce any amendment of the Act, I hope this aspect will be given consideration. People in the north are working under disabilities and we should endeavour to encourage an increase of population in that area. In a small way a concession along these lines would assist.

I was impressed by the remarks of the genial member for Claremont (Mr. North), who made special reference to the need for informing the public of the truth regarding Parliament and its functions. The time for doing that is opportune, and I propose to submit some facts which might help the hon. member to put his desires into effect. We know what the functions of Parliament are and many people outside Parliament know, but unfortunately others do not take the trouble to ascertain, the basis upon which members are elected to the Legislature. I think the people are justified to some extent in their protests. From time to time we are reminded that there are 13 Houses of Parliament functioning in Australia. I consider that there are at least six too many. Before Federation became an accomplished fact, the smaller States in population considered that they needed some safeguard and consequently the Senate was made part and parcel of the Commonwealth Constitution. While members of the House of Representatives are elected by the different States on a population basis, the Senate is constituted of an equal number of members from each State, namely, six. The framers of the Commonwealth Constitution were doubtless sincere in their desires, but over the years the Senate has developed into a party House. There is not the slightest doubt of that. We find members from this State voting not with other Western Australian members but with their respective parties. No matter what

party we belong to, we cannot deny that fact.

Let me now refer to the position here and in some of the other States. All the other States with the exception of Queensland have a second Chamber. In Western Australia we have a second Chamber elected on a restricted franchise. In Victoria members elected to the Legislative Council must possess a property qualification, and those entitled to have a vote for the Council in that State are matriculated students, doctors and lawyers, ministers of religion, and naval and military officers. Members will note that the shearer and the farm labourer have no say in the choice of representatives in that Chamber. A similar qualification operates in South Australia to a large extent and also in Tasmania; the Council in each of those States is elected on a restricted franchise. We hear much talk about democracy and about rule by the people for the people. In actual practice, that does not happen. Before one may have a vote for the Legislative Council in this State, one must own property to the value of £50 a year or pay rent to the value of £17 a year. To be elected to the Legislative Council, one must be 30 years of age.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is if he wishes to become a member of the Council.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: If we believe in the adult franchise and in the principle that the people should govern, there should be only one House in each of the States and in the Federal sphere.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What would you say if we fight the election on that?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Legislative Council of Western Australia has more power than has the House of Lords. If a Bill is sent from the House of Commons three times and is rejected by the House of Lords on each occasion, that measure may become law. That does not happen in this State. Any Bill sent from this House to another place is subject to the criticism of members there, and if another place elects to amend, alter or reject the measure, the Assembly has no alternative to accepting the decision.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The franchise is totally different.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: If we are going to have rule by the majority, we should have it definitely. I find that the total number of electors on the roll for the Legislative As-

sembly at the last election was 265,987, and the total number of votes recorded was 205,738. Those people had a say in returning members to this Chamber.

Hon. C. G. Latham: How many do you represent?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: There is such a thing as quality besides quantity. In connection with the Legislative Council the number of votes recorded was 32,917. The number of electors in the contested provinces was 82,060, and the number of votes recorded was 32,917. The actual position is—the Leader of the Opposition can sneer—that the will of 32,917 people can override the will of 205,738.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is democracy.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do you say I sneer because I interject?

Mr. SPEAKER: I must ask the Leader of the Opposition to keep order.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Not only is the franchise too restricted, but the time is long past when the people of the State should have a say as to whether they favour the retention of such franchise for the Legislative Council. I have no hesitation in saying that the time is overdue for the abolition of another place. It is an insult to people of intelligence that the will of those who elect members on an adult franchise can be thwarted by another Chamber whose members are elected on a restricted franchise. Over a period of years efforts have been made to liberalise the franchise of the Upper House, but without success. Even men over 18 years of age who were considered good enough, strong enough and intelligent enough to be sent overseas to fight for their country, and to pay taxation if they earned a certain income, have no right to a say in the constitution of the government of the country. That is true. I believe the member for Claremont (Mr. North) would like those facts made known to the public.

Another matter with which I would deal is closely related to the franchise of the two Houses. I refer to the remarkable apathy and indifference displayed by large numbers of people of all political persuasions, wherever they may live. So much is that so, generally speaking in Australia, that it has been found necessary to introduce a system of compulsory voting. There was a time, years ago, when men and women were prepared to shed their blood

in protection of their right to a say in the government of the country. Already there is compulsory adult franchise for both Houses of the Federal Parliament. Because of the position that arose, the Commonwealth was obliged to pass a law compelling people over 21 years of age to exercise their right in connection with the government of their country. Many people do not value the heritage that has been handed down to them. The only alternative to the present form of government is a dictatorship, against the principles of which all British countries are fighting at present. I appeal to the Minister for Education to see that, in the course of the teaching in the higher classes of our schools, provision is made for teachers to outline to the boys and girls about to leave school the principles under which their country is governed.

Mr. Doney: I think that is already being done.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Young people should be educated with regard to the franchise appertaining both to the State and to the Commonwealth. I happened to find a book a little while ago written by Roy W. Grace, entitled "Wants and Welfare." I congratulate the author of that volume. Certain principles are defined in the book, which I understand has been used to some extent in our schools. I also commend it to adults. I was speaking to a man recently who, though in a semi-Government position, asked me how Parliament was constituted, whether it was sitting, how many Houses it comprised, and if members went to Canberra. He has had a first-class education and has one or two letters after his name. I met another man a little way from Perth who is working in the Commonwealth service at a salary of £450 per annum. He asked me whether the Federal Government was identical with the Commonwealth Government, and whether the Senate sat here alongside the Legislative Assembly. These are facts, and I mention them in the endeavour to awaken the public conscience to a realisation of the powers that rest with the community. The alternative to our present system of government is a dictatorship. People are prepared to lay down their lives to fight against dictatorships, and yet many of

them have to be forced to exercise their votes on election day.

I will not enter into details of the new order, as it is called, because that subject has been dealt with already by many speakers, who have shown that they have made a considerable study of the subject. I was pleased to hear the remarks of the member for Claremont (Mr. North). He said that if a comparison were made between members of the party on this side of the House and those opposed to us, it would be found that we were in agreement on 95 per cent. of the matters that we deal with. In other times of crises and depression, the remedy of our opponents, of those who would cure the ills of society, has always been to lower wages and lengthen the working hours. That was the remedy applied to the reconstruction period after the last war, and it was the remedy applied during the last depression. I am pleased to know that at least some members of the party to which the member for Claremont belongs have somewhat altered their outlook. It is also reassuring to hear the remarks of the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty), who yesterday said that money would not be tight after the present war, because it would be dangerous that it should be so. It was very reassuring to hear the hon. member speaking in that strain. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) said that the question of interest must be tackled. Such remarks indicate that at least some members of the parties who are opposed to us realise that we must get away from the orthodox belief that has been held so long.

Mr. Sampson: You had better come over here.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am pleased to have this opportunity to pass these few remarks. As the occasion arises one naturally likes to speak what is in one's mind. All of us, I think, are imbued with a spirit of sincerity to do what we think is right. We are all anxious to ensure, when peace is restored, some better outlook for the masses of the people than has prevailed in the past after wars, no matter how far back in history we care to go. We cannot adhere to the old order. Force of circumstances will make the leaders of the nation provide work for the unemployed. If half the people can procure sufficient for all the people, the

other half must not be allowed to fall by the wayside. The problem of production has been solved; the question is now one of distribution. This and other wars have demonstrated that the present financial system must be overhauled and that the State must control the means of distribution and exchange. Full and plenty will be available for everyone in this country, and no one should be allowed to starve or go short of the necessities of life.

Dealing with education, one of the problems yet to be solved is the placing into industry of our young people. That is a big question, and whatever Government is in office and charged with the responsibility, I hope it will inquire into the possibility of raising the school age to at least 15 or 16 years. I do not mean the three R.'s should continue to be taught after the scholars have reached the age of 13; but when it is found that some children are fitted for particular callings, instruction in those callings should be given. Some may desire to take up agriculture or to enter into other primary industries. By teaching them the rudiments of the industry, they will be better equipped for absorption into it on leaving school.

A suggestion was made by the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) that industries were not being established in this State because the premiums for workers' compensation insurance were too high. I do not think that is so. The industries in Victoria and New South Wales were built up in past years under protection, before Western Australia got a footing. I sincerely hope, however, there will be no reversion to the provisions contained in a Bill introduced into the Legislative Assembly on the 13th May, 1931, by the then Minister for Works, Mr. J. Lindsay. A comparison of that Bill with the present law will make plain the attempts made to reduce the amounts payable by way of compensation for injuries. For the loss of one leg at or above the knee, the present compensation payable is £600. The Bill I have mentioned provided £475 for that injury, a reduction of £125. For the loss of a hand at the wrist, the compensation at present is £600; the amount provided in the Bill was £400, and so on. That is not the way to secure the co-operation of our working classes. The medical expenses allowed at that time, and

still allowed, are £100. The Bill sought to reduce that sum to £52 10s. Fortunately, it did not pass. I repeat that in my opinion the reason for the failure to establish industries is certainly not because of our Workers' Compensation Act. I thank members for the patient hearing they have given me, and I trust that our deliberations this session will prove of benefit to the people of Western Australia.

MR. SHEARN (Maylands) [5.6]: Like the previous speaker, I shall not traverse all the matters which ordinarily one would deem to be of sufficient importance to occupy the attention of the House on this debate. Other members have referred to the increasing gravity of the international situation, which is now threatening to affect Australia vitally, so much so that we may be in the theatre of war any day. That naturally overshadows local considerations, however necessary or urgent they may be. In the circumstances, we are not surprised that the principal note struck in the Speech of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor is the activities associated directly with the war and what our Government intends to do in that regard. That seems to have been the dominant theme of the speeches of members who have addressed themselves to this debate. It is but right that we should make vocal our anxiety over the critical situation facing the British Empire. I am glad to note that members realise now, more than ever before, how important it is to sink political differences and make common cause in our efforts to achieve victory in this conflict, as well as to make some substantial contribution to any plan of reconstruction upon which we may embark. We shall thus worthily support those of our relations and friends who have gone overseas to make sacrifices and endure trials and tribulations to uphold the traditions of the A.I.F. of 1914-18. Those men played a considerable part in bringing that war to a successful conclusion and thus maintaining our civilisation. All that was worth while then is, so to speak, hanging in the balance today.

There are some matters affecting my electorate upon which I wish to touch, but I shall deal with them later when the Estimates are introduced. I may be pardoned, however, for referring to a small matter, which nevertheless is urgent. I have brought under the notice of the Minister for

Railways the long-standing need for some form of transport for people living in what is known as the Peninsula area of the Maylands electorate. Members will no doubt be aware that what I am about to say is correct. Most of the people in that area have been residing there for some 25 years, but they have not yet received proper transport facilities. The Government in its wisdom has from time to time granted transport facilities to other districts, which in many instances had only been settled for four or five years. These districts have been provided with most up-to-date transport facilities, and in some cases these have been duplicated. I have already made representations to the Minister on this question and have been wholeheartedly supported by the local authority. I hope that even in these times of stress this small matter will receive the attention of the Government. The Minister does not contest its legitimacy or urgency.

Reference has been made in the Press to a matter of special interest to myself. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Committee inquiring into social questions, including housing on a national basis, will, I understand, visit Western Australia for the purpose of taking evidence. I have taken a keen interest in this subject for many years, even prior to my entering Parliament. I hope the work of this committee, unlike that of some other committees, will not be in vain, but that a sincere effort will be made to give effect to its recommendations. Investors seem to be disinclined to build homes for workers in this and the other States. The reason they advance is that they will not receive a sufficient net return to justify the investment of their capital in that way. Another factor militating against the erection of workers' homes is the high building costs. The ordinary working man, with his relatively small income and family responsibilities, cannot accumulate sufficient funds to build a home for himself. The problem has been aggravated by conditions associated with poverty. This is a matter which should have been taken up long ago by the Governments of Australia. I am pleased that the Federal Government is now proposing to deal with it as a national responsibility, and I hope it will not allow matters to drift as they have drifted in the past, when the responsibility was thrown upon the State Governments, who were

not in a position to find the necessary funds to tackle the project in a satisfactory and comprehensive manner. The reference I have made to this subject by no means indicates my lack of appreciation of the tremendous volume of excellent work accomplished by the Workers' Homes Board and the Housing Trust. I have personal knowledge of the activities of both bodies and realise the splendid work effected, particularly in view of the meagre amount of funds made available to them.

Mr. Doney: They do not make many mistakes.

Mr. SHEARN: Rarely are mistakes made. The men associated with the work are zealous and take a deep personal interest in it. I have had an excellent opportunity to appreciate that, to an extent much greater than most members, because I am associated with a local governing body. I have had ample opportunity to gauge the enthusiasm and interest imported into the work by the members of the board and the trust. I am glad to say they have done a splendid job. I trust the result of the investigation by the committee to which I have referred will be the launching of a definite scheme. If that is so, I hope the Federal Government, from an economic point of view if from no other, will appreciate the advisability of utilising the organisation already set up in Western Australia and other States, in giving effect to the project. To adopt such a course would be not only economical, but distinctly advisable because a local body such as the Workers' Homes Board knows the conditions and requirements of the people of this State. In those circumstances that body would be in a far better position speedily and satisfactorily to deal with housing matters here than would be possible through the inaugural attempts of any new organisation set up by the Federal Government.

The contention may be advanced that financial considerations will loom so largely in relation to the project that its inauguration must necessarily be deferred. I recognise the strength of that suggestion because of present-day conditions and the colossal sums necessarily expended in connection with our war activities generally, and which may have to continue for a much longer period than that suggested by the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Triat). Under the conditions that may apply, there may be the possibility that taxpayers of Australia who re-

quire homes will not be able to pay the interest rate demanded, which assuredly will not be the same as that charged hitherto. The indications are such that it may be found possible to make greater use of the Commonwealth Bank in the financing of a scheme of such national importance as that of housing the people. It could probably be effectively financed from that source, because the Commonwealth Bank could provide the necessary funds. I certainly hope the problem of finance will not be allowed to stand as a bar to the promulgation of the scheme for the building of workers' homes.

Painting a rather gloomy picture, the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) last night made reference to the future as he sees it, and commented on his conception of the futility of the efforts of Parliament as a whole. During the short time I have been a member of this Chamber, I have had some opportunity to judge the attitude usually adopted by that hon. member. I am inclined to think his remarks last night did not really reflect his considered opinion either with regard to the future or to Parliamentary operations. I am certain that, upon reflection, he would appreciate our acceptance of his remarks as having been made in a spirit of levity rather than of sincerity. With the multitude of matters associated with the war effort, I am convinced that, as some speakers have already suggested, greater use could be made of the State Parliament. The member for Pilbara (Mr. W. Hegney) said there was extreme apathy on the part of people of Western Australia regarding the Parliamentary institution, and intimated that he had been asked a number of most childish questions as to the activities of this Chamber. I myself have been asked whether the House was in session and what it was doing, even when we were in recess. Every member of this Parliament is possessed of a sense of responsibility to the community he represents, and is only too anxious to do everything in his power to apply himself to the work at hand. If opportunities to enable him to do so are not provided through no fault of his own, then any stigma attached to him would be most unfair. Equally would it be unfair if that stigma were applied collectively to members of Parliament as a whole. If the Government here, and the Governments in other States, acted correctly in these times of stress and emergency, Parliaments would be called

together more frequently. I do not support the contention that we should sit in continuous session, for I would regard that as unnecessary. On the other hand, if Parliament were called together every two or three months during the continuance of the present crisis, I am sure there are matters to which members might apply themselves with advantage to Australia in general and to Western Australia in particular. I say that seriously, for I am convinced that we should be applying ourselves to the many problems that confront Australia. I ask members and even Ministers themselves: What do they know about the details associated with the conduct of the war?

Mr. Warner: Nothing!

Mr. SHEARN: It may not be practicable to know everything. It would be quite unnecessary, and even undesirable, that members should discuss here, or even amongst themselves, various aspects of the technical issues involved in the war effort. But that does not by any means represent everything. What do we know about those matters affecting the well-being of the troops overseas with which we should be more fully acquainted? We are told no more than the people who gain their information through the columns of the Press. Seeing that we are representative of the people, we surely should be told something about what is happening in various avenues. We are responsible to the people. Speaking for the moment as a member of a local governing body, what would ratepayers say if they were told something was happening that would affect their well-being, and when they asked for some particulars, their road board member could only reply that he did not know anything about it as there had been no meeting to discuss the matter? There would be chaos. I do not necessarily blame the Government for the present position, but would like an assurance from the Premier as to whether he has endeavoured to ascertain if the Federal Government was prepared to co-operate with us and allow the State Parliament to play a practical part in the work of reconstruction, of which we hear so much. We should be preparing for the future now. We should also be allowed to take part in some of the activities associated with the war. I shall not particularise; to members it must be obvious to what I refer.

Mr. Needham: What suggestions have you?

Mr. SHEARN: I suggest co-operation for a start. I do not regard it as idle or futile to mention that not only in this House but right throughout Australia there is every indication, apart from a few malcontents, of the conviction that a spirit of co-operation is necessary in furtherance of our war effort. Signs are not lacking on the part of all political parties, of a sense of responsibility and recognition of the urgency of the vital issues associated with our future well-being. I do not think my suggestion is futile or impracticable.

Mr. Watts: And that is that!

Mr. SHEARN: I have followed closely the discussion in this Chamber regarding shipbuilding, war work and the production of munitions. Reluctantly do I express my regret that the Minister for Industrial Development has not taken advantage of the opportunity to enlighten Parliament at this early stage regarding what he has been able to achieve in relation to matters of importance, to which reference has been made during the debate. In view of what one member of this Chamber has been able to do, it seems inexplicable to me that the Minister has not attained a greater measure of success in the task to which he has zealously applied himself ever since he was appointed a full-time Minister to deal with industrial developmental matters. He has associated with him a number of skilled officers and he also has the advantage of an energetic committee of business and other men to assist him. To date we have had no indication of any tangible results attained by the Government or by the Minister himself. I am unable to believe that the Minister has not made some real effort and attained a measure of success in avenues affecting our industrial development, but it seems remarkable that it should become necessary for the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Berry) and other public-spirited persons to sponsor the cause of this State with the Federal authorities. To me that appears to be deplorable. I shall not seek to defend the Minister; he is better able to do that than I am. While it may be suggested that the rules of debate or our Standing Orders preclude him from making a statement regarding the position at this stage, the fact remains that the columns of the Press have been available to him. Why is it we have

not had a statement from the Minister? If he has done anything worth while, surely we are entitled to be so informed. If he has not, that fact constitutes a serious indictment not only of his work but of the Government's lack of sense of responsibility to the public generally. I hope the Minister will be able to explain away the point I make in a manner satisfactory to him and to Parliament. We have the member for Irwin-Moore giving notice of his intention to move a motion dealing with this matter in order that it may be transmitted to the Federal Government.

Mr. Berry: What is wrong with that?

Mr. SHEARN: There is nothing wrong with that; what I complain of is that there should be any cause for such a motion. I do not think the member for Irwin-Moore is any more seized of a sense of his responsibilities than am I or is any other member of the House. He has initiated the matter, which has also exercised the minds of others. Unlike that hon. member, I and others have been awaiting a statement from the Government indicating what it intends to do. The Government of the State for the time being must accept the responsibility. We are here to assist Ministers. Ever since I have sat in this Chamber, members on this side have freely offered to assist the Government in dealing with the activities of the department and have, like hon. members opposite, shown great earnestness, sincerely recognising the difficulties associated with the subject. But when the matter of initiation is left to a private member of the House, the matter calls for explanation.

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SHEARN: I hope the Minister will be able to explain the position, when he rises, and also state the reasons for what has taken place. The five lines treating of the matter in the Speech tell us absolutely nothing.

Some few months ago I had an opportunity to visit the Eastern States, but an unfortunate illness compelled me to return somewhat hurriedly. Nevertheless I had opportunities, thanks to a speedy mode of conveyance and the help of a friend, to visit a number of factories engaged in war production. I also had opportunities to discuss the subject with various officials, whose names obviously I cannot mention.

Western Australia's difficulties arise from its isolation, and from the fact that we have been making only spasmodic contact with the East. That is the position. My investigations in Eastern Australia satisfied me that whereas the representatives of Eastern firms live practically on the doorsteps of those controlling these projects, Western Australia was represented only spasmodically in relation to her claims for contracts in connection with war-time activities. I am convinced that while the Eastern States are flourishing—on this every member who has visited the East lately will agree with me—a very different state of affairs prevails here. One cannot walk up the street in an eastern city without seeing activity exuding from everywhere. A state of financial prosperity exists there, whilst here we have almost stagnation. Nevertheless we have the materials and the men and the inclination.

I know the Government wants to do everything possible in this regard. My own desire is merely that Western Australia should take its part in connection with the activities of war-time production, and should set about instituting industries. The indications I gained and the impressions I formed in Eastern Australia show that the trouble lies in our not being sufficiently pressing. Therefore I suggest to the House and the Minister for Industrial Development that it is advisable for the hon. gentleman to be more insistent on our claims being recognised in the future than he has been in the past. I may throw out this suggestion as one means by which something of a more definite and practical nature might be achieved. Conditions being as serious as they are, our national existence being at stake, our sons fighting overseas, it is intolerable that any business should be making excess profits. Every business should be satisfied with a return covering reasonable costs, such as depreciation and other charges legitimately associated with the industry. I emphasise that no business has the right to make large profits out of war-time activities. My suggestion to the Minister for Industrial Development, for his earnest consideration, is that he should select from the Public Service of Western Australia a man possessed of both initiative and technical skill. I feel that members who have been here longer than I have and possess a wider

knowledge of Government departments will agree that such a man is to be found in our Public Service. I am convinced that it would be a worthy experiment to appoint the right type of officer as a liaison officer with the Commonwealth. I would like to see him permanently stationed in Melbourne. If that is impracticable, he should be almost permanently located there. In Melbourne most of the important decisions are made with regard to munitions. Under those conditions I feel sure that the Minister, assisted by the committees associated with him, and assisted also by the suggested liaison officer, would bring about a great acceleration of effort, and that a greatly increased quantity of orders for the existing factories of Western Australia would result. Not only that, but the creation of new industries would result as well. I commend that suggestion to the Minister's earnest consideration.

As previous speakers have pointed out, much has been said in this debate about conditions that are to ensue at the conclusion of the war. Every member will of course recognise that so far as lies within our power as a State Parliament we subscribe not only to the idea of reconstruction, but also to other things which imperatively require to be done if the conditions following on the 1914 war are not to recur. We realise also that this conflict seems to have developed into one of almost entirely mechanised warfare. Thus it will result that our men engaged in it will come back—I trust very few will not come back—in the main with a mechanised outlook. It should be our duty now as a State, a duty to be embarked upon as a national project in the spirit to which the member for Perth (Mr. Needham) referred earlier, to provide for the passing-over to peace-time production of those now engaged in war-time production. At the same time we must provide for the absorption of our returning men so that we shall not have again the tragic sequel of the last war in the form of unemployment and dole conditions. I am convinced that if all of us apply ourselves to that effort, a great measure of success will be achieved much more speedily than some people outside would have us believe. When we begin to do that in a practical way, we shall at least achieve something, and shall not be accused, as we were rightly accused after the last war, of not providing for a new

deal and other economic changes, from which fact arose the depression following the war. As the member for Pilbara (Mr. W. Hegney) said, even to the extent of revising orthodox ideas we must realise that a change is being brought about, whether we like it or not, and that we must do everything for this State in particular to trudge up those impending changes, and to bend our individual efforts to bringing about the advancement of Western Australia and the ultimate peace of the British Empire and the world as a whole.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle) [5.41]: A number of speakers on the other side of the Chamber have made references to the necessity of sinking party politics. I think, however, that the only politics they desire to sink are the Labour Party's politics. No charge can be brought against the Labour Party of not having done its utmost in the prosecution of the war. The party, at its Interstate Federal Congress, agreed to place the whole of its wealth and its men at the disposal of the Commonwealth Government for the prosecution of the war; and it has lived up to that promise ever since. I consider that a little more unity amongst other political parties is a great deal more to be desired. There is more disunity in the National Party on the other side of the Chamber than there is between the Nationalists and the Labour Party.

Mr. McDonald: That is not correct. It is quite wrong.

Mr. FOX: It is correct. How many members of that party have kicked over the traces about the leadership of Mr. Menzies? What did Mr. Cameron say? And what did Mr. McCall say?

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think the member for South Fremantle had better stick to State politics. Then he will be safer.

Mr. FOX: We have done our part towards the successful prosecution of the war. The member for Perth (Mr. Needham) pointed to the large amount of money donated by various unions. In my district the Fremantle Lumpers' Union put £1,500 free of interest into the war loan, and also took out the maximum allotment of war savings certificates. Moreover, it was quite prepared to take out more if permitted to do so. Nothing can be said

against this party as regards doing its share towards the prosecution of the war. Our very existence depends upon the winning of the war. Hitler's first action in Germany was to wipe out the unions. Only recently I was speaking to an Italian in the country, and he told me that he had to get out of Italy because he attended a meeting where a member spoke against Mussolini. Machine guns were turned on the meeting. This Italian added, "If I went back to Italy I would be shot." We do not desire such a state of affairs to be created in Australia. Therefore we have something worth fighting for. All of us are prepared to do our utmost to see that the war is waged successfully, as I have no doubt it will be. I feel sure that all political parties are prepared to use their best endeavours to ensure that the British Empire shall emerge victorious. Last night I asked the Minister for Lands a question regarding weevil-infested wheat at Fremantle, because I am concerned about the health of the men who handle wheat on the Fremantle wharf. We all know that bulk wheat is very dusty at any time. A number of members from both sides of the House one day went to the Fremantle wharf and looked down the hold of a ship into which bulk wheat was being shot. All agreed that the wheat was very dusty. Men have to go down a ship's hold and shovel back the wheat, and that is injurious to their health. I am concerned about the havoc weevils are playing with the wheat at Fremantle because weevily wheat is likely to be dustier than that which is not so infested. I trust, if the Minister for Lands has any jurisdiction in the matter, he will do his utmost to ensure that the grain is kept in as good a condition as possible.

At the end of this wheat season we will have about 1,250,000 tons of wheat stored in Western Australia. That would be sufficient to load over 200 ships. During the last year only 35 ships were available. If the same conditions prevail within the next few years, we will require at least six years in which to ship the accumulated wheat, without taking into consideration the fresh wheat that will be produced during those six years. To keep that wheat clean and ship it out of the State will be a big problem. Recently, about 5,000 or 6,000 tons of wheat that had been stored

at Fremantle from the previous season was in such a bad state that it had to be put through a cleansing process before it was rendered fit, not for consumption but merely for handling by the workers. The difficulty of keeping clean the large quantity of wheat that will be stored during the next six years will be readily apparent. In the past Western Australia had a reputation for shipping good wheat from the State. That is mainly due to the system of sampling introduced by the Government. All the wheat that went down to Fremantle was sampled by men from the Agricultural Department, and if it was up to standard, a certificate was issued.

We should be very careful of the reputation of Western Australian wheat, and make sure that none is shipped away unless it conforms to standard. I know quite well that in the past all sorts of wheat have been exported. I worked on the wharf for a number of years and during that time I saw trucks of wheat condemned and ordered off the boat by the engineer in charge; but when night came and the engineer in charge had left the boat, the wheat was put back. That should not be allowed to happen. I do not say it is happening now but that was what took place when I was working on the wharf. I hope no wheat will leave Western Australia unless it is properly certificated. We do not want to lose our reputation for exporting good wheat in the way we lost our reputation for exporting good flour. After the last war we lost the greater part of the South African trade because of the inferior flour that was allowed to leave the State. There was one question I asked which the Minister did not answer as I thought he should have answered it. He said he had a report on the condition of Western Australian wheat but it was confidential and not for publication.

The Minister for Lands: The report is not my property.

Mr. FOX: If it has been printed, I do not see why it should not be made public. It interests the whole of the people of Western Australia. We in Fremantle are very much interested in wheat production because to a certain extent it is the lifeblood of the city, and provides considerable employment. We have always held that view and have been very anxious to help the farmers. In years gone by we pointed out to the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) how

he could have saved thousands of pounds for the farmers if he had co-operated with the Lumpers' Union in the handling of the season's wheat. Stevedores used to get as much for handling the wheat as the lumpers did. We offered to do all the stevedoring for the farmers. The farmers could have saved more by co-operating with the Fremantle Lumpers' Union than by the introduction of bulk handling.

Mr. Withers: They were always shy of co-operation.

Mr. Seward: They knew who could handle the wheat properly.

Mr. FOX: I hope it will be possible for the Minister to release that report and give us an opportunity of seeing what it contains. I am concerned about the position of market gardeners in my electorate who are handicapped as a result of petrol restrictions. I know the Minister is alive to the need for an adequate supply of petrol for the man on the land. The people to whom I have referred have to market their goods quickly. They have to travel from Spearwood, Coogee and other districts to Perth and Fremantle twice a week, and have to go to the country for manures, cart it to the sidings and then from the railway station to their farms. Although my district is very productive, the market gardeners have to use an enormous quantity of manure to secure their present returns. To do all the carting necessary they need a good supply of petrol. Before those who use petrol entirely in the course of their business are rationed, those using it for pleasure should have their supply stringently reduced.

Mr. Seward: The primary producers are stringently rationed already.

Mr. FOX: If there is to be any further rationing, it should not be at the expense of people who have to depend on petrol for their livelihood. Wood carters who go out into the bush and supply the community with firewood are also suffering. Their supply of petrol has been considerably curtailed. Many people have decided to increase the size of their orders with a view to helping the wood merchants who are in this way obliged to make fewer trips to their customers.

Mr. J. Hegney: But in many instances it is not possible to obtain more than a 5s. load at one time.

Mr. FOX: To be in the fashion, I desire to say a few words about the new order, concerning which so much has been said.

Mr. Thorn: Do you think we shall have a new order?

Mr. FOX: I will tell the hon. member later.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Privately!

Mr. FOX: Consideration of the future is causing all of us a good deal of concern. When there is no longer any need for the manufacture of munitions, many people associated with that industry will be dismissed, and they, together with men returning from the war, will be seeking employment. It is true that at least 12 months may elapse before the Government and industry will have the maximum amount of unemployment to deal with.

The Minister for Mines: They will turn the munition factories into factories for the production of other commodities.

Mr. FOX: They may! In the past the Government has had to find employment for a number of men, many of whom have since joined the Home Guard or enlisted for service overseas. When peace spreads its wings over the troubled world, those men will return to the ranks of the unemployed, and unless a new order is established the Government will have increasing numbers of people on its hands for whom it will have to provide work or sustenance. This is the time to begin setting our house in order. It is no use waiting until we have thousands of unemployed on our hands before we start to do anything. We need to get in early. I know the task is a big one. I am not aware whether anybody has a complete plan to put into operation. As a number of members have already said, it is all bound up with the monetary system. But unless we have a Commonwealth Government in power which can plan for the future and is prepared to put that plan into operation, we shall not get anywhere. This war is being waged for the preservation of everything we hold dear, for the preservation of our very lives and liberties, of Parliaments and democracy and free speech—although perhaps free speech has been curtailed a little even in Australia.

Mr. Hughes: Not Parliaments!

Mr. FOX: We are fighting perhaps for the right to abolish some Parliaments if we so desire. If a bad Government is in office we can change it, but if we had a dictator we could not change him.

Mr. Hughes: He would change us.

Mr. FOX: I suppose he would. I do not know that I am prepared to prophesy when

the war will end; it might last five years and it might last ten. Some of the men who have gone overseas will give their lives for their country. Surely their dependants are entitled to a place in the sun after the war is over! Those who risk their lives and come home safely are surely entitled to expect a decent standard of living! Those people should be able to enjoy the amenities of civilised life. Unless we make plans now to ensure for them a decent standard of living, it may be too late when the war is over, and then we will have nothing but chaos. A great change in our social economy is necessary if we are to establish a new order. I believe I would be justified in saying that rent, profit and interest far exceed wages. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) may be able to tell me whether I am right. If we are to have an effective new order, rent, interest and profit will have to go to the National Government. Years ago the Labour Party laid the foundation of a new order when it established the Commonwealth Bank. It also established the Commonwealth Shipping Line and the Commonwealth Woollen Mills. The Commonwealth Bank still exists, though it is not functioning as was originally intended. The Commonwealth ships and woollen mills were ruthlessly slaughtered by the National Party at the first opportunity, slaughtered on the altar of private enterprise.

Mr. J. Hegney: The ships have not been paid for, either.

Mr. FOX: No. The man who bought them went bankrupt. They have never been paid for and never will be. If we are to hold Australia against all possible invaders, we must have large shipyards; not shipyards capable merely of building wooden ships but shipyards capable of building modern liners. We require the establishment of other large industries as well. We should be manufacturing iron and steel. We must have woollen mills. All such activities would employ many men. When the war is over, Great Britain will have to spend an enormous amount on effecting repairs to damaged docks, ruined cities and wrecked utilities. Would it not be much better if we could induce the British Government to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government so that a large proportion of the expenditure involved could be effected in sparsely-settled portions of the Empire? If we could establish huge industries in Western Australia

and the Commonwealth generally they would form part of our defence system. We could build houses for the people who will be employed in the industries to be established. That is the only means by which we can populate Australia to such an extent that we shall be able to hold it in the face of any invader. We have illimitable resources of coal, iron and other raw materials required for shipbuilding and other industrial activities. As it is, we have not a population that could possibly defend the country. We are constantly confronted with the danger of losing Australia to some other nation requiring territory for her surplus population and raw materials for her manufactures. We may not always be fortunate enough to have the British Navy ready and willing to defend us. Had not Russia entered the war on the side of Great Britain—

Hon. C. G. Latham: I do not think Russia entered the war for the sake of Britain.

Mr. FOX: No, it was to defend herself. Had Russia entered the war on the side of Germany, the Empire's position would have been desperate. In those circumstances, Britain would have had her hands full and we would have been in a very difficult position. We have relied on the British Navy for too long. We would do ourselves and the British Government a service if we were to develop to the stage of being able to defend ourselves. If we had a fleet of submarines and 5,000 or 6,000 aeroplanes, I believe we could hold Australia against invasion, provided we had a larger population. The transport problem confronting an enemy attempting to invade Australia would be so difficult that it would make the task almost impossible. I think it would be of advantage to the British Government in the post-war period if assistance were rendered to this State by the expenditure of money that would make the problem of re-establishing the population in civil life easier of solution. By that means Australia would gain population that is so urgently needed. After 150 years we have a population of 7,000,000. I do not suppose we will add another seven millions in the next century if we proceed at our present rate of progress. Recently I read an article dealing with eight families who had come to Australia 40 years ago and had at present only eight or nine dependants in the Commonwealth. How can we populate

Australia when that sort of thing is happening in our midst?

Hon. C. G. Latham: Those are isolated instances.

Mr. FOX: Yes.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Look at the number of "Foxes" there are about!

Mr. FOX: Some of them are fairly good. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) referred to the young man who has gained distinction in the R.A.F.—Acting-Wing Commander H. I. Edwards, V.C., D.F.C. In his youth he lived in the district I represent and there laid the foundations of the stuff that made a V.C. of him. Let me mention another young man in the person of Pilot Hoocy, son of a Fremantle tailor. He was one of five young men sent to England by the Commonwealth Government to learn aviation. He had passed his course and had almost reached the stage of returning to Australia when the war broke out. He joined the R.A.F. and has made 35 bombing trips over Germany. On the last of those trips he had the misfortune to lose an eye, and I believe he is to be invalided to Australia. In my opinion, a man who has made 35 raids over Germany has done his share.

The Minister for Mines: He is lucky to get through.

Mr. FOX: Very lucky. I hope that the services of this young man will not be lost to Australia. When he returns the Commonwealth Government should place him in a position to impart his knowledge to young men needing tuition. He is the stamp of man we want.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke of the shortage of skilled tradesmen in Western Australia. I have hardly ever known of an industry that could not get all the skilled labour required. Until recently, I believe, there was a slight shortage of shipwrights. But I have known of young fellows who, after having served five year's apprenticeship, could not get a job in their trade. Young men have been dismissed from the Midland Junction Workshops after completing their apprenticeships because work could not be found for them. A wagon builder found it impossible to get a job at his trade. He has done a lot of work as a carpenter, but he could not get work at the trade, to learn which he had given five years of his life. Two or three years ago a number of

tradesmen went to New Zealand; the Government of the Dominion was actively searching for skilled men. A number of men have also gone to Whyalla, South Australia. In all my experience, there has never been a shortage of tradesmen here, and the desire to get additional apprentices seems to be inspired by an entirely different purpose.

Mr. Abbott: It is to give the boys a chance.

Mr. FOX: They do get a chance.

Mr. Abbott: But they have to go elsewhere in Australia.

Mr. FOX: At the dawn of the machine age when each man owned his own tools, he had sufficient apprentices to carry on the trade. That is all we require now—sufficient apprentices to carry on industry. I know a first-class blacksmith who had come to Perth from the Perseverance Mine, Kalgoorlie. He was engaged in Fremantle for a number of years and did most of the repairs on ships that came to the port—repairs that called for a good deal of initiative. He had to devise ways and means for doing much of the work. One day he was passing a Perth foundry, and though he was over 60 years of age, he went to the manager and asked for a job. The manager replied, "You are too old; you would not be able to do the work." The man said, "Put me on alongside the best man you have in the shop, and if I cannot do a fair cut of work, you need not have me. I know the trade inside out and, while some of your men were thinking how to do a job, I would have it done." He met with refusal. Had there been a shortage of tradesmen, the manager of the foundry would have jumped at the offer. The blacksmith told me he did not want a job but thought he would ask for one to see what sort of a reply he received. He had really called to see a friend at the foundry. There is an instance of a first-class tradesman offering his services and being refused, so there could have been no shortage of tradesmen. The manager of the Perseverance Mine told him that if he cared to return at any time, there would be a job for him.

Under the Workers' Compensation Act Brills disease is compensable, but the worker, to get compensation, must prove that rats and mice were prevalent on the premises where the trouble was contracted. The disease is transmitted by fleas on rats and mice, and the sufferer develops a high temperature

and might be laid up for weeks. In some cases the workers have been able to secure compensation, having proved that rats and mice were on the premises, but when clothes are manufactured on premises where the pests are prevalent and taken to a shop or some other place where a worker develops the disease, it is very difficult to get compensation because he is not able to prove that rats and mice were prevalent on the premises where he was employed. The Act should be amended to provide that the fact of a worker's contracting Brills disease in the course of his employment should be sufficient to bring him within the compensation provisions.

Another cause of much concern is the compensation for casual employees. If a man working as a casual hand in a wool store meets with an accident, he is asked how much he has earned over the preceding 12 months. Usually such accidents occur in the peak periods, and but for the mishap he might have had six months' work in view, during which he would earn the major portion of his year's income. In order to avoid much friction between employers and workers, it would be better to provide that a casual employee should be compensated on the rate of wages he was receiving when the accident occurred.

Mr. Hughes: He might have the misfortune to be receiving small wages.

Mr. FOX: He would be getting not less than the basic wage. Such a man should be compensated on the rate of wages he is receiving at the time, just as are the members of the Waterside Workers' Union.

Mr. Hughes: He might be getting £6 and somebody might be on £4 and the injured man might be compensated on the £4 rate.

Mr. FOX: No, he should be compensated on the rate per day he is getting at the time.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. FOX: Before the tea adjournment I was speaking about a necessary amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes), I think, misunderstood me. The amendment referred only to casual workers, and not at all to men permanently employed. It would apply mostly to workers in seasonal occupations, handling wool, or fruit, or employed during the fat-lamb season. As those casual

workers earn the bulk of their seasonal pay during the flush period, they should, if they are injured during that time, receive half the proper wage. This would not include any man permanently employed.

I regret that the Workers' Homes Board has not seen fit to build some homes on the magnificent block of land donated to it by the Fremantle City Council. I know of very many men who have applied for homes on that block, but have not secured them, having been allotted homes in other districts. The block is in a thoroughly healthy part of the country, with good roads, and within easy access to buses. I know that the Fremantle City Council would be prepared to grant other lands to the board. It has already stated its readiness to give an area to the McNess Housing Trust. The board should reciprocate by showing that it appreciates the action of the City Council and build homes as soon as it can. Water and electric light are already laid on. Dozens of applications have been lodged, but in each instance a home elsewhere has been granted to the applicant. I do not wish in any way to reflect on the board, whose members are rendering magnificent service. Perhaps they have some good reason for not building on the block as soon as we think they should.

Another local matter I have to refer to is the Old Women's Home at Fremantle. It is disgraceful to have the institution in such a position as the present one. The only decent piece of ground, the only level spot, available for those inmates who are able to take recreation, has a large wool store built on it, covering the entire front of the home. Assuredly not a breath of air will reach the home during the summer months; the wool store will stop it all. In addition, there are the forts above the home. Recently those forts engaged in gun practice. At this time I was at Fremantle, a good distance from where the gun practice was going on. That practice was near the home, and would be hard on the nerves of the old people. In fact, the practice was held immediately outside the fence of the home. If the Government removed the institution and took possession of the stone, there would be material enough to build a terrace of houses. I do not know whether the Commonwealth wants the whole of the land for all time; but, if it does, a good plan would be to ask the Federal Government

to take over the whole area now, and with the resultant funds build a home somewhere on the banks of the Swan. Assuredly I would not like to see a relative of mine an inmate of the present home, notwithstanding that the place is kept scrupulously clean. The building itself may be described as all right, but it would also be a good place for stowing wool. If a nice home could be built on the river, with good surroundings and scenery, the Government would be doing a national service. Let me point out that the home is occupied by ladies who have done the best that was in them to build up this great State, and that they deserve as much consideration as do the old men, who are comfortably housed at Claremont. I am indeed pleased that the Government is building a technical school at Fremantle. Tenders have recently been called. The site selected is ideal for the purposes of the school, which will fill a long-felt want in Fremantle.

I wish to refer to a couple of matters connected with the district I represent, and then I shall conclude. The schoolmaster at Bibra Lake asked for £50 to be provided for a water supply at the school. This will interest the Minister for Lands. We have an excellent man in charge of the school. He came from the South-West, where he had made many experiments connected with agriculture, as to foddors and so on. I believe the member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) knows the gentleman, who wants this water supply to carry out experiments at Bibra Lake. The piping required would cost about £50, and with a supply of water he would convert what is now a sandpatch into an experimental farm. I particularly urge upon the Minister for Lands as well as the Minister for Education to see that the amount is provided. It will be well spent. The district is agricultural, and many of the children attending the school will embark on agricultural pursuits afterwards. The experimental section will be instructive for them, besides benefiting the State.

A school is also required at Spearwood. That is a growing district. Most of the people there now have been settled in that area for the last 30 years, and their children are getting married and setting up house. The only place available for a school during a number of years has been the agricultural hall, which is altogether unsuit-

able. I believe a school building is available for removal to that place. I hope the Minister for Education will give the matter his favourable consideration and that before long the much-desired school will be established. I thank members, and have pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

MR. HILL (Albany) [7.40]: Broadly speaking, Mr. Speaker, we can divide our work into two parts. Our first duty is to win the war; our second, to win through when the war is over. Last year, when speaking to the Address-in-reply debate, I said that tactics were a matter for all ranks, but that strategy was a matter for the Admiral, the General and the Statesman. I have with me a book that I studied years ago, entitled "The Elements of Strategy," from which I would like to read a paragraph or two. I feel confident that every member will endorse what I read—

It is, however, necessary to point out that though politicians must control, and be responsible for, the preparation for war, and the cause of war, and declaration of war, yet for politicians to attempt to control strategy, once the first shot is fired, or the frontier is crossed, is to fly in the face of the plainest teachings of modern history.

Party politicians have ruined the reputation of many a fine General. Thus the career of our greatest General, Marlborough, was checked in the full tide of its glory. Politicians were responsible for the failures of many commanders in the campaigns of the American Civil War till Grant, Sheridan, and Sherman determined that they would conduct the war in their own way or resign.

In 1914 a descendant of Marlborough put the finishing touch to the reorganisation of the British Navy, which stood between the preservation of our democracy and the domination of the world by a military caste. In 1940, we have still the Churchill at the helm of the British Empire and he is steering us through the greatest crisis in our history. I am proud to say that we all stand solidly behind Winston Churchill. Personally, I am 100 per cent. behind our own Prime Minister, although I am sorry to say some things are being done by our State Government that should not be done.

I am afraid members will be disappointed if I say nothing on the subject of transport. The finest speech that it has ever been my privilege to hear was made on the 19th May, 1919. The Mayor of Albany was the proudest man in Australia when he stood up and

said that history taught us that the British Navy stood between Napoleon and his attempt to dominate the world. "Our esteemed guest on this occasion, Lord Jellicoe," continued the Mayor, "had been in charge of the British Navy, which had stood between Britain and the Kaiser and the fulfilment of his ambition." Lord Jellicoe, in his reply, was grand. After speaking for a while he said, "Of course, the Mayor in his remarks about the Navy included the men of the merchant service." That was a wonderful and generous tribute and in every way worthy of that fine man, Lord Jellicoe. I have here the May, 1941, issue of the monthly magazine "Port of London Authority." The illustration shows the stern of a merchant ship, with the red ensign. Under the illustration appears the following:—

The Mercantile Marine have carried on their work with unfailing bravery. The time will come when their many gallant deeds will be made known to the world and that they have not fought and died in vain. (H.R.H., the Duke of Kent.)

I feel we should not give all the credit to our fighting forces; we are inclined to overlook the wonderful and valuable work that is being done by the men of the merchant service.

I have here a cutting from the "West Australian" newspaper of the 27th May. It is headed, "Transport Problems," and is as follows:—

"The merger of the Ministries of Transport and Shipping under Lord Leathers is regarded as evidence that the Cabinet wants things altered," the paper states. "Previously, the Transport Ministry suffered because it was a junior portfolio. It can now be ranked as one of the most important, because the war will be won or lost in terms of transport. Transport saved the Dunkirk armies. The Battle of the Atlantic is an attack on transport, while the German victories have all resulted from new transport methods for delivering men and munitions in the right place at the right time."

Shortly after making my speech last year, my doctor ordered me away and I took a trip through Australia. I kept my eyes open while travelling and learned what I could about transport matters. I am not a Foster Fraser and do not intend to write a treatise on that important subject, but what struck me was that Nature had been far more generous to our State than to any of the other States. Our transport problem is simpler, but I am sorry to say that we pay less attention to transport administration than is paid to that matter by the other States. In spite of our high charges, the loss on our

transport services for the year 1939-40, including interest, sinking fund and exchange, was £840,000. Of our total revenue received from taxation, 28 per cent. was required to make good that loss. That is not all. Even today our transport services are inferior and expensive and in some cases unsafe.

Preparations are being made for air raid precautions and for a possible invasion. I hope these will continue. So far, no aircraft has flown over and dropped bombs on Australia. No foreign soldier has yet landed on our shores; he will get a warm reception if he does. We have, however, suffered severely from the activities of enemy raiders. The member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Berry), when speaking to this debate, referred to the damage done at Nauru and suggested that some aeroplanes should be sent there. In a few minutes the raider did damage to Nauru which is being felt throughout Australia today. Aeroplanes, however, have their limitations. Not long ago a raider was reported off our coast and some ships took shelter behind fortifications. I could tell members a lot about this, but shall not do so. Those ships sheltered in a port well known to me. What are we doing with our wheat in this State? The wheat at the southern part of the wheat belt is not stored behind fortifications; it is exposed to any enemy raider that may approach our coast. If ships came to the port to load the wheat from the Great Southern, they also would be at the mercy of any raider. I spoke about this matter last year and am sorry that nothing has been done to rectify the position. I hope steps will be taken to ensure that ships loading wheat at our southern ports will be able to do so safely.

We have heard much about our war industries. I realise that Western Australia has had an unfair deal compared with the rest of the Australian States, but I am inclined to think that our State itself is somewhat at fault. Some years ago a Federal Royal Commission was visiting Albany and I took the members for a trip up the Kalbar River. One of the members of the Commission, in conversation with me, said, "The people of Perth and Fremantle are so busy complaining about the treatment they are receiving from the Commonwealth that they cannot see that the outlying parts of Western Australia have greater cause for com-

plaint." These outlying districts should receive attention.

I will go back now to the year 1910, when Lord Kitchener, accompanied by Lord Forrest, visited Albany. I was with the rest of my battery at the light six-pounder guns. Lord Kitchener and Lord Forrest were at the six-inch guns. Lord Forrest came over to one of my old friends and said, "You men here have been neglected, but there is a change coming." Unfortunately, the change was one which, owing to political wire-pulling, we did not expect. I have good reason to believe that statement. Had it not been for political wire-pulling in 1910, and the parochial attitude then adopted, Western Australia today, instead of having that white elephant the Cockburn Sound Naval Base, which cost Australia £1,000,000, would have had one of the leading naval bases in the Southern Hemisphere, as well as a graving dock and a shipbuilding yard.

The Minister for Mines: Who was responsible for that?

Mr. HILL: The Labour Party!

The Minister for Mines: The Labour Party was not in office in 1910.

Mr. HILL: The Minister is wrong. If he will turn up the records, he will find there was a general election in 1910, and Senator Pearce became Minister for Defence.

The Minister for Mines: Oh! You are referring to the Federal Government.

Mr. HILL: Yes; and in 1911 there was a Labour Government in this State. No one is more anxious than I to see shipbuilding undertaken in Western Australia. I could take members a couple of miles from my home and show them an ideal site which has been used as a slip for the building of wooden ships. I could show them where trees were cut down and the sawpit where the timber was cut for the ships built on that slip. I believe one of the ships built there sailed as far as Fremantle. The old chap who built the vessels was a man named Peters, and he used to pull in and out of Albany in a dinghy. One night—it was in the days of the convicts, when a bell was rung at 9 o'clock—Peters got in his dinghy and started pulling for the Kalbar. I do not know how long he pulled—whether it was until daylight or not—but when he finally happened to look behind him, he found that he had forgotten to untie the boat! When we talk about building wooden ships, it

might well be asked whether we are moving in the right direction. I do not want to throw cold water on any scheme, but I cannot see that small wooden ships would be any good to us. In this State today we could build iron ships, but I am afraid there is only one place where that could be done, and that is Albany.

I tell the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Fox) that for big shipbuilding it is necessary to have a large area of level land alongside deep water. Those conditions obtain at only one port, but reclamation would be needed at the site I have in mind, namely Princess Royal Harbour. Another need that has been emphasised is the establishment of a graving dock in Western Australia. There has been an agitation for such a dock to be established at Fremantle. Over £200,000 was lost in an attempt to construct a dock at Fremantle for the Henderson naval base. An eminent engineer was brought out to report on the engineering difficulties, and before he would express an opinion as to whether a graving dock should be constructed, he gave instructions for a shaft to be sunk 50 ft. long, 50 ft. wide and 50 ft. deep. Before the required depth was reached, work had to be abandoned on account of the porous nature of the ground. A year or two after that, the then Premier of Western Australia stated that both the Commonwealth Government and the State Government realised it would be impracticable to construct a dock in the vicinity of Fremantle. Two years ago another investigation was made by Sir Leopold Savile on behalf of the firm of Sir Alexander Gibb and partners. If that report is consulted, it will be found that he condemned Fremantle as a site for a dock. Last year I had the privilege of inspecting the site for a dock in Sydney with the engineer-in-chief of the Maritime Services Board of New South Wales. I am not an engineer and only say this for what it is worth. From the information I have, I feel confident that a dock could be constructed in Princess Royal Harbour for considerably less than the cost of the dock to be built in Sydney. Albany was last year ruled out as a site for a dock, because one of the essential conditions was that engineering works ought to be available near such a dock. If we could adopt a policy that would result in shipbuilding yards being established at Al-

bany, we would have more chance of getting a dock there.

Right throughout Australia it will be found that cities are benefiting as a result of the war. Most of the big cities have munition works, and other establishments connected with the war effort, but as one leaves the cities and goes into the country, one finds that the outer districts are feeling the adverse effects of the war. Albany has never been so dead as it is today.

The Minister for Mines: I am not surprised at that.

Mr. HILL: Neither am I, considering the unfair treatment it has had. When the war is over, the position will be reversed, and industries that today are right up against it will be expected to put Australia back on its feet. In July, 1918, I predicted that the last war would be over by the end of October or the beginning of November. To be on the safe side, I said I would give it up till the date of my birthday, the 22nd November. I do not propose to predict when this war will be over, but I agree with Mr. Eden that when the end comes, it will come quickly, and we need to be ready for it. As Mr. Eden points out, Europe will be looking to Australia and the other British Dominions for foodstuffs to feed its people. An industry with which I am concerned, and which is feeling the effects of the war, is the apple and pear industry. The acquisition scheme has aroused considerable adverse criticism.

Mr. Tonkin: A lot of it is warranted.

Mr. HILL: I beg to differ from the hon. member. No matter what big scheme is launched, mistakes are always likely to be made.

Mr. Doney: There has been a terrific amount of waste.

Mr. HILL: I agree. It hurt me a few months ago to have to feed cartloads of apples to the sheep instead of being able to sell them. In Western Australia we consume annually about 400,000 cases of apples and pears, and we produce 1,500,000 cases. The fruit industry in this State is more dependent upon export trade than is the industry in any other part of Australia. Fruit-growers in the Eastern States have the big populations of Melbourne and Sydney to which they can look for a market, but in this State there are only 460,000 people. The position is aggravated in the southern end of the State, which is far removed from the only local market worth having. The apple

and pear growers there are 100 per cent. behind the acquisition scheme, though those administering the scheme have not been 100 per cent. perfect in carrying out their work. Great attention should be paid to the local distribution and in this respect the people themselves can be of assistance. They should aim at buying fruit not in single pound lots, but in 10 lb., 20 lb. or case lots.

I would like to refer to the orchard tax. I have been severely criticised because I supported that tax in this House, but I do not regret the attitude I adopted. Let me briefly give the history of that tax. We have an Agricultural Department in this State—a very efficient one—but insufficient inspectors were employed to inspect orchards and do all that was necessary to try to stamp out the fruit-fly. Requests were made by the Fruitgrowers' Association for greater financial assistance from the Government. The Government should have provided that assistance, but it refused to do so, and adopted the attitude that if those in the fruit industry wanted additional assistance, they should finance it. Of the two evils, it is always better to choose the lesser. Taking that stand, the association agreed to finance the matter, and that led to the introduction of the orchard tax. I am sorry to say that though the tax was collected it was not all used to provide additional inspectors. The fruit industry is up against it. Our State has made a surplus of £11,111, and it is only reasonable to suggest now that the orchard tax be abolished and that additional inspectors be provided out of Consolidated Revenue.

I also desire to refer to a disease that has made its appearance in Western Australia, and is affecting our orchards, namely "black spot" or "apple scab." This is a fungus disease. Its first appearance on the apples is in the form of a mark resembling a small spot of soot. This causes a scab; hence the name, "apple scab." In severe cases, the fruit is badly shaped. To control that disease a spray consisting of bluestone and lime is used, but very often the application of the spray russets the skin of the fruit. Owing to the normal freedom of Western Australia from blackspot every effort is made to stamp out the disease. Because of that freedom the Western Australian apples have been the only ones with clear skins. Hence the anxiety to stamp out the disease. The first outbreak was on the property of

Mr. Enright at Mt. Barker, while the disease also made its appearance on the orchard conducted by Mr. Fontanini at Manjimup. Two years ago there was an outbreak on the orchards of three of my neighbours on the Kalgan River. The Agricultural Department, through its inspectors, has drastic powers by which orchardists can be compelled to stamp out the disease on their properties. Those drastic powers have been wielded in order to eradicate the disease from the affected properties. Among those in that position were Mr. Enright, of Mt. Barker, Mr. Fontanini, of Manjimup, and in my district Capt. A. E. Douglas, E. Douglas & Sons, and A. E. Maxton. Those growers bore the brunt of the fight against the disease.

The fruitgrowers of the State, by imposing a levy on every case of export fruit, provided the fund from which we have been able to assist the growers who had to put up the fight against the disease on their behalf. Incidentally I was one of those whose orchards were affected and I had to do a certain amount of spraying. The other growers provided my out-of-pocket expenses for the purchase of spraying materials. The unfortunate part of the situation was that the growers who had to bear the brunt of the outbreak had to spray so heavily that their fruit russeted. The Minister for Works, during a visit to the Kalgan River saw some of the affected apples and I think he will admit he found them good to eat. Because the apples were slightly blemished the Federal Apple and Pear Board refused to accept them as "fancy" or "extra fancy" and graded them merely as "good." That means that after these growers had put up such a strenuous fight in an effort to stamp out the disease, they had to be content with receiving 1s. less for their apples than other growers were paid.

The Minister for Lands: We pressed hard in your interests, you know.

Mr. HILL: I admit the Minister pressed the Federal Government for the payment of an extra shilling to those growers, and I thank him for his efforts. The attitude adopted by the Federal authorities was that if they paid the extra money to Western Australian growers, they would have to make similar payments to growers in the Eastern States. That suggestion is so much "bosh" because the growers in the Eastern States merely attempt to con-

trol the disease, whereas in Western Australia our fight is to eradicate it altogether. We put far more work into the campaign than did the growers in other parts of the Commonwealth. I suggest to the Minister that as he could not secure the payment of the extra shilling by the Commonwealth authorities, it would be fair if the payment were made from Consolidated Revenue. I trust that when the Minister visits Albany shortly, he will be able to see the growers and discuss the matter with them on the spot. We are under a debt of gratitude to them for the work they accomplished, not only for their own benefit, but for that of the State as a whole.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Why is not the price of apples much lower?

Mr. HILL: One reason is the cost of distribution. It cost me about 3s. 6d. a case to transport my fruit from the orchard to the metropolitan market. I do not think the price charged in the retail shops in Perth can be regarded as unreasonable. The individual householder could reduce the cost if he were to buy case or half-case lots, and, in addition, that would increase the consumption of apples.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: You can get 2½ lbs. for 6d.

Mr. HILL: That is so.

Mr. Cross: What will be done with the apples now in the cool store?

Mr. HILL: They will be used for marketing later in the season. I now come to one of the most difficult problems confronting the State. I refer to the fact that Western Australia is one of the largest self-governing units in the world. We have half the population centred in a small area about the size of the Isle of Man. We should formulate a policy the effect of which would be to distribute the population more effectively. We hear a lot of talk about centralisation, but we must realise that wherever we go that policy applies. I have carefully studied this problem, and have arrived at the conclusion that its cause is largely wrapped up in that of transport, and, in turn, that largely depends upon ports. All over the world shipping is cutting out small ports and concentrating trade at the large ports. In Western Australia the export trade should be limited to the three major ports of Fremantle, Geraldton and Albany.

The first member of Parliament I met when I visited the Eastern States last year was Sir Robert Nicholls, the Speaker of the House of Assembly in South Australia. He said to me. "You have a great country at the back of Albany where you ought to be carrying a population of 2,000,000 souls. A block on the King River or Kalgan River area would suit me." To me it was rather astounding to think that I had to go to Parliament House in Adelaide to secure recognition of a fact that should be freely appreciated in Western Australia. If members look at a map of this State and consider the area from which the Albany Freezing Works draw supplies, they will find that it extends roughly along the northern boundary of the Blackwood River and then follows the northern boundary of the Wagin electorate to the rabbit-proof fence. The area enclosed might be described as a second Victoria. Today it carries a population of only 40,000 and I believe it is the largest under-populated area in the temperate zone anywhere in the world. We must face the fact that if that part of Australia is not populated we shall not be able to hold it. In a position corresponding on the map to "Bateman's Little Village"—I refer to Melbourne—we have Albany and the progress of that portion of Western Australia, of which it is the outlet, depends largely upon the development of the port of Albany. I have to thank the Minister for Lands for having proved that statement.

For many years the freezing works at Albany operated at a loss and were used largely for storing fruit. I was present at a meeting at that port when the then Director of Agriculture said that the production of the Albany zone did not warrant the establishment at the port of freezing works for export lambs. Three or four years later a couple of gentlemen approached the Minister for a lease of the freezing works in order to develop them for the frozen lamb trade. The Minister ignored the port zone system and encouraged the firm to use the works at Albany. He stood behind the enterprise and encouraged growers well beyond the Albany zone to send their lambs to the port of Albany. He also introduced legislation permitting a limit to be placed on the number of freezing works in the State. I congratulate him on having brought down that

legislation, because the surest way to kill the frozen lamb trade is to over-stock it with freezing works. I congratulate him on the judgment he has shown in issuing licenses. I have followed his actions closely, and I am satisfied that when he has issued these licenses, there has been only one thought in his mind, and that has been to do what was best for the State.

In South Australia may be seen a striking example of how a policy of sound port development encourages production. I once heard a Minister of the Crown sneer at the muddy Port Adelaide river. I wish he could have been with me when I visited that port 12 months ago. The general manager of the Harbour Board took me on the river. I went to Osborne to the coal wharf where no less than 450,000 tons of coal is handled annually. The coal is picked up by grabs 3 tons at a time, and put on to a conveyor belt 42 inches wide, which by the way costs 33s. per foot. There is 10,000 feet of that belting. On one side a power station provides current for the industries that are being built up around Adelaide; on the other side are the gas works and a railway depot. As I went down the river I passed the Imperial Chemical Industries Works, which have a capital of £2,000,000. Those industries were able to acquire freehold land abutting the wharf frontages. Proceeding down the river I passed the superphosphate works and the oil depot, each with its own water front. The wharves at Port Adelaide are a thing of beauty designed to handle products turned out by the large industries of that State. Not far from the Port Adelaide river I saw an area of 7,000 acres that had been resumed and £3,000,000 was being spent on munition works. At present three slips are being built and vessels up to 15,000 tons are to be constructed.

At Albany we have an example of how port neglect will hinder the progress of a province. The woollen mills, the only secondary industry there, are severely handicapped because of the neglect of the port, while the question of moving the mills to Fremantle is under consideration more or less all the time. Our producers are handicapped in every way. At Albany we have to pay 7d. a gallon more for our petrol than is paid in the metropolitan area. When the Apple and Pear Acquisition Investigation Committee was in Albany recently, I

gave evidence. The chairman asked, "How much do you pay for petrol?" I replied, "Three shillings a gallon." He exclaimed, "What, 3s., and you have a harbour like this!" Since 1924, when the Labour Party took office, the total expenditure on the port of Albany has been £1,259. The average expenditure on the port of Fremantle has been about £1,400 per week, and yet we hear talk about the complaints from Albany! We have an asset there that cannot be neglected. In the hinterland is country worthy of and in need of modern port facilities. We requested the Minister for Works to undertake certain reclamation work at Albany, but he has refused every request we have made. At one deputation he asked, "Why do you want more land down there? There is plenty of land in Western Australia." I could point out 200 or 300 acres of land at the Kalgan that was purchased for 1s. 8d. an acre. I could also take the Minister to a man in St. George's-terrace who paid £3,000 for an acre of land at Albany—the block now being used by Westralian Farmers Ltd. A few weeks ago wool brokers visited Albany to consider the question of stores for wool appraisalment, but no land was available. Across the railway line from Westralian Farmers Ltd. is an area that a dredge lying idle there could reclaim for £400 an acre. Alongside it is land worth £3,000 an acre. A German captain visited Albany on one occasion and after looking around said, "I cannot make it out. If we had this port, it would be full of ships." I appeal to the Government to extend to the southern end of the State the consideration that it would like to receive from the Commonwealth Government.

If we look at the early maps of Australia, we find that New South Wales embraced the whole of the eastern section and that later the eastern part was divided into the three States of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. South of the line I have already described, we could have another State in Western Australia—a second Victoria. I have made a rough calculation from which it appears that, if this new State was formed and we took over the proportion of debt from the rest of Western Australia, we would be able to reduce taxation considerably, because our debt would be much below £200 per head. Transport facilities, thanks to nature's generosity, instead of being a drag on the taxpayers, would be revenue-produc-

ing. But I do not suggest the formation of another State. I suggest that the Government pay attention to the southern end of our State, follow the lead of the Minister for Lands, and give that district encouragement, and then it will be found capable of helping considerably to put Western Australia on its feet again.

I should like to refer briefly to two very fine gentlemen who have been lost to this State, the late Mr. E. Y. Butler, magistrate, and the late Mr. F. M. Reedy, headmaster of the Albany High School. I first met Mr. Butler about 37 years ago and, in the intervening time, he had been engaged upon important work throughout the State. He served oversea with the first A.I.F. and after his return continued to prove himself a very worthy citizen. As a magistrate he carried out his duties without fear or favour, and with tact, ability and sympathy. As a private citizen he was ever ready to assist in every possible way. It will be very hard indeed to replace Mr. Butler. Mr. Reedy had been headmaster of the High School at Albany ever since it was built. He never married; the school took the place of a wife and he had a very large family of school children. Throughout Western Australia may be found a large number of men and women who have reason to be grateful to Mr. Reedy. Included in the number are a son and daughter of mine. Although those two gentlemen have passed away, they will be remembered for their noble example. If we follow their example and do all we can for the town, the State and the Empire, we shall not go very far wrong.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.17 p.m.

Legislative Council.

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the 14th August.

HON. H. J. ROCHE (South-East) [4.33]: When I spoke on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply last year, I suggested that it might be well for Australia—I think that at the time I mentioned Western Australia only—if the State Parliaments were taken more into the confidence of the Federal Government and if secret sessions of the State Parliaments were held. I suggest that if the Premiers and some of the Ministers of State Governments could attend a secret session at Canberra, and were empowered to report back to their several Parliaments, an excellent opportunity would be afforded to clear away some of the misconceptions that I feel sure animate even today some sections of the community regarding the present war situation. Although by no means a defeatist, for I have an abiding faith in the British-speaking races and in the efforts of which they are capable during a period of stress such as the present, at the same time it seems to me foolish that so many of our people should be permitted to remain blind to present day implications. I have heard argued emphatically and determinedly the claim that in view of what has happened recently in Russia, the Germans will be overcome by the Russians and that the war will be ended by Christmas.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is wishful thinking.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: Yes, but I doubt if it even represents thinking. Members will agree that our five members in the House of Representatives must find it exceedingly difficult to attend to matters affecting the whole of Western Australia, particularly in times of stress such as the present. They must find it almost impossible to keep in close contact with their 40,000 or 50,000