

every citizen to do what he can to familiarise himself with munitions and other things that may be necessary when war occurs. Although the Prime Minister gave a promise before the last elections that compulsory training would not be introduced, now that the world is seething with unrest and war preparations are being made by every nation, is it not time that we took steps to safeguard our land, our women and our children, and prepared to the utmost extent to resist any invasion that might occur? I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 16th August, 1938.

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

QUESTION—LANDS.

Special Settlements.

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Lands: What are the total amounts which have been expended up to 30th June, 1937, on the special settlements—South Busselton, Nannup, Napier, Walpole?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: South Busselton, £14,027; Nannup, £54,112; Napier, £22,696; Walpole, £114,923.

QUESTION—MINING.

Great Fingal Reservation.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Mines: What was the date of the granting of the original reserve around the Great Fingal mine at Day Dawn, of which temporary reserve 1033H now forms part?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1st June, 1934. The occupant company has now advised that it will not be applying for the extension of its occupancy of this reserve, which expires on the 31st instant.

QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVICE APPEAL BOARD.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Premier: 1, Who are the members of the Public Service Appeal Board? 2, When were they appointed? 3, What remuneration do they receive?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Chairman: Mr. Justice Wolff. Members: Government representative on appeals other than those in which Education Teaching Staff is concerned—Mr. C. A. Munt; Government representative when Education Teaching Staff is involved—Mr. R. Hope Robertson; Service representatives: Clerical Division—Mr. F. J. McAdam; Professional Division—Mr. C. L. Henderson; General Division—Mr. W. H. Read; Teachers' representative—Mr. M. Darcey. 2, Chairman and Mr. Munt, 14th July, 1938; Mr. Hope Robertson, 1921; Messrs. McAdam, Henderson, and Read, February, 1938; Mr. Darcey, 1928. 3, £3 per day for each day of sitting (or proportionately for part of a day, with a minimum fee of one guinea), provided that no member shall receive more than £450 in any financial year. If employed by any State instrumentality an allowance equal to the difference between their total emoluments (including house allowance) and the remuneration of £3 per day.

QUESTION—SHEPHERD'S LUCERNE.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Agriculture: In view of the encouragement that is being given in certain quarters to the growing of shepherd's lucerne for use as a fodder for sheep, and as this weed—which is closely related to wild turnip, wild radish, and hoary cress—is highly detri-

mental to wheat growing--(a) will he have exhaustive tests made to determine whether any advantages that shepherd's lucerne possesses are not outweighed by its disadvantages, and (b) will he take steps to restrict the distribution of seed pending the result of any tests that may be made?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied: (a) The officers of the department are quite convinced that any advantages gained by the growing of shepherd's lucerne are far outweighed by the loss to the wheat crops that must occur if this weed becomes established in the wheat areas and, therefore, no useful purpose would be served by conducting experiments. (b) The department is also considering declaring shepherd's lucerne a noxious weed and is doing its utmost to discourage the distribution of the seed.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

Demurrage Paid to and by Midland Railway Company.

Hon. P. D. FERGUSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What amounts were paid by the Railway Department to the Midland Railway Company as demurrage on rolling-stock for the years ended 30th June, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, and 1938? 2, What amounts were received by the Railway Department from the Midland Railway Company as demurrage on rolling-stock for the years ended 30th June, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, and 1938?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Year ended 30th June, 1934, £311 12s. 6d.; 1935, £351 5s.; 1936, £93 15s.; 1937, £24 15s.; 1938, £97. 2, Year ended 30th June, 1934, £906 18s.; 1935, £529; 1936, £976 10s.; 1937, £1,456 2s. 6d.; 1938, £1,893 7s. 6d.

QUESTION—PICTURE SHOWS.

Sixpenny Admission Programmes.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER asked the Premier: Is he aware of a threatened withdrawal by the American distributors of supplies for sixpenny admission programmes in the picture houses of this State?

The PREMIER replied: Yes.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the 11th August.

MR. NULSEN (Kanowna) [4.37]: Firstly, in common with other members, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your elevation to the Chair. I feel sure, Sir, that you will be just and impartial in all your decisions. I desire also to congratulate the new Minister (Hon. A. H. Pantton) on his elevation to Cabinet rank. I have had a great deal of contact with the Minister in many ways, and have always found him most accessible and very obliging. I know that the residents of my electorate, especially those of Norseman, are most anxious to see him. The hon. gentleman has done the people of Norseman, in particular, many favours. I also desire to offer congratulations to the two newly elected members. The member for Hannans (Mr. Leahy) I have known for many years, and I am certain he will prove a very good member and an asset to the House. As regards the new member for Sussex (Mr. Willmott), I feel quite sure that if he follows the example of his predecessor he will be held in the highest esteem.

For the past five years the Government has done an excellent job. I do not think I ever heard the Leader of the Opposition to worse advantage than when he spoke on the Address-in-reply. The reason was that he could not conscientiously blame the present Ministers for anything they have done under prevailing conditions. The Leader of the Opposition is a hard worker, and most conscientious in every respect. Therefore, I do not think a greater compliment could be paid to the Government on the results of their efforts so far than the speech made on Tuesday last by the hon. gentleman.

I desire to thank the Government warmly for many things they have done in my district, especially with regard to roads. My electorate covers an area of 212,950 square miles; so it is easy to imagine the number of roads in it. The road between Coolgardie and Norseman, and thence on to Esperance, is in excellent repair, thanks to the present Government. Again, there is now a first-class road between Laverton and Beria. I have often wondered why the railway has not been extended from Laverton to Beria. The extension would have been very helpful,

because the Lancefield company promised that it would use wood instead of oil fuel if that extension were made. I have always been at a loss to understand why the extension was not made at the time. Now, of course, the company is using oil.

The Premier: The company had a tram-line for some time.

Mr. NULSEN: No, not from Laverton to Beria. It is a splendid road now, and all the goods from Laverton to Beria are carted over it. Nevertheless, the company, instead of using wood, is using oil imported into the State. My district has also been dealt with fairly in regard to water supplies. At present an engineer is employed at Salmon Gums putting down a couple more tanks and roofing key dams to ensure a reasonably safe water supply. The water scheme at Norseman has been a great boon. Norseman today would not be so prosperous but for that scheme; as a matter of fact, it would be in a very precarious state. Generous contributions have been made to the hospitals in my district. We have three important hospitals, one at Esperance, another at Norseman, and still another at Laverton. The difference between hospitals in the metropolitan area and those in country districts is that the people in the country are forced to contribute pound for pound towards the cost of their hospitals. That is not quite fair. People in the metropolitan area enjoy greater facilities for hospital treatment, but yet are not called upon to contribute to their hospital in the same way as are the people in the country. I am not disputing that the new hospital about to be erected in Perth is required; but I think the people in the metropolitan area should be called upon to contribute at least 5s. for every pound expended on the hospital by the Government. As far as country hospitals are concerned, it is hard to realise what the position would be if it were not for the Lotteries Commission, which has played a great part in assisting the hospitals in my district. On behalf of the people in my district, I thank the Lotteries Commission very heartily for what they have done, especially for the hospitals at Norseman and Laverton. The Esperance hospital was, of course, built before the Lotteries Commission was established. Unemployment is not very extensive in my district, but still there are some unemployed. Road construction has helped to absorb quite a

number. There, again, so far as unemployment is concerned, centralisation is a curse. At Esperance we have huge deposits of salt. These deposits are regarded as the purest crude salt and, when refined, the salt is equal to the best salt produced. Unfortunately, if salt were refined in our district, the freight to bring it to the capital would amount to 11s. per ton more than in its crude state. That makes it unprofitable to work the deposits. We are not troubled with a housing problem in my electorate, but I desire to compliment the Government upon its broad policy of erecting houses not only in the metropolitan area, but also to a certain extent at Kalgoorlie and Boulder. The metropolitan area especially enjoys comforts and amenities that are denied to people living in the back country. Even Kalgoorlie and Boulder are better off in this respect than are Norseman and Beria and similar places. With regard to housing, the people in the country districts do not get much consideration; they are told it is not a business proposition. I can quite understand it is not; but yet it seems unfair that people living in the back country, under adverse conditions, and helping to develop the country, cannot receive more recognition for their efforts.

Mining, as I have often said before, is the backbone of Western Australia. I am glad to note the wonderful progress that has been made since 1916. I notice, according to the Minister's statement in the newspaper the other day, that gold production for 1937 was 1,007,289 ounces, worth £8,743,755. This is a very great improvement on last year's production. The men directly employed in the industry number over 17,000, so it can easily be understood what an enormous part the mining industry is playing in the development of this great State. Much of the improved production is due to the Government's generous assistance to the industry. The Government has a real understanding of the requirements of the goldfields. Some people say that the industry would not be so prosperous if the price of gold had not risen. To a certain extent that is true, but the progress would not have been achieved except for an understanding Government. The Government has played its part in making provision for water supplies to the goldfields and assisting various mines financially, thus putting them on a payable basis. One of the big factors in the development of Norseman has been the water

scheme, which was estimated to cost £180,000. That is a huge sum. No financial assistance was given to that scheme by the Federal Government; it was carried out entirely by the State. The Government was far-sighted enough to give Norseman that scheme. This I can say, that were it not for that water scheme, Norseman would not be to-day what it is, one of the most prosperous goldfields in Western Australia. I myself recently interviewed the Government with a view to getting assistance for the Porphyry Gold Mine, but I was promised only a part of what was required, and the company would not take advantage of that assistance. Had the company been able to get the assistance it required, probably 50 or 60 more men would have been at work on that mine. If that company could only obtain the extra amount of financial assistance required it would be put on a payable basis. The same remark applies to the Spargo Mine, which is owned entirely by Western Australians. If that mine could be financed to the extent of £5,000 or £6,000, it would mean the employment of 50, 60 or even 100 more men. The Government, in my opinion, has been a little short-sighted in refusing assistance to that mine.

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

Mr. NULSEN: However, those are but small matters. Nothing big attaches to them, but I felt I could not let the opportunity pass without expressing myself adversely to the Government's treatment of those two mines.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Government wants keeping up to the mark.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The Government does not like shepherd's lucerne!

Mr. NULSEN: I will have something to say about shepherd's lucerne. Another matter to which I desire to refer affects wives, landlords and business men, and I hope the Government will give consideration to it. I refer to a fortnightly pay. It would not cost the companies very much more, and it would greatly help the persons I have mentioned. I hope that an amendment to the Act, with that end in view, will be made during this session. Up to date, great success has attended the prospecting scheme that the Government has been financing. Over 600 men are being assisted under the scheme, and that number has to be added to the 17,000 odd that are being employed on the goldfields generally. I am pleased that the Government

saw fit to increase the allowance to the men under the scheme from 15s. to £1, but I do not know whether enough is yet being paid. I realise that money is scarce, but the payment of £1 is very little for a man who has to go into the country. Nevertheless that sum is very helpful, and the young prospectors have always a chance of striking something rich and thus becoming independent for the rest of their lives. It is really a speculation, and the £1 a week that they receive is very handy. I desire to thank the Government for increasing the amount allowed in respect of tailings from £4 to £4 4s. 11d. Prospectors have been battling for years to obtain that concession. I think they expected a little more, but they got a small amount, and for that they are thankful.

The outlook for the wheat industry at present appears to be somewhat depressing, and it seems to me that the four big exporting countries will find it difficult to get rid of their wheat at a payable price during the coming season. The Federal Parliament, in co-operation with the States, should ensure that farmers receive no less than 3s. 6d. a bushel. The wheat industry should be put on a basis similar to that of the goldmining industry. When wheat drops in price below 3s. 6d., the deficiency should be made up to the producers. Wheat-farming should be encouraged, because it is bad business to have all one's eggs in one basket. I do not know whether it is possible—but the Federal Parliament should find it so—to extract power alcohol from wheat. I am told that two gallons can be extracted from a bushel of wheat and, if that is so, the extraction of such power alcohol should prove of considerable benefit to the wheat industry. For this purpose, from 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 bushels could be used. Such a project would prove helpful from the point of view of providing increased employment and in the event of trouble we would have our own fuel supply. I understand that the value of petrol imported into Australia during 1936 was over £5,500,000. Could that amount of money have been retained in Australia it would have been very helpful, not only to the farmer, but also to the whole Commonwealth. Pastoralists, too, are having a rough time. Although the Government has helped them—in some instances very generously—still more could be done. A few stations will never survive another drought. I know some properties with a heavy capitalisation of between £6 and

£7 per head of sheep. Their position is very bad, and everything possible should be done to help them.

I intend to make a few derogatory remarks concerning the Department of Native Affairs in this State. The discretionary power given to the Commissioner of Native Affairs is very unjust, and he has been most unfair in a lot of his actions. I doubt whether the Minister in control of the department has a complete knowledge of what takes place. In some cases it would seem that the Minister has no jurisdiction over the Commissioner, whose judgment is extremely unfair. I believe that more dissatisfaction exists in the district I represent concerning the administration of the Department of Native Affairs, than exists in respect of any other Government activity with which I have to deal. There are several cases of unfair treatment to which I wish to refer, and I think that the best way to put the matter before members is to quote from letters I have received. The first one reads as follows:—

Eucalyptus, via Murrin Murrin,
17th November, 1937.

Mr. E. Nulsen, M.L.A.

Dear Sir,—Seeing that you are the representative for this electorate I take the liberty of bringing to your notice what appears to me to be a bad case of maladministration, requesting you to act in your capacity to see that the administration shall be as it is intended.

I will give you the facts of the case. Some two or three weeks ago, I wrote to Mr. R. S. Schenk, Protector of Aborigines at Mt. Margaret Mission, notifying him that I was desirous of contracting marriage with one of his wards, a half-caste woman. On receipt of his reply I visited him at some expense to myself and, after consultation as to what was required, I placed my credentials before him. The result of the interview was that Mr. Schenk said he would notify Mr. Neville, the Commissioner of Native Affairs, and seek his consent. I am just in receipt of a reply from Mr. Schenk to the effect that Mr. Neville refuses to consent on the following grounds:—

- (1) Until I am in receipt of fuller information in regard to this man I shall object to such marriage taking place.
- (2) It is only four months since the woman's husband died; besides other circumstances (which he does not mention).
- (3) He asks: Has the woman any young children and, if so, what will become of them?

As previously stated, I placed my credentials before Mr. Schenk, the local protector, and

satisfied him as to my being bona fide, so much so that he very highly recommended the proposed marriage. Mr. Neville's statement of requiring fuller information does not seem genuine, as he has asked no questions, nor even hinted what fuller information is required. As to the woman being only widowed four months (it will be five months on the 26th of this month) that is no grounds for Mr. Neville to say "I shall object." And her former husband never provided for a lengthy widowhood. Then again, as regards the woman having any young children, the answer is easy. There are no young children at all. The youngest, a girl of about eleven, is at the Mt. Margaret Mission, and two elder ones are in another part of the State.

I understand it is the intention of both State and Federal authorities to encourage such marriages, as agreed at a Canberra conference, so it would seem it is lawful for a white man to take as wife a half-caste woman.

I can produce testimonials of good character. I have presented such testimonials to Mr. Schenk, the local protector, and they testify to my being of exemplary character. These have been placed before Mr. Neville, who objects on the grounds outlined. Mr. Neville surely has no need to ask what would become of any children. He would know that a stepfather becomes legal guardian of all children under the age of 21 and is held responsible for them under the law. I would have no desire to shelve the responsibility but would care for them to the best of my ability.

It seems ridiculous that one man can sit in an office in Perth and despite the fact that all cards are placed on the table, can say "I shall object." This seems too dictatorial to me.

I gave nearly five of my best years (my discharge reads from August 12th, 1914, to May 19th, 1919) to help retain our democracy, and it seems to me a very dangerous precedent that one man should be given such dictatorial powers.

Perhaps you are conversant with what one of your Members said during a debate on native affairs—that we are raising and maintaining a bunch of harlots, or words to that effect. This was referring to half-caste women. The attitude adopted by Mr. Neville will not help in any way to eradicate the harlotry referred to. No objection can possibly be made against this woman, whose circumstances are best known to Mr. Schenk, who agrees with me that she would make a loyal and affectionate helpmate. She is very neat and tidy, and could be an example to a lot of her white sisters at washing and ironing, cooking, making bread, etc.

In closing, I want to say I do not consider this a retrograde step. I am no better than the "Man" who was charged with eating and drinking with publicans and sinners. I trust that I may be used in His service as a

stepping-stone for the half-castes and natives. They are God's people, just as we are, and are as capable of loyalty, affection and service as we are, given a fair and reasonable chance. Trusting that you will do your best in this matter, and thanking you in anticipation.

I do not intend to divulge any names. The letter is quite plain and I do not approve of the action taken by the Commissioner for Native Affairs. The Mt. Margaret Mission is situated about 570 miles from Perth and Mr. Schenk who is in charge of it, made all the necessary inquiries and was satisfied that "Jack" was quite a decent fellow, and could, with advantage, marry one of his proteges. Nobody better than Mr. Schenk knew the circumstances of the case and was aware of what should be done. The woman that "Jack" wanted to marry—Lily—at one time was slightly mentally deranged. "Jack" however, knew all about that and still he was satisfied to take her. I met the man in question and I found him a type really above the average. True, he had been knocked about considerably at the war, but on the whole he was a very reasonable sort. Further, he is a well-read man and has travelled considerably; he just wanted somebody to help him during the period that he was trying to help himself in the back country of this State. I shall ask members to bear with me while I read extracts from another letter that I have received and it will really give an idea of what is happening in that part of the State.

I am very thankful for your assurance of understanding. It just happens that I belong to that legion of men, broken in body (but not in spirit). Because of this, Sir, our flag still unfurls to the breeze, the emblem of all British tradition. It stands for peace, liberty and justice. I have just received in to-day's mail a letter from Mr. Schenk, local protector of the Mt. Margaret Mission. He informs me that he wired Mr. Neville on my behalf and the reply was that I must report to Constable Gravestock at Laverton.

I consider that is infra dig. Here is a man who wants to marry; he has no record whatever against him and yet he is obliged to report to a constable so that it may be learned what he looks like. The letter continues—

Am I to sacrifice my liberty and freedom, also my God-given right to choose, to the whims of a man like Neville? I am sure, Sir, you will see that justice is done. What would Gravestock know of me if I were to report to him? I would just be an ordinary

old bush battler and the woman I wish to marry just a half-caste. To Mr. Schenk I am a brother in Christ, and the woman of my choice is a sister in Christ. What a wonderful world it would be with all Mr. Schenks and no Nevilles. I trust, Sir, that I do not bore you, also that I am not an annoyance. I realise you have more to do than just attend to me.

It seems extraordinary that a man who wants to marry has to submit himself for inspection by a policeman. The officer in question, Constable Gravestock, is a very decent fellow, but he made the matter worse by paying a nocturnal visit to the camp accompanied by a black tracker. That, to me, appears to be strange, because had the woman been at the camp, "Jack" would have been liable to a fine of £25, and as far as marriage was concerned, he would have drawn a blank. I can quite understand that "Jack"—I have given him the name of "Jack"—was very indignant, and the action that was taken was anything but tactful. I was assured by the department that the officer had no ulterior motive in going to the camp. He has a very big district to cover and decided to take a run to the camp one evening to see whether matters could be adjusted. Consequently I will regard in a generous light the visit that the officer paid to the camp. There is still one more letter that I would like to read, and I hope members will not consider it boring on my part if I ask them to listen to this as well. I have only the three letters with me, but I have received dozens on the same subject.

Mr. Coverley: If you want a few more to read, I can let you have them.

Mr. NULSEN: I have enough of my own. This is the letter and it is from "The Granites," via Murrin Murrin, dated the 23rd March of this year—

I have just made another trip to the Mission and if ever I had reason to feel disgusted with a fellow man, I certainly have at the moment. I had an interview with my intended, and after hearing what she told me I demanded to know from Mr. Schenk why she had been taken to Laverton to be examined by a doctor. Mr. Schenk told me that he had received instructions from Neville to be examined. What next is Neville going to do and when is something going to be done to stop him? What a nice way he has of using discretion. It is now nearing six months since I asked permission to marry, and what a wonderful reply I have had.

I am giving Neville all the rope he wants: he may hang himself directly. Anyway, my turn is coming; he cannot have it all his own

way. You might kindly let me know whether he has all the fuller information that he required concerning this man, and whether he is going to give a decision or not. I think he has played the fool long enough. I fancy he has been too long on his job and needs a bit of a change. Anyway he will get my views on this subject ere long. I am not taking too kindly to the doctor's report that my intended is not pregnant. Fancy having a thing like Neville put that kind of a bomb over at least five months after a genuine application for marriage has gone in. Disgust does not express my feelings nor the feelings of any other decent-minded man.

Hon. members can realise the unfortunate position in which the man is placed, and the extent to which the Commissioner of Native Affairs fails to exercise tact. I am not going to say that he does not do what he thinks is the best in the interests of the natives, but I do say that he has done some unscrupulous things.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I thought he wanted to marry half-caste women to white men.

Mr. NULSEN: That does not seem to be the policy that was decided at Canberra.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: It is the policy of the Commissioner, I think.

Mr. Doney: The question is whether the Commissioner is carrying out the provisions of the Act.

Mr. NULSEN: I am not sure about that. However, he must be a very suspicious man when he takes such drastic action as to send a woman to be examined by a doctor. Morally and spiritually I say that the woman Lily is quite equal to the man who wants to marry her. From what I can learn she is decent in every way and clean, and she would be a good helpmeet in the bush. The man's status, of course, is higher than hers in every way, and he is a very decent type. What actually happened was a surprise to both of them, and particularly to the woman. The man has been knocked about as the result of his experiences at the war and may be old, but the alliance would have saved the two of them and perhaps would have added years to the man's life. The couple are not yet married and if this kind of thing is permitted to continue, it may result in harlotry. I definitely and emphatically protest against such injudicious action on the part of the Commissioner of Native Affairs. I have other complaints to make, but the case to which I have alluded is different altogether. I have received a few letters from

Rawlinna and Balladonia Station on the question of permits having to be obtained for the employment of natives. To my way of thinking, the permit system is an abomination, and I learn that if one company owns more than one station property, it is necessary to take out permits for each station. It would be better if we could find other means by which the natives could be employed. There are many half-caste women who have been educated at convents and who are of a very good type, and even they have to obtain permits before they can be employed to do household work. That is wrong and should be stopped. A station may make application for a particular native, knowing him to be a good man, but the department declines to send him along. That is not fair. If a native is taken out of his own country, especially when two areas adjoin, with only a line of demarcation between them, that native becomes hopeless and helpless, and is of very little use. The natives of Karonie are treacherous towards those of Balladonia. The pastoralist is penalised because he cannot get the natives he wants. All kinds of tales are told. It may be said that a particular native has a prepossessing woman, and that in consequence he should not be engaged. That is the kind of excuse that is put up in many cases. I do not think the department knows the meaning of the words "tact and discretion"; at any rate, it does not practise those principles, and in consequence a lot of dissatisfaction has arisen. I have a good deal of sympathy for the natives. They are often treated as animals and extensively molested. We took their country from them in the first place and have confiscated their food, the fauna of the country, and have picked out the best for ourselves. The amount of food available to the natives is now very limited. We are not doing enough for them. Money does not grow on trees, and it is difficult for the Government to do all that it would like to do, but I am sure it has done its best for our natives. It is said that the natives are a degraded race. I think we have helped to degrade them. In the early days they were shot at sight and ill-treated. If a native showed any dignity or any "go," he was not wanted and was got rid of. We should do more than we are doing for the natives, and help them to make some headway in life. Some people may ask what I know about

the question. I have been more or less associated with natives since 1898. I have seen them in the back country living in a crude state around Wiluna, Peak Hill and other places. In those days many of them did not wear any clothes. If natives are treated fairly, they will treat white men fairly. We have exploited them and brought diseases, such as gonorrhoea, to them. Diseases have come to them through their association with the whites. To-day we are not living up to our responsibilities towards them and are not giving them the opportunity to do something with their lives. I am in favour of the creation of a board to control this question. It is not possible for one man to undertake the work unless he is particularly well versed in his job. He must have the right mentality, must be fair and just in all his dealings, and impartial in his decisions. I believe some regulations to give the department or the Commissioner more power will shortly be brought down. Until I have investigated them closely, I do not intend to support them.

A question concerning shepherd's lucerne was asked. I do not care whether that vegetation is called a noxious weed or anything else. I maintain that but for shepherd's lucerne, the mallee areas would not be what they are to-day.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Is it not a fact that more wheat has been grown in districts where this weed has been eradicated?

Mr. NULSEN: I do not think it has been detrimental to the growth of wheat.

Mr. Seward: Ask the department.

Mr. NULSEN: At one time I thought it was a noxious weed. I asked my manager one day whether he could not do something with "this awful weed." I thought we would have to eradicate it. I was not going to put any more money into the property. Not long after that, I sent out to Fraser's Range and got some sheep from there. Since then we have never looked back, because of Shepherd's lucerne.

Mr. Seward: I hope you will keep it there.

Mr. NULSEN: If there were no shepherd's lucerne on the property, I would no longer be possessed of the area I hold. The weed has great food value. We do not want any other parts of the State to get it, for we shall be prospering when other districts are hard put to it to survive. It is not difficult to eradicate shepherd's

lucerne, for that can be done by postponing cultivation for two or three years. I say definitely that the mallee district, but for shepherd's lucerne, would be of little account to-day.

Mr. Patrick: Does it require cultivation?

Mr. NULSEN: Yes. In food value it contains 15.13 per cent. protein.

Mr. Seward: It is only valuable at certain times. It is of no use when full-grown.

Mr. NULSEN: The seed contains that amount of food value. From the time it begins to grow it is of great importance as sheep feed. The year before last we were short of feed, and I suggested to my manager that I should send down a truck of chaff. I received no reply from him, but when I visited the property I asked why he had not ordered the chaff. He replied that there was plenty of shepherd's lucerne, and suggested that I look at the horses. I did look at them and found they were in good working condition, though most of them had had only shepherd's lucerne to eat.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: You should invite the departmental officers to see it; that might convince them.

Mr. NULSEN: I do not care whether they are convinced, or remain unconvinced. I shall still look upon shepherd's lucerne as a good animal food. I should be very jealous indeed if we were not able to keep it in the district.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [5.23]: Unlike other members, I am not going to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, upon your appointment. I feel that we have lost from the floor of the House a great debater, and I am sorry that you have been promoted to your high office.

Hon. P. Collier: If that is not a compliment, I do not know what is.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The object of my remarks is to place before members a few facts concerning a subject of great importance to Western Australia, namely, migration. I was anxiously awaiting to see the Governor's Speech, hoping to find some reference to this subject, but I was disappointed. The Premier has, however, informed the House that he is not in accord with the principle of assisted passages for migrants, but he does agree that we should help children under the Fairbridge Farm School system. The cost of supporting

children at Fairbridge is fairly high. If the amount involved were given to Australians, I think we should at least get some Australian migrants, if they can be called by that term. Many citizens, including the Premier and some members, fear that the influx of people into this State may reduce wages and lower our standard of living. The Eastern States are more prosperous than we are, not only because they are producing States, but because they have a larger consuming population than we have. Upon what does the standard of living depend? Does it not depend upon our natural resources, our minerals, land, water, timber, etc.? Secondly, does it not depend upon labour and capital, in other words, upon men and money? Thirdly, does it not depend upon markets? If we have no markets, the other factors are of no importance. We must have markets if we are to have a good standard of living. For full development our State's assets need labour. What we have to determine is the limit of the population which this country can accommodate, and aim at that limit. We have an area almost as big as that of the United States. Unfortunately, this country has approximately 425,000 square miles of sandy desert. I believe that lands adjacent to those areas are also sand plains which are equally unfertile. These two areas bring the total to over 1,000,000 square miles of useless country. I do not know whether members have read a book by Sydney Upton entitled "Australia's Empty Spaces." In that publication the author makes the following comments:—

The task before Australians in the meantime is, as Mr. Dow sees it, twofold; to prevent as far as is now humanly possible the spread of aridity and sterility throughout Australia's pastoral and marginal agricultural areas, and the acceleration of settlement where climatic conditions and rainfall make this possible. . . He says, "Taking into account the vegetation previously destroyed and the destruction caused by the introduction of rabbits and by overstocking with sheep and cattle, the continent has been deprived by white men of an area of vegetation equal to that of its original inland water surfaces. Thus, in the interior of Australia in addition to the million square miles which the eminent geologist Koeppen calls desert, there is to-day no less than 100,000 square miles of treeless and scrubless country. Dew-fall has been diminished considerably and sand-drift is increasing all over the continent."

This is a very gloomy outlook. In Australia our agricultural areas are presumed to cover only 436,000 square miles, out of a total area of 2,974,581 square miles. I believe I am right in saying that only 25,000,000 acres are under crop of all kinds. In Western Australia the area under crop last year was approximately 4,000,000 acres, an increase of 125,000 acres over the total of the previous year. When the price of wheat is high, farmers will increase their acreage under crop. They gamble on the world's values. They often face ruin, and then ask the Government to go to their assistance. I do not know that they would have put in the extra 125,000 acres of crop if they had known that the price of wheat was to fall. In the Eastern States there are numbers of abandoned farms. In Victoria £35,000,000 has been spent in the last 15 years on closer settlement. During the last couple of years the Government of that State has spent many millions, and I believe the total loss will be over £20,000,000, through trying to get off the land the same settlers that were put on. In many instances, Victorian settlers, during the occupancy of their blocks in a period of 15 years, were unable to produce from their farms enough to pay for the chaff supplied to their horses. It may interest members to know that 2,500 families were withdrawn from the mallee districts alone during the last two years, and the land from which the Victorian Government had endeavoured to obtain rentals of 3s. 4d. per acre per year is now rented, if it can be rented, at 3d. per acre for pastoral purposes. The Victorian Government has spent huge sums in order to re-settle those people on more productive holdings, or to buy them out and allow them to return to their native land. Those people stand as living examples for others who have been misled by false statements by Governments that the immigrants believed were perfectly honest. Again, Mr. Sydney Upton says, in his book—

Mr. Cross: He is no expert.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: He is a greater expert than any of the metropolitan members.

Mr. Cross: Of whom you are one.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: He says—

Too many writers, and writers some of them of repute, have written about Australia as if they were writing a prospectus for a dishonest company. Their references to great, open, fertile spaces and to rich lands going to waste in the north are not based on

facts and must do Australia incalculable harm.

The Minister for Justice: What did that author write about Western Australia? He described it as a dry, waterless waste. That shows what he knows about the State.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The Minister should be careful. The Speaker has said that speeches must not be made by way of interjection.

The Minister for Justice: At any rate, that is all the author knows about Western Australia.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: That reminds me of one point I had almost forgotten to make regarding this State. One is surprised and rather hurt to note that the present Government is selling some of the abandoned farms to victims from the East or to people from overseas. I venture to assert that the time will come when future Governments will be asked to make up the difference in the amount those poor people have spent on the land.

The Minister for Justice: Some of the farmers want land for nothing.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: And they should get that land to which the Minister refers.

The Minister for Justice: They want it given to them.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Australia has a population of approximately 7,000,000, including 60,000 full-blooded aborigines, and the density of our population to the area of the continent is 2.7 per square mile. Australia is the least populated country in the world. In Asia the percentage of population to the square mile is 71.5; in Africa, it is 12.5; and in South America, which is one of the most fertile parts of the world, the percentage is only 12.7 per square mile. When we compare the density of our population with that of Europe, where there are 118 persons to the square mile, we can realise our danger, and the necessity to impress upon the world the fact that the Commonwealth is not a country that can readily absorb a large population. The intending migrant is very often led astray by the fact that Australia is a country that is not densely populated. It is easy to imagine how that impression can be gained, especially when we read the excellent little Statistical Year Book that members receive. One would imagine that Western Australia was a land flowing with milk and honey. The

intending migrant has a feeling that a land that is so barren of population would naturally have potentialities for him. One cannot be blind to the fact that our population in Western Australia, and indeed throughout Australia, cannot be fixed on the basis of the annual rainfall, but by the assured seasonal rainfall. The largest percentage of the population must always necessarily be concentrated in the south-west corner of the State, or along the southern and western coasts. Dealing now with water supply matters, it has been said that Australia's bore water, upon which much of our prosperity depends, is diminishing, and many of the wells will last from 20 to 30 years only. Dr. Thompson, the well-known geographer of Queensland, is reported to have said that, after 55 years of observation, he had come to the conclusion that there is an unmistakable process of drying up going on all the time in Australia. He has also pointed to the disappearance of the lakes and lagoons; to the great evaporation of conserved water, and to the repeated and prolonged droughts. Professor Prescott, in his report to the Council of Scientific Research, echoes this gloomy story. He says:

It is probable that prior to pastoral settlement many areas consisting at present of drifting sand were fixed by vegetation. So the gloomy story goes on. If money is to be spent on the provision of water supplies—and I have heard it rumoured that the Government intends to spend a colossal sum on a water scheme—we should at least profit by the experience of the irrigation systems in New South Wales and Victoria. In those States, the Governments have spent considerable sums of money on the provision of irrigation works, and, should any hon. member journey through the areas I refer to, he will see many holdings now deserted.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: That does not apply to Harvey.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: We have not had a very long experience there. At any rate, we have not spent such a tremendous amount on irrigation works in this State. However, it is well known that irrigated areas must be used to their fullest capacity if they are to be payable propositions. The State River and Water Supply Commission of Victoria has spent £27,000,000 on irrigation works, and I was informed recently that approximately £600,000 is outstanding in

rates at the present time. Those of us who know only Australia are apt to forget that there are other countries as large as ours, more fertile, with greater natural water supplies and the advantage of cheap labour. It is difficult for Australia to compete in the world's markets with such countries. May I make a comparison between Australia and South America? The Argentine, with all its fertility, has set a limit to the population it can carry at 150,000,000, whereas it is estimated that Australia can absorb at most 25,000,000 to 30,000,000 people. Some authorities set the limit of population at much less than that. Last year the South Australian Government sent its Assistant Director of Agriculture to South America to investigate the position, and his report should dispose of the idea that Australia is a land of paradise for farmers. I propose to give the House some information, although I dare say it may not be news to some, because it always appears to be known what one intends to say; but, of course, one must speak on the Address-in-reply to keep the ball rolling for someone else. An official report has provided some striking comparisons between the Argentine and Australia, and I propose to give some of them to the House. The figures are for the year 1936-37, and show the area under cultivation for the various commodities.

	The Argentine.	Australia.
	acres.	acres.
Wheat	20,000,000	15,000,000
Other cereals ..	7,000,000	4.2 million
Maize	17,000,000	0.228 million
Linseed	7,000,000	Nil
Vineyards ..	0.386 million	0.383 million

In the Argentine acreage for vineyards, orchards are not included, whereas in the Australian figures orchards are included.

Cotton	0.342 million	—
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We are only at the experimental stage in Australia, and even those who are experimenting want further subsidies from the Government.

Sugar	0.386 million	0.419 million
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Here we are cultivating a greater area under sugar, but it has to be realised that our sugar costs Australia £1 per head per annum.

Lucerne	13,000,000	1.087 million
Livestock—		
Sheep	44,000,000	112,000,000
Cattle	32,000,000	13,000,000
Pigs	4,000,000	1,000,000
Horses	10,000,000	2,000,000

As hon. members are aware, cattle in the Argentine are fattened on lucerne and mature in from two to three years. The short journey to England to supply the London market, and the earlier advantage that can be taken of the beef market, give the Argentine a decided advantage over Australia in that particular market. I know many members think a great deal of Australian chilled beef that is exported to England, but I can assure them that the people of England do not class Australian chilled beef with that exported from the Argentine, for the latter is regarded as much the better.

Mr. Patrick: But the chilled meat export trade has only just commenced.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: It has been operating for seven years or more.

Mr. Patrick: No.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: It has been operating for some considerable time.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You are thinking of frozen beef.

Mr. Patrick: The chilled beef trade has been in progress for only two years.

Member: And our beef is the best in the world.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: It is not the best in the world. Australia cannot supply the best article in that branch of the meat industry when we compare it with the supplies from other countries.

Mr. Patrick: If you do not boom your own country, no one else will boom it for you.

Mr. Sleeman: And we should not develop an inferiority complex.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: No, but if we are to compete with other countries in the world we must know our own faults, and our failing is that we are prone to be blind to them. The truth is that our beef is not comparable with other beef that reaches the London market. We are many more miles away from London compared with the Argentine, and the cost of transport from Australia is correspondingly greater. Even though our chilled beef export trade may not have been operating for more than two years, the fact remains that our article is not yet up to the standard of that exported from the Argentine. Then take the position regarding Brazil which, in my opinion, is the most fertile country in the world. It can accommodate many millions of people more than the Argentine.

Mr. Patrick: Is Brazil as big as Australia?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: It is considerably bigger.

Mr. Cross: I would sooner be in Australia.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: And I would sooner you were in Brazil.

Mr. Thorn: No other country would stand him.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Seeing that Brazil, the Argentine and other South American countries, together with South Africa, are so sparsely populated, one must ask the question: Why is publicity given to the advantages of migration to Australia rather than to those other more fertile countries? My answer to that is that the European peasant would choose Australia if he could, because it belongs to the British Empire; because it is a democratic country with comparatively stable government—even if it be a Labour Government in this State—and because there is a better distribution of wealth here than in any other country in the world. Finally, he would select Australia because this country is so far from the centre of conflicts. During the hundred years to 1925, more than 33,000,000 people crossed the Atlantic to settle in the United States of America. Many of those migrants were young and favourable to a high birth-rate, and to-day we find that the United States has a population of 120,000,000 souls. In the same hundred years in which America accumulated considerably over 100,000,000 of population, our increase of population was approximately 6,000,000 people, although the area of our country is little less than that of the United States. True, our land is not nearly as uniformly fertile as that of the United States, but the difference between the number that reached our shores and the number that went to the United States is too great a contrast for our peace of mind. It appears that many countries of the world are ready for increased population. If only it could be properly distributed and the right type of people could reach the country to which they were suited, how much better it would be! I consider that the migration policy of the world should be an international one. We should have an international body that could send the people to the countries for which they were best suited.

Mr. Cross: Are not we capable of settling our own country?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: What Australia should make clear to the world is that this is no land for soft people. Our pioneers did not expect settled villages. They fought their way through flood and drought, sickness and poverty, without much Government aid, with the result that only the fittest survived, and a marvellously fit type they were. Those migrants came prepared to accept pioneer conditions, but owing to Government propaganda, more recent migrants have been led to believe that in coming to Australia they were coming to settled conditions, which, of course, was not true. If Australia were to receive an inflow of 150,000 migrants yearly, it would not reach a population approximating that which could be comfortably supported in 40 years, and we cannot hope to get anything like that number yearly. The problem is, "Where can we get suitable people as migrants?" Germany is demanding migrants. Italy, Russia, Turkey, France and many other countries are crying out for increased population, mostly for self-defence or to increase output. In some countries the women are being paid to have babies, in order that increase of population may be encouraged. We, however, do everything possible to prevent people from coming here. It is impossible for Australia to remain isolated either in peace or war.

The world's population is roughly 1,900 millions, and I believe the white races represent a little less than one-third of the total. Of the white population, only 78,000,000 belong to the British Empire, of whom 48,000,000 are in England, 10,000,000 in Canada, 7,000,000 in Australia, 1,500,000 in New Zealand, and the rest are scattered throughout the colonies of the British Empire. When we consider the small population of Australia, we must wonder what is going to happen. The Overseas Settlement Board, in a recent report, warned us that Britain could not send us sufficient migrants, and recommended that we admit carefully selected types from countries whose inhabitants were of the same stock. The board further warned us that the matter was urgent, that if the present population trend continued, the population of the Empire would become stationary and then would decline. It has been suggested that

we might admit a number of refugee Jews to form a Jewish colony. The ability of the Jew is an acknowledged fact, but that ability lies more in trade and profession than on the land or in the domestic field. Eight years before the first outburst by Hitler in Germany, a vocational census was taken in that country which revealed that 50.2 per cent. of the lawyers in Berlin were Jews, 48 per cent of the doctors were Jews, more than two-thirds of the school and welfare doctors were Jews, and half the teachers of the medical faculty at the University of Berlin were Jews. The tendency was for the Jews to crowd into the cities, where their ability secured for them the leading positions. Whereas one-third of the Prussians were on the land, not one-fiftieth of the Jews were on the land. One-half of the Jewish population of Prussia was domiciled in Berlin.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They knew how difficult it was to make farming pay.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I believe that most countries benefit by having a proportion of Jewish population, but a Jewish colony or, in fact, a colony of any sect or nationality, unless its components are land workers, does not appeal to me as a sound method of dealing with migration. The census taken in Australia in 1933 revealed that 99.1 per cent. of our population was British. During the years 1930-38, the net loss of Britishers was 31,000. On the basis of an increase of 5,000 aliens a year over the next ten years, and provided the natural increase remained at 50,000 per annum and Australia gained no British population, the position in 1948 would be a proportion of British born people approximating 97 per cent. and of aliens 3 per cent. Such a small alien population, in my opinion, would not be hurtful to the development of Australia.

Recently Commonwealth representatives have been sent to England to endeavour to secure increased markets for Australia. Mr. Bruce has glibly talked about the necessity for England increasing her purchases of our primary products if we are to take some of her surplus people. England has told us plainly that she does not consider bargaining for people as against goods to be relevant. England has no surplus population except unemployables, and Mr. Bruce knows better than most people that England has given Australia a most generous share of her markets. England is by far the best cus-

tommer for all our products, although she herself is no mean producer. She has often discouraged her agricultural interests in order to encourage our markets. We forget that agriculture still plays a great part in Britain's life, both in the employment it gives and in the value of output. That output is valued at approximately £220,000,000 a year. Britain employs more agricultural labour than Australia, New Zealand and South Africa combined. Britain has colonies, apart from the Dominions, that can give her almost all the raw materials she needs. She is not dependent upon us, but we are dependent upon her. We cannot imagine what it would mean to Australia if the British market were lost to us.

We are continually being reminded through the Press that we can increase our markets in the East. But can we? Japan may be a decided factor in our markets to-day, but economic possibilities are governed by political actualities. A more intimate realisation of the relative importance to the producers of the markets of the United Kingdom and of Japan will be gathered from the fact that in 1935-36 the United Kingdom took 73 per cent. of Western Australia's exports, while Japan took only 3.08 per cent. I do not propose to enter into details of commodities; members can obtain them for themselves. Sir Henry Gullett, who was Minister in charge of Trade Treaties during 1935-36, said that our exports of wheat and wool were determined, not by the attitude of any particular country, but by the general world demand in relation to world supplies. Wool prices held and wheat prices improved, notwithstanding Japan's withdrawal from the Australian market. The facts are these: We want Asiatic trade, but we do not want Asiatic migrants. We want to sell a maximum quantity of our primary products to England and to take a minimum quantity of England's manufactured goods. We cannot have it both ways.

If we encourage the importation of Japanese goods, we shall do so at the expense of our best customer. Japanese woollen manufacturing is an industry devoted mainly to earning foreign exchange by export. At whose expense has that industry been built up? Britain's. We boast of our labour unity and of our power to bargain for higher wages. Japan permits the sale of her young children to industrialists for cheap

labour; she pays low wages to adult labourers. At whose expense does she do this? At the expense of the white worker. Japan aims at creating a world market for cheap synthetic wool. She allows only an infinitesimal quantity of wool to be used in the goods manufactured for home consumption. Her synthetic factories are working overtime. At whose expense? Australia's. Japan resents the fixing of a quota for goods in British colonies. She does not object to tariffs. Why? Because, with her cheap labour, tariffs hold little terror for her. Japan aims at dominating the shipping trade in the Pacific. At whose expense? Britain's. Whereas Britain once held 80 per cent. of the Pacific shipping trade while the remaining 20 per cent. was shared by other nations, Japan now controls 80 per cent. Japan has broken every agreement she ever made with China. She is now engaged in murdering the defenceless people of that country, and when she has finished her dastardly work there, what will she do? She will not respect our shores. The Japanese have claimed that they are Oceanics, not Asiatics, and that soon they must burst their present bounds and drift southward. This is proving true. We have to consider the position of the islands of the Pacific and of those north of Australia to find that the Japanese population is outnumbering the native population. A petition has just been forwarded from the Dutch Islands to Holland praying for increased protection. Those people fear Japan because of the huge trade interests already secured by the Japanese. In Hawaii there are five Japanese to every American and native. In the Philippine Islands the Americans are leaving by the front door while the Japanese are pouring in at the back door. In some areas there are 150 Japanese to one American. Japan is flooding most of the markets that once were held by Britain. In spite of the fact that our shops are filled with cheap Japanese goods, that our Government is almost, shall I say, Oriental in its subservience to Japan, that Japan dishonestly imitates trade marks and gives English names to towns to delude buyers into a belief that they are purchasing British goods, that Japan has fleeced, through cheap labour, what were once British markets, that she has taken our wool mainly in order to wrest the woollen trade from Britain, and that we in Australia buy Japan-

ese cotton goods and leave the Manchester mills idle—in spite of all this, I say, Britain has kept her trade routes open. Britain has kept the trades routes open so that we, her dominions, might trade with any country, including countries which, by fair means or foul, flech her trade. There is no country in the world except England that would do this. No people in the world except the British would gladly bear the burden of extraordinary taxation so that its dominions might be protected and so that those dominions might build up nations of their own. By some it may be argued that England keeps her trade routes open in her own interest, so that she may trade with us and so that we may pay the interest on the money she has lent us; but that is a despicable argument. Firstly, England could get all the trade she wants from countries nearer to her shores, especially if the same privileges as are granted to Australia were granted to such countries. Secondly, it would be cheaper for England to wipe out the debt of £600,000,000 we owe her than to keep her trade routes open for Australia. England's destiny and greatness do not lie in her far-flung dominions, but our destiny and our greatness do lie in the character of the ninety-eight per cent. British blood that she has given us. I pray God that by some means we may be able to keep intact the standard she has set for us and the future she has planned for us, and that Australia may be the new British nation in the Southern Hemisphere, as true in blood and as generous in character.

But one thing is certain: the only right that any nation has to a country is the right of use. If we cannot or will not people Australia, it will be taken from us; and the Japanese are the most likely people to do it, either by peaceful penetration or by force. If we think at all, we must realise that England cannot continue to protect us. We must grow up. She will assuredly be challenged in the end. Already her power in the Mediterranean is challenged, and the Suez Canal must pass to Egypt in 30 years. The value of the Singapore base will be greatly reduced if Japan carries out her design of cutting the Kra Canal through Siam. To whom are we to look for protection? With 7,000,000 people we are helpless. If we spent £100,000,000 on defence now, it would be merely an offence instead of a defence. We have over 11,000 miles of coast line with limitless entries to cover. A powerful in-

vader will not enter at our front door, and our back door is next to his front door. Geographically we lie with the East; politically, racially and spiritually we lie with the West, and we cannot, dare not, allow a false economic expediency to govern political honesty. Our White Australia policy, our very existence, is at stake. Population is our only natural defence.

I have been asked, what do you propose? My remarks would be futile unless I could end with a constructive note, which, summed up, is, how are we to populate? Briefly I suggest that we build up our population by initiating legislation for child endowment. This can be done immediately by the present Government. I have already said that it takes a considerable amount to keep a child here, under the Fairbridge Farm School system. If that amount of money were given to Australians to populate, we would have a greater number of children. Our friends on my right ask for a home consumption price for wheat, or they will ask for it. Our friends on my left ask for higher wages and shorter hours. Now I, on the cross-benches, am asking for a home price for babies.

Mr. Marshall: Not a bad scheme.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: It has been reported that more than half the married couples in Australia have either one child or no children. Can we blame them?

Mr. Doney: Are you sure of that?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I am quoting Mr. Hughes, who is not always right, but who I believe is right in this instance.

Mr. Doney: Which Hughes do you refer to?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I think our Mr. Hughes is very often right. However, I am quoting the Federal Minister. I cannot blame the married people in Australia for not having children. In some of the schools I visit, more than a fourth of the children have parents who over the year receive considerably less than the basic wage. Some of them have families and a hundred pounds a year to exist on! If we were to give liberal endowments either in money or in kind to parents, there would be no dearth of children. The Premier no doubt will reply that he is willing to assist in this way, but that the State has no money and that he is afraid of imposing further taxation. May I remind him that in the ants' house dew is a deluge. The Premier has nothing to fear from taxation

if it is just taxation. Then we want the standard of living raised further by better educational facilities, by vocational training for youths, and for men and women too if they want it. There are dozens of schools with a certain amount of equipment that should be open for night classes. We have begged the Government to open those schools at night in order that the children may be trained there. We could have secured voluntary teachers, and the scheme need not have meant any expense to the Government; but each time we have been denied the use of those schools. Let us make marriage, the home, and children more attractive to the young. Let us get rid of some soul-destroying books from the bookstalls, books that demoralise our young and belittle the marriage state.

Mr. Marshall: And let us get rid of some of those Yankee pictures.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I quite agree with that, and I shall support the hon. member when he brings such a proposal forward. We could give equal pay for equal work, and so stop the exploitation of cheap female labour and allow more women to drift naturally into their natural spheres. To-day we cannot get nurses and we cannot get domestics. And why? Simply because shops like Woolworth's and Coles' are allowed to take our girls and exploit them at a cheap rate. Again I say, let us divide our State into three equal parts and give the greatest amount of local governing power to each part, so as to encourage decentralisation. Let us lease our lands at peppercorn rents to those who can successfully use them, rather than have them lying idle. What is the use of having idle lands? If people can make use of land at all, let them have it free: they will pay taxation in other ways.

I consider it would be ridiculous to have a home consumption price for wheat if we are going to export most of it. I speak with humility, because, as members are aware, I have always been with the Country Party in declaring that there would be no city if there was no country. I have the greatest sympathy with Country Party members. The point is this: what we need, rather than a home consumption price for wheat, is a consuming public with money to buy the stuff produced. It is the Government's job to find that consuming public and to find the money. In Western

Australia we have gold, coal, minerals, wheat, wool and meat sufficient to clothe and feed as many people as the whole Commonwealth now holds. We have that in this land of Western Australia. I ask the Premier to reconsider his policy with regard to immigration, and to adopt a policy of courage, a policy that will give hope to the farmers, the pastoralists, the industrialists, and the workers—a policy that will give people prosperity. Let us banish fear and timidity; let us never give way in battle. The battle to retain this country for the white people and for democracy is now here. It has truly been said that we must populate or perish.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [6.12]: In company with other members, I desire to offer you, Mr. Speaker, congratulations on your elevation to the position you now hold. Strangely, like the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver), I sincerely regret your removal from the floor of the House because I believe that the debating strength of the Chamber will be poorer by reason of your elevation. However, I am sure we can look for your kindly guidance on those occasions when we deviate from the straight and narrow path. I wish you, Sir, a very happy term of office as Speaker of this Assembly. I also desire to congratulate the Minister for Health (Hon. A. H. Pantou) upon his promotion to Cabinet rank. If I do not exactly wish him a long term of office, still I hope he will have a happy and successful one for himself and the State. Further, I wish to join in congratulating and welcoming our two new members—the member for Hannans (Mr. Leahy) and the member for Sussex (Mr. Willmott). While I regret, with other speakers, the necessity for their election to this Chamber. I wish them a very happy term here.

Before dealing with the few matters mentioned in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech, I wish to express the hope that the closing scene of last session will not be witnessed again, at all events while I am a member of this Assembly. Firstly, I think it is neither fair nor right to ask members to sit from half-past two in the afternoon through the whole night until almost mid-day on the following day, as was the case here last year. There is no need for the undue rush that marked the close of last session. I am aware that this is caused mostly by the practice, which has been condemned on previous occasions, of referring

important measures at the close of the session to conferences. I fail to see any sense in asking six men to go into conference and compelling 74 other men to sit or walk or sleep about this building. If children indulged in that practice, we would indulgently laugh at them as doing something fitted for children. The outcome is such legislation as the Bread Act Amendment Bill, which was rushed through here in the closing hours of a long sitting. It was hustled through the House before anyone had time to gather what was in it, with the result that it now meets with universal condemnation.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. SEWARD: Before tea I was referring to the practice of holding conferences between managers representing the two Houses for the purpose of determining important business. I had expressed the hope that that practice might be terminated. If that is impossible, I suggest that such conferences be held at 4.30 p.m. when the Houses meet, instead of waiting until the early hours of the morning when members are tired and not mentally fit to give their attention to the work in hand. If such conferences took place at 4.30, and I understand that members must be close handy, the managers could then sit until midnight, and, if no agreement were reached by that hour, an adjournment could be made to the following day. That would be a better system than the present one under which we have 74 members wandering around the House all night while six only are closeted together in conference. On a previous occasion I expressed the opinion that the Standing Orders should be amended in various directions, and I think the one I have indicated should receive attention. It is not my purpose to devote much time to-night to the question of finance, but there are indications that we are rapidly reverting to the old "borrow-every-penny-you-can" principle that was in vogue some years ago, and, therefore, the time is opportune to have a word or two to say regarding that phase. It will be remembered that prior to the inauguration of the Loan Council, all the States were competing against each other for what loan money was available, with the result that each successive loan advertised offered more attractive terms than its predecessor. In consequence, interest rates were forced up, although everyone in Australia, who was in

a position to advise the Governments of the day, said that it could not go on, and that it was not possible to pay the rates that were advertised. The inevitable end came in 1929 when the London money market was closed to Australia, and no further borrowing was possible. Then followed the financial crash. It was obvious at that stage that Australia had arrived at the position when her interest commitments were hopeless, for it was impossible to meet the interest bill. It became necessary to borrow in order to pay interest charges.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is what we are doing to-day.

Mr. SEWARD: I know that. We had to ask the bond-holders to accept a reduction in interest rates and we had to convert loans to enable us to get somewhere near financial stability. Unfortunately at that time there was a slump in the prices of primary products. The result was that Australia was in a hopeless mess. In consequence, the Loan Council was formed, and an endeavour was made to return to methods of sound finance. It is regrettable to note that the practice is creeping in again whereby Governments are endeavouring to get behind the Loan Council and to borrow huge sums of money in addition to those authorised by the Council. New South Wales has secured £21,000,000 for the current financial year in addition to the amount authorised by the Loan Council. Another very important point to bear in mind relates to this form of semi-governmental borrowing. I refer to the fact that sinking fund contributions are not provided for, as they are in respect of amounts borrowed with the authority of the Loan Council. In the days I spoke of prior to the formation of the Loan Council, all Governments—I do not blame any Government in particular—drew attention to the fact, when it concluded the year with a deficit that in reality the indebtedness was not being increased, because the amount of the accumulated deficit was counterbalanced by the amount of the sinking fund. I mention that point particularly because again that factor is creeping in. I regard a telegram that appeared in the "West Australian" as of so much importance that I intend to read it to refresh the memories of members. The telegram appeared in the issue of the "West Australian" of the 26th July, wherein there appeared what I regard as a

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most amazing statement to emanate from Canberra—

Figures which have been received by the Commonwealth Government disclose that in the financial year that has just closed the seven Australian Governments in the aggregate received in revenue an amount of £13,805,000 in excess of all current expenditure for the year. This is believed to be the largest surplus of revenue over current expenditure in the history of the Commonwealth.

The big surplus is derived by adding to the budgetary position disclosed by each State at the end of the year the amount paid to the Commonwealth sinking fund by and on behalf of that State for the redemption of debt. Since no sinking fund payments were made by the States until immediately before the depression—

And that statement is not correct as applied to Western Australia, because when the depression period set in, this State had an accumulated sinking fund of between £5,000,000 and £6,000,000.

The Premier: It was more than that, and Western Australia was practically the only State that had that much.

Mr. SEWARD: Yes, I am speaking from memory. The statement in the telegram continued—

—the total of £13,805,000 thus obtained represents the net Australian surpluses as they would appear on the basis of the pre-depression boom years.

The Budgets of the Commonwealth and States for the year just closed showed an aggregate surplus of £3,515,000, after allowance is made for deficits totalling £239,000 in two States. Payment to sinking funds amounted to about £10,290,000, but the precise amount has not yet been determined.

So the position there, and the course of action that this authority would urge upon the Commonwealth, would seem to be that by not taking into account the contributions to the sinking fund, the budget balances. I have no hesitation in saying that that does not spell sound finance. It merely urges the State to present false balance sheets. That again is another step that we are, in effect, asked to take, and means getting back to the position that obtained prior to the formation of the Loan Council. There is also the other feature that I mentioned previously, namely, of each loan floated on the market being in a slightly more attractive form than its predecessor.

The Premier: That has not been the position during the past 18 months.

Mr. SEWARD: I think so. The last Commonwealth loan was slightly more attractive than its predecessor. However, the important point seems to me to be that the later loans have not met with as favourable a reception on the money market as we would like. They have not been fully subscribed. There was a lot of beating of drums and publicity on the occasion of the last loan, and I would like to see published the precise amounts taken up by the investors and the underwriters respectively.

Mr. Marshall: You noticed what Mr. Casey replied to Mr. Curtin on that point?

Mr. SEWARD: I may have done so. I think Mr. Casey said the loan was oversubscribed by a small amount.

Mr. Marshall: I refer to the answer to another question put by Mr. Curtin.

Mr. SEWARD: I cannot recollect the answer at the moment. I wish to emphasise the point that the previous loan, not having been fully subscribed, should have been regarded as an indication that we are approaching the limit of the lending power of the Australian market for Governmental borrowing. I warn the Government that cognizance should be taken of that indication and every endeavour made to reduce borrowing as much as possible. During the last few years there has not been the necessity to borrow that there was when the prices of our commodities were even lower than they are to-day.

The Premier: The loan expenditure is coming down every year.

Mr. SEWARD: Yes. I will have a word or two to say on that matter in a moment. It has also to be remembered that this year Australia has to draw on its accumulated London funds. That may not be a very important matter, provided we take measures to see we have not to do so next year. If we do not take such measures, then we shall rapidly approach another financial crisis. Despite the paragraphs we read occasionally in the paper, the prospects of the present season are anything but reassuring. I sincerely hope it will be a good season, but we have to realise that spring is approaching and the time is coming when our normal rains may be expected to fall off. The prospects of water supplies for the coming summer, along the Great Southern line particularly, have never been as bad as they are at present. We should therefore be extremely careful in the handling of our finances.

I was pleased to read in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech the following passage:—

The financial position compels the closest supervision. There has been a further curtailment of the amount of loan money allocated to the State. The funds available will need to be expended most judiciously in order to supply the developmental needs of the State . . .

Those are timely and wise words, and I regret that the Government inclines rather to words than to deeds. If the financial position compels the closest supervision of expenditure, then why has the public had inflicted upon it the burden that the Railway Department will have to bear by reason of the extra price that it will have to pay for coal, simply to satisfy the demands of the Colliery miners? That extra expense has been thrown on to the Railway Department without the consent of the Commissioner of Railways and notwithstanding the fact that he has had to meet extra expenditure because of the recent increases in the basic wage. That action certainly does not indicate that a very close supervision is being exercised over the State's expenditure.

We are told that Loan Funds available will need to be expended most judiciously in order to supply the developmental needs of the State. So, in order to supply the developmental needs of the State, the Government promptly orders a bigger supply of trolley buses. I fully realise that transport facilities for suburban areas should be kept up to date; but, at the same time, nobody can regard transport facilities for suburban areas as a developmental measure. The money that has been spent on trolley buses could have been expended much more wisely in bringing up to date the antiquated transport facilities that are provided for country districts. Let suburban traffic be catered for by private enterprise, which is quite willing and well able to attend to it.

Member: Why not let private enterprise look after transport facilities for the country?

Mr. SEWARD: I would be prepared to do so and guarantee that private enterprise could do it a thousand times better.

Mr. Marshall: Private enterprise will not do it.

Mr. SEWARD: Private enterprise would not be given the opportunity. Of course, it is easy to find fault and probably not so easy to find a remedy. The Leader of the Opposition, in his speech the other

night, referred to the necessity for our finding new markets. He said that Great Britain was nearing the saturation point so far as taking our products was concerned. To illustrate that remark, I draw attention to our exports during the last 10 years. In 1926-27, the United Kingdom took £4,500,000 of our exports, and that figure gradually increased until in 1935-36 the United Kingdom was taking a little over £12,000,000. So in 10 years our exports to the United Kingdom rose from £4,500,000 to £12,000,000. In 1926-27 our exports to foreign countries amounted to £5,500,000, or £1,000,000 above what we were exporting to the United Kingdom; but our exports to foreign countries gradually declined until last year they amounted only to £3,500,000. Therefore, we are concentrating upon sending our exports to the United Kingdom. Now, we have been warned recently by the leader of the British Agricultural Conference that the United Kingdom cannot take very much more of our products, and we must therefore try to sell them in other markets. I therefore commend the action of the Government in sending the Minister for Agriculture overseas with a view to preserving our fruit market. I hope he will be successful in his mission. I would also urge upon him the advisability of opening up additional markets, particularly in the East. In order that this object may be achieved, I advocate the sending of one of our own officials to the East. We should not depend upon Commonwealth officials, who probably would not be conversant with our local conditions and so would not be able to foster our trade.

Since last session, we have received the very valuable report of Mr. Justice (then Mr.) Wolff on youth employment. While I have not yet made a very close study of the report, we can heartily congratulate Mr. Justice Wolff upon the painstaking work that he has carried out on behalf of the State. I do not intend to deal with the whole of the report. I shall mention one particular subject: no doubt other members will select other subjects for themselves. I wish to refer to the question of advanced agricultural training and the necessity for it, because the present Government, it seems to me, does not seem to look very far beyond the limits of the city and the goldfields as far as our educational paths

are concerned. They seem to be under the impression that all educational paths lead to the University or to the secondary industries. I do not wish to minimise the value of both those paths. Both are necessary, because it would be foolish to try to educate a man for agricultural pursuits if his bent is not in that direction. In just the same way, it would be foolish to educate a man for a profession if he were not suited to it. But there is danger of overcrowding the professions and this is a primary-producing country. Our duty is to see that youths desiring to take up agricultural or pastoral pursuits receive a sound education, in order to fit them for that sphere of life. Another reason why I draw particular attention to this matter is because the whole future of the agricultural industry of this State is dependent upon our youths receiving an advanced and complete agricultural training. I desire to draw particular attention to what Mr. Justice Wolff has to say in regard to one of our agricultural schools. There are two, of course, the Muresk College and the Narrogin School of Agriculture. On page 28 of the report, Mr. Justice Wolff says this about the Narrogin School of Agriculture:—

Up to 1937 the school was receiving 35 students per annum. There are about twice that number of applicants for admission annually.

Mr. Doney: Did you say the total number of students was 35?

Mr. SEWARD: Thirty-seven. The school was receiving 35 annually.

Mr. Doney: There is double that number at the school.

Mr. SEWARD: I am quoting what Mr. Justice Wolff said. The report proceeds:—

The facilities at the school are inadequate to cater properly for the existing number of students, and I find there is a justifiable and urgent need for extension so as to be able to cater for at least one hundred students at the school. On the whole I find that agricultural instruction is not well catered for in this State.

That is a severe indictment of our educational policy in what is a primary producing State. It is undeniable that the agricultural industry is fast losing its appeal even to those boys and girls who have been brought up on farms; and one of the reasons is the insufficient agricultural training afforded in this State. One cannot expect a young fellow to take any interest in

farm work if he finds himself in possession of valuable stock that die without his being able to account for their death; and the reason he is unable to ascertain the cause of death is that he has been denied the full agricultural training he should have received. I have in mind two young fellows in a part of my electorate, in Kulin. They have received the benefit of an education at Muresk and a keener young fellow at his work than one of those young men in particular it would not be possible to meet. He is efficient and alert. If a sheep contracts a disease he is, generally speaking, able to diagnose and prescribe for it.

The Minister for Justice: He is a veterinary surgeon, is he?

Mr. SEWARD: No; I am coming to that. He has, however, received the benefit of training at Muresk and obtained the education that fits him for the work, with the result that he is keenly interested in it. It should be our objective to enable all those students who wish to go to such schools to be able to do so. Unfortunately, however, at Narrogin, many such students cannot be accepted and are thus denied the chance of being educated and also of receiving a veterinary training if the opportunity for such training existed. That opportunity does not exist. On several occasions I have strongly urged the establishment of a veterinary class at the Narrogin School of Agriculture, because I maintain that no agricultural education is complete that does not include veterinary instruction. Such a class would not cost the Government much to establish. It might cost a few pounds for a building for the veterinary surgeon, but if money were spent in that way it would be well and more advantageously spent than in the provision of trolley buses. I do not suggest that it would be necessary to secure a new veterinary officer, because there are veterinary officers in the department at present. One of them could be transferred from a particular centre to carry out research work at the school. There is no better way of inculcating ambition and creating interest in this kind of work than by carrying out experiments in front of boys and with their assistance. Such activities could be undertaken by the veterinary officer. He would still carry out his research work in the field and would bring back specimens to the school on which

to conduct experiments with the assistance of the boys. That would result in the boys being thoroughly grounded in veterinary work, and would make them much better fitted to take up positions as farmers. From the point of view of the State, it would have an even more valuable effect. As a result of taking part in the experiments, some of the boys would be induced to take up a veterinary course instead of going in for farming and thus we would be supplied with veterinary surgeons in the future. That would be a great benefit to the State. If he were here, the Minister for Agriculture would bear me out when I say that he has the greatest difficulty in getting veterinary surgeons at the present time. What better way of providing such surgeons could be found than by training our own boys, especially those from the farms, who are keenly desirous of receiving the training? We have heard a good deal about the way in which our fat lamb industry is developing. That industry is going to be of great value to this State. If, however, members were to take a trip through the country at the present time, and have a look at the lambs being offered at the various sales, they would see thousands that could never be exported. They are worm-infested, have probably not had proper feeding, and perhaps their breeding is not correct. Many lambs are being bred that will never be suitable for the export market, simply because of the ignorance displayed in breeding them.

Mr. Marshall: I thought our lambs were of special quality.

Mr. SEWARD: Our top lambs are the best on the London market, but what I am saying is that many lambs are being put on the market that have not been bred on right lines, or, if they have been so bred, they have not been treated for worms, or their feeding has been at fault.

Mr. Marshall: Will they be exported?

Mr. SEWARD: No, because if they were, the effect on the market would be serious. I do not think their export would be permitted. But if our youths were to receive a proper veterinary training as part of their agricultural education, they would know how to treat those lambs and bring them up to export condition, or they would know sufficient about such matters to refrain from breeding unsuitable types. I appeal to the Premier to take into consideration the position at the Narrogin School and to have a

veterinary establishment set up there. I ask, too, that the capacity of the school should be increased, because students are being turned away. Fifty per cent. of the applicants are turned away each year on account of the lack of accommodation. It has to be remembered that students are accepted only between the ages of 14 and 17, so that if a boy is rejected this year, and manages to enter the school next year, he has lost a year of training. That should not be. Adequate accommodation should be available to enable the school to take all the applicants. The lack of accommodation has resulted in a demand for the establishment in other districts of further agricultural colleges that are not warranted. It is far better to have the present school running at 100 per cent. capacity and efficiency than to have two or three running at half that capacity and half that efficiency.

Another question that I want to bring under the notice of the Government and particularly of the Minister for Employment is the position of rural workers. The Government takes very good care of those workers who are enrolled in the big unions and who can tell the Government just what they want, when they want it, and how they want it. But a lot of men engaged in rural industries are scattered all over the country and they have to look after themselves and do the best they can. It is well known, of course, that the pay of all employees in industry over the last 10 or 15 years has increased to a very marked degree. But the pay for those engaged in rural industries has not kept pace with that increase. Not that there is any desire to pay the rural worker less or that he is not entitled to receive the same wage as others; but the industry is not in a position to pay the same rate. The result is that if a man is looking for employment to-day and is offered farm work at the ruling rate, he says he wants to be employed at the basic wage. I do not blame him for that. Every man is entitled to receive the highest return for his labour that he can obtain. Unfortunately, where an industry cannot pay the basic wage, the man goes away from that industry and takes on more highly paid work. That state of things has existed for some time. The position is getting worse and cannot be allowed to continue. There is one way of checking it and that is to raise the price of the commodities produced by primary industries to such a level that those industries will

be able to pay the higher wages. That, however, is impossible at the present time. The only alternative is to give assistance to those industries to enable the higher wages to be paid. That was done some years ago. Unfortunately, some employees did not receive the money that was made available for them. This was occasioned by the fact that farmers are not in exactly the same position as are people on salaries. Generally speaking, the farmer gets his returns for his year's work in one or two lumps during the year, and for the rest of the year he has to finance himself the best way he can. Another contributing factor to the position was that employees, instead of drawing their wages weekly or fortnightly, would allow them to accumulate for two or three months. Possibly they then had a disagreement with the employer, but the farmer, having failed to realise what he expected from his products, or having used such money as he had to pay his way, was not able to meet the accumulated bill for wages, so that sometimes the employee did not receive that which was due to him. I do not condone a practice of that sort. The fact that it has happened, however, on some occasions is no reason why steps should not be taken to organise a scheme whereby farm labour can be made available at a rate of wages similar to that paid to men engaged in other avocations.

The Minister for Employment: Mr. Justice Wolff investigated that position.

Mr. SEWARD: I know that. The Minister made a statement through the Press as to what he proposed to do. It was unfortunately brought home to me that his statement did not indicate any urge on his part to do much for the agricultural industry. Everyone talks about a bureau of investigation. People in the country have an enormous amount of work to do. It is more important that they should be furnished with the requisite labour to enable them to do that work than to spend time in talking about a bureau.

The Minister for Employment: Such a bureau would help the primary as well as the secondary industries.

Mr. SEWARD: What we require is efficient and sufficient labour for employment on farms.

The Minister for Employment: How do you view the recommendations of Mr. Justice Wolff?

Mr. SEWARD: Perhaps the Minister will tell us later on what he thinks about them. As an indication that the primary industries cannot pay such high wages, I mentioned a case at a conference a few weeks ago. I received a letter from a farmer who commended me for what I had said, and who quoted his own case. He has for many years been a woolgrower along the Great Southern. He runs 750 sheep, and received £224 net from the wool for one year's operations. For rates, taxes, insurance, etc., he had to pay £25 a year, £90 for super, and this left him with £109 with which to carry on for the rest of the year. He could have doubled or trebled that income if he had been able to secure the necessary labour with which to develop his property. He cannot, however, pay the wages demanded, although I cannot blame the labourers themselves for not going there at lower wages.

The Minister for Employment: The farmer's income is mortgaged to the financial institutions.

Mr. SEWARD: He has to be mortgaged to someone.

The Minister for Employment: The result is that nothing is left for wages.

Mr. SEWARD: A certain amount is left, but not sufficient for high wages. How long would the secondary industries stand if they were not protected by high tariffs and the Arbitration Court? How long could they afford to pay wages amounting to £4 6s. a week without the Arbitration Court and the protection that is afforded to them? It is only by means of these artificial methods that employment becomes more attractive in the secondary industries, and is taken away from the primary industries. That sort of thing cannot go on. The outlook for our primary industries is so black, that young people will no longer enter them. The older people are dissatisfied with the position. If the primary industries go down, it will be the end of Australia.

The Minister for Employment: Why should not the wages of a farm labourer have first claim upon the farmer's income?

Mr. SEWARD: Let me put this position to the Minister: If he advanced money to a farmer to enable him to carry on, would he be agreeable to the farmer paying wages out of that money first, and to allowing his interests to take second place?

The Minister for Employment: Unless the farmer can get labour, how can he carry on?

Mr. SEWARD: The Minister finds that an awkward question.

The Minister for Works: You cannot get a living from 750 sheep. That is the case you quoted just now.

Mr. SEWARD: This particular man has been making a living for many years. The remark shows how little the Minister knows about the parlous condition of the farming industry. I am reluctant to again refer to railway matters, the Minister for Railways must take the responsibility for the situation that arises.

The Minister for Railways: There is nothing wrong with the railways, is there?

Mr. SEWARD: The interjection shows how little Ministers know about the country. They live in the city, travel about in their own motor cars, and move in a certain circle. They cannot see that anything is wrong with the country.

Mr. Thorn: They drive around in circles.

Mr. SEWARD: And in the best cars, too. I do not blame them for that, but I do blame them for making the stupid statement that there is nothing wrong with the railways. Last session I moved for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the working of the railways. Unfortunately the motion was side-tracked until the last hours of the session, was made a party question, and voted out.

The Minister for Railways: There was no party vote about it.

Mr. SEWARD: The railways have been carried on inefficiently. When the Transport Act was passed, we all hoped that side by side with the elimination of unfair competition against the railways, an attempt would be made to bring the present antiquated system up to what we might expect for 1938. It now appears that the only effect the Act has had is to drive the privately-owned vehicle off the road, and to leave the railways in the same old position they occupied before.

Mr. Cross: Have you not had reduced freights?

Mr. SEWARD: I wish to pay a tribute to the work of the Chairman of the Transport Board. In Mr. Millen we have a gentleman who is deeply interested in his task. He interprets the Act liberally in an endeavour to improve the general transport facilities of the State. I cannot see, however, that there has been any great improvement in the railway system. I am not going to talk about the "Westland" or the trolley buses or Diesel cars. If anything goes

wrong with these, the department as well as the whole State will soon know about it. I prefer to deal with the so-called facilities provided for the back country. The main business of the railways is to develop the country and provide facilities for people outback, comparable with their needs, and comparable with transport facilities generally. When we were advised that Diesel cars were being put into operation on the railways, I made application for some of those cars to be run on spur lines, with the idea of doing away with the long and tedious mixed-train travelling, and of giving the people a faster service to the main lines, where there could be a link-up with better-running trains which would arrive at their destinations in reasonable time. It is in this manner that the Diesel cars should have been used. One is running on the Bruce Rock line and another on the Dowerin-Merredin line. I hope they are meeting with a favourable reception from the residents concerned. In place of running another on the Great Southern line, it would have been better to have run the Diesel coaches on the two lines extending out from Narrogin, so that the settlers there could be brought to the main line in quicker time. As I pointed out last session, it has to be remembered that although Wickpin is only about 135 miles from Perth, it takes four days to come from Wickpin to Perth and go back again. That is an intolerable thing. No country people will put up with transport facilities of that description. They come down by motor car and truck rather than waste their time on such trains, which incidentally involve their having to spend two nights in hotels en route. I am rather surprised, in view of the Minister's statement that there is nothing wrong with the railways, to think that a member of a party which is usually supposed to stand up for the working man, and possibly for the user of second-class carriages, should say that he would put up with the accommodation we find in the second-class on our railway system. The second-class carriages have been running on the railways ever since I have been in the State, for the last 22 years. We might reasonably expect a little more progress, and better facilities. Some years ago I asked for foot-warmers to be put on the night trains running in the Great Southern district, because the weather was particularly cold and the journey not very pleas-

ant. The request was not granted, and accordingly I renewed it. However, the Commissioner replied:—

Foot-warmers are not generally used in this State now, so far as the Commissioner is aware, is it customary to provide them elsewhere for second-class passengers. Besides the expense of their provision, there is the cost of having them boiled at each end, and the frequent attention necessary to make them effective.

The present generation demands many things that our forefathers went without. I fail to see that there is any reason why we should go back to the primitive methods of 50 years ago, discarding the advancement since then merely to suit a Government that is too lackadaisical to look after the duties committed to it. I also brought under the notice of the Commissioner the type of second-class carriage used on the Great Southern train. I think they are called AR type. They are a corridor type without the corridor wall, practically converting them into an open carriage: if anybody opens the door, there is a blast as from a refrigerator. Imagine travelling in one of those carriages on a perishingly cold night! I regularly see the people huddled up on the seats as the train has pulled into the siding at 4 o'clock in the morning, and sometimes asking the conductor for a blanket: and I have had their opinion on that type of carriage for night travelling. Yet when I asked the Commissioner to change them and use only those coaches that have a door to each compartment, he replied—

It is not considered that closed compartments would be popular with all travellers.

While perhaps they would not be, yet passengers holding such views are, I venture to say, so few and far between as to be not worth considering. I know how some of the present-day travellers view those coaches. They are an impossibility, and simply cause people to travel by motor car or motor truck in preference to using our railways. Surely we are entitled to a little of the improvement that has taken place during the last 30 years! I do not expect a train like the "Spirit of Progress" in Victoria, because we have not the travelling public to warrant such trains. Even if we had, there are perhaps other avenues for wise expenditure of the money involved. I do say, however, that a certain amount of progress by way of

extra comforts and lesser delays might reasonably be expected. If those things are withheld, then the travelling public will undoubtedly refuse to patronise the railways. The Diesel cars appear to be proving popular, thus illustrating the view I am continually stressing, that if the trains are made more comfortable and the times taken on journeys are reduced, the public patronage will return. But the department has a peculiar idea of what "reducing the time taken on journeys" means. Previous to the introduction of the Diesel cars, the fast passenger train left Perth at 7.12 a.m. and reached Pingelly at 2.7 p.m. But the Diesel cars can do the journey to Pingelly in 5½ hours as against 7 hours by train, and the journey to Katanning in nine hours as against 12 hours by the old time-table. Naturally country travellers would expect to reach Pingelly by 12.30 p.m., or 1½ hours earlier than before the Diesel cars were introduced, and Katanning at 4 p.m. instead of 6.30. But no. The Railway Department does not work on those lines. That would be conveniencing the public, enabling it to do the journey home in one day instead of two. So instead of getting people home earlier the department starts the Diesel car two hours later—at 9 o'clock in the morning instead of 7.12—the car thus reaching Pingelly 20 minutes later than formerly the train got there. The Commissioner was asked to get the Diesel cars to their destination earlier by leaving Perth at the old time, thus giving travellers the benefit to be derived from the faster mode of travelling. But no; the Commissioner regards 7.12 as too early to start, although the train has been leaving at that hour for the last 20 years.

The newer type of carriage, the AZ, which has been running on the Albany express for the past 12 years, has now been taken off and the old four-berth type has been reverted to instead. Thus we return to carriages which were discarded 15 years ago. I was not at all surprised, therefore, to read in the Commissioner's report just presented to Parliament that a falling-off in passenger traffic has been experienced during the past year. Ever since I have been here, I have been asking the Commissioner to reduce the charge of 15s. for sleeping berths, but without result. The people cannot afford that charge, and so the sleeping car is hauled up and down the line empty. I could go on

enumerating inconveniences for some time yet. My only regret is that I have to mention any of them at all. It should not be necessary to take up the time of the House with them, but I find it is absolutely useless for me to go to the Commissioner. I have been doing that for the last five years, with always the same reply. Therefore I am appealing to the Minister to take up these matters, and find out for himself what the travelling public, or rather what the public, thinks of this system. I do not ask him to accept my opinion, but to ascertain just what the people in the country think of the service provided. I am perfectly agreeable to abide by their decision, because it is their case I am pleading. Now that we have a change of policy and find Cabinet, and not the Commissioner of Railways, is running the railways, I ask the Minister to take up these matters. I notice in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech a reference to the timber industry, as follows:—

The industry is at present passing through a difficult period owing to lack of forward overseas orders.

I think all will agree that it is an important duty of the Government to find markets for our products, timber amongst other things. I cordially agree with the Government's action in sending the Conservator of Forests to countries where an expansion of the timber industry is likely, and I hope that his mission has been a success. But it is equally important to see that opportunities which arise near at home are not lost: and in that respect I was recently amazed to see a return, furnished by the Commonwealth Government, giving the successful tenderers for supplying sleepers to the Commonwealth Railways. The two sets of contracts referred to the supply of sleepers for the Trans-Australian Railway and for the Central Australian Railway. Most people will, I think, agree that Western Australia is advantageously situated to supply sleepers for the Trans-line, while it is also well situated to supply the Central Australian Railway, delivery being specified at Port Augusta and Parkerton. Imagine my amazement, therefore, to read that out of 11 contracts for supplying the Trans line with sleepers, Western Australia could secure only three, and that those three contracts were the highest in

price of the 11. It is extraordinary to think that out of those 11 contracts Western Australia was able to secure only three, and those at the highest prices. Apparently

there is something wrong with our timber industry. I quote the following from the Commonwealth "Hansard" of the 9th June, 1938:—

TRANS-AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY (8ft. 6in. x 9in. x 4½in.).

Date Contract Let.	Contractor.	Sleepers.		Delivered at.
		Number.	Price each.	
30th July, 1936 ...	Allen Taylor & Co., Ltd., Sydney	45,000	s. d. 6 8½	Port Augusta
30th July, 1936 ...	Bunning Bros., Perth ...	35,000	7 6	Parkeston
17th December, 1936 ...	E. D. Pike & Co., Sydney ...	10,000	6 7	Port Augusta
17th December, 1936 ...	Allen Taylor, Sydney ...	15,000	6 7½	Port Augusta
31st December, 1936 ...	Allen Taylor, Sydney ...	60,000	6 6	Port Augusta
9th August, 1937 ...	Bunning Bros., Perth ...	61,429	8 1½	Parkeston
9th August, 1937 ...	Newcastle Contracting Co., Newcastle	10,000	6 9½	Port Augusta
9th August, 1937 ...	R. J. White & Co. Pty., Ltd., Sydney	25,000	7 3	Port Augusta
9th August, 1937 ...	Allen Taylor, Sydney ...	25,000	7 3	Port Augusta
28th February, 1938 ...	Kauri Timber Co., Melbourne ...	60,000	7 5½	Port Augusta
28th February, 1938 ...	Bunning Bros., Perth ...	50,000	8 1½	Parkeston

I repeat, there must be something requiring close investigation in connection with our timber industry. In the case of supplying sleepers for the Central Australian railway, where delivery again was Port Augusta, there were six different contracts, and of these Western Australia was able to secure only one, and again at a high price—in fact, again the highest price except a tender from Melbourne bearing the same date as the successful Western Australian tender. I give the complete list—

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA RAILWAY (6ft. 6in. x 8in. x 4½in.).

Date of Contract let :	Contractor.	Sleepers.		Delivered at :
		No.	Price each.	
Dec. 17, 1936	Allen Taylor & Co., Sydney	20,000*	s. d. 4 7½	Port Augusta.
Dec. 17, 1936	R. J. White & Co., Sydney	30,000	4 6½	do.
Aug. 9, 1937	Newcastle Contracting Co., Newcastle	10,000*	4 9½	do.
Aug. 9, 1937	R. J. White & Co., Sydney	20,000*	4 11½	do.
Feb. 28, 1938	Kauri Timber Co., Melbourne	80,000*	5 2½	do.
Feb. 28, 1938	State Saw Mills, Perth	31,000*	5 2	do.

* Contract not yet completed.

This is a matter that should be the subject of searching inquiry, for to me it appears that there must be something radically wrong when Sydney and Newcastle contractors can

outdo Western Australian contractors for the supply of sleepers in, practically, Western Australia.

The Minister for Health: The sleepers may have been of special quality.

Mr. SEWARD: I do not know what the explanation is, but that is the published statement and it demands investigation.

Mr. Patrick: It is certainly a long way to carry sleepers to Parkeston from New South Wales.

Mr. SEWARD: Practically the only other matter I wish to refer to was mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, and that is the fact that we are apparently encouraging a breed of people far inferior, as the Minister for Health said just now, to our forefathers.

The Minister for Health: I did not say anything of the sort.

Mr. SEWARD: I do not think our forefathers—

The Minister for Health: I would not agree with that contention.

Mr. SEWARD: I do not think our forefathers had any difficulty in undertaking a week's work, but apparently the present generation cannot do so and we are forced to give the civil servants two days a week in which to recover from the awful tasks upon which they are engaged from Monday to Friday. That is necessary so that they may be fit to return to duty on the follow-

ing Monday. To my mind, most people, if they were so affected, would endeavour to hide their disabilities. Of course, I would not suggest that the Government, in view of the early approach of the general elections and the desirability of roping in all the electors they can, offered this concession as a sop to bribe in the civil servants.

Mr. Thorn: Oh, but they would not do that!

The Minister for Health: Civil servants cannot be bribed like that.

Mr. SEWARD: I agree with the Minister. There was no necessity for him to make that assertion, but irrespective of whether they could be influenced, the Government did offer the concession to them, and has put the scheme into force.

The Minister for Health: I do not think we offered it to them: they asked for it, and we gave it to them.

Mr. SEWARD: I do not think they did and I regret that the system has been introduced. At the outset of my remarks, I drew attention to the fact that the State was rapidly approaching a stage financially that was certainly far from being desirable, and I have no hesitation in saying that Western Australia is not in a position to adopt any fantastic scheme such as one aiming at the curtailment of work. Rather should the Government provide opportunities for more work than in the past. I do not suggest that any individual should be asked to do more than is necessary, but it is certainly essential that our public offices shall be kept open as long as they have been in the past and that there shall be no curtailment of working hours.

I will mention an occurrence last week, because I think it a disgrace to the Commonwealth Public Service. I appreciate the fact that this is a Commonwealth, not a State matter, but I think it should be ventilated. An unfortunate old lady in a country district has been deprived of her pension because she was taken ill. An application was sent to Perth for authority to pay the pension to her daughter, and it took three weeks for a reply to come from Perth to Pingelly. Even then another letter of authority had to be sent and it took another three weeks to get that reply. In the meantime the old lady had to be taken to hospital and meanwhile she was deprived of £10 3s. 3d. I took the matter up with a member of the Federal Parliament, who

sent a long telegram to the Minister concerned, and I received a wire last Thursday intimating that the Minister had granted authority for the payment of the pension as desired. Although that intimation was received on Thursday, no authority has yet been received from the Pensions Office in Perth. This is the type of person concerning whom the Premier had the hardihood to say that the five-day week concession was desirable and necessary in order that civil servants might recover from the exertion of their work!

The Minister for Works: You had to go to the Federal Public Service for your horrible example.

Mr. SEWARD: I think I could find examples in the State Civil Service. Of course, I know there are many very fine men in our Public Service and it is always a pleasure to interview them, but this sop to the service on the part of the Government, in the shape of an extra holiday a week, is a most degrading thing.

Mr. Cross: The Federal civil servants have had that privilege for a long time.

Mr. SEWARD: What does that matter? Two wrongs do not make a right. I do not think it should have been done. It is all on a par with the attitude of the Government towards the Arbitration Court. Although that tribunal might have served a more useful purpose had it been given a free hand, it has been cast aside and put out of action. The business of arbitration now has to be settled by the State Cabinet, which is not the proper body. A few years ago the Government was told that this would be the inevitable sequel to their interference in industrial affairs on the goldfields. Now big industrial unions, if they cannot get what they want from the Arbitration Court will go straight to the Government and get what they want from Cabinet. The Government will set aside the Arbitration Court as it did in the case of the Collie coal miners. The Government will give the men what they demand and pass the cost on to the public.

The Minister for Health: Do not say that too loudly, or those fellows may take your advice.

Mr. SEWARD: There is no need for them to await my advice in the light of what has happened. A misconception may arise from the remarks of the member for

Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) in connection with the proposed water scheme for the Great Southern districts, which the Government is investigating. I have not yet heard of any intention of embarking upon an irrigation scheme; it is a scheme for a water supply for the towns along the Great Southern line, together with some agricultural areas east of the lines where satisfactory water supplies have not been obtainable. It is by no means an irrigation scheme.

When speaking the other night, the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) expressed the hope that no charge of more than 3d. an acre would be levied if this scheme were made operative. I want to make perfectly clear to the Government that, in my opinion, it was never intended, if such a scheme were put in hand, that any rate would be struck in respect of the agricultural areas over which the scheme passed to serve the Great Southern districts. If there is any such intention, it will be stoutly fought, because the farmers in the parts that would be traversed by the pipe line have their own water schemes that have been put in at the cost of many hundreds of pounds. If they were asked to pay a rate for a water scheme that simply passed from one side of the State to the other and from which they received no benefit whatever, such a proposition would not be entertained for a moment. Of course, if the pipe line passed through any farming area where there was no water supply and the settlers wished to be linked up with it, those so served would have to pay for it. However, I think we fully understood that the Great Southern water scheme was merely intended to supply the towns along the line, and was not proposed for irrigation purposes. As members are aware, such a scheme is required, not because water cannot be obtained at those Great Southern towns, but because they cannot conserve water in earth reservoirs without its going salty. The Government is quite aware of the position and has received reports on the subject. The water supplies installed in the past have resulted in a financial loss to the State, and that is why a new scheme for the Great Southern districts has been requested.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin) [8.29]: I am at one, very heartily indeed, with those who have complimented you, Mr. Speaker, on your promotion to the Speaker-

ship of this House. The Premier said you had represented your constituency, either as a private member or as a Minister, for something like 35 years. That, Sir, is a very long time. During that period you must have acquired abundant knowledge indeed of the Standing Orders and of the usages of this House, and I have no doubt whatever that you will use that knowledge in the interests of the important work that lies ahead of you. I share the belief of the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) that your advancement will deprive the floor of the House of one of its ablest and most forceful debaters, but that cannot be helped. I express my pleasure that at long last we are able to welcome to this House the new member for Sussex (Mr. Willmott). His introduction to politics has been painful in the extreme; but to offset that, let us express the hope that his association with us will be both pleasant and useful. Finally, may I congratulate the new member for Hamman (Mr. Leahy) upon a speech which pleased the House, no less by its cheerfulness and humour, than by its sound commonsense? I think we can safely say that of the hon. member's speech.

Members: Hear, hear!

MR. DONEY: I was pleased, and so I think was the House, with the speech delivered by the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver). I was particularly pleased with that portion of it in which she showed signs of an awakening agricultural conscience. I say, without fear of contradiction from anyone on this side of the House at all events, that the hon. member made a very wise speech. To my agreeable surprise, she dealt with such subjects as marketing, costs of water supplies, export of beef—

MR. WATTS: And the home price for babies.

MR. DONEY: I was cudgelling my mind to recall the various agricultural subjects to which the lady referred. The home price for babies is not found upon the platform of any agricultural party—

Member: It is a primary industry.

MR. DONEY: Yes, and not the least important part of the lady's contribution tonight. What she said must have been distinctly encouraging to the Leader of the Opposition who will surely think we have a valuable Country Party member in the making. Perhaps I was disappointed because the hon. member did not carry

on far enough to indicate her agreement with our intention to bring down the two amending Bills to deal with rural relief and the Agricultural Bank. I was hopeful that she would have anticipated her leader and indicated that the Leader of the Opposition would have the support of the members on the Nationalist cross-benches in these two important matters.

Member: Her conscience would not have admitted it.

Mr. DONEY: I think it would. I have to compliment the member for Kanowna (Mr. Nulsen) for a quite different reason. The hon. member devoted a great deal of time to telling the House that the Government had not given the attention to or spent the money it should have upon Esperance and its port, and particularly its sandplain. He has protested so much as to leave the impression that the sandplain was not worth anything at all, that it must be the worst sandplain in this State. I now want to compliment him, upon the consolation and the benefit that his electorate will receive from the report of the Light Lands Commission, of which the hon. gentleman is a member.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The hon. member deserves it.

Mr. DONEY: I certainly agree. It appears that the sandplain at Esperance, instead of being the worst in the State, is the best. I am very glad indeed to make that acknowledgment, and I know it will please the hon. member.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: What do you think of Shepherd's lucerne?

Mr. DONEY: That is a point upon which the member interjecting and the member for Kanowna (Mr. Nulsen) will not agree. We come now to that somewhat drab document, the written copy of the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. In all the years I have been in the House, I do not think I have heard a single nice word said about the Speech. Honestly, I do not think it deserves anything nice to be said about it.

Mr. Raphael: Create a precedent, and start yourself.

Mr. DONEY: The Speech told us in a very colourless way just what we already knew. As to the achievements of the Government, it told us only the more favourable half. It suppressed all the bad things. It said nothing whatever about the deplorable treatment of the Arbitration Court by

the Government regarding the request submitted by the Collic miners. That treatment of the Arbitration Court perturbed all sections of the State, certainly all parties in this House, even the party opposite, although one cannot expect that party to admit it. The Government is pretending that what it did was a piece of very wise statesmanship, but the public regard it as just about the feeblest bit of administration experienced for many a long day. I readily admit that when the Minister went to Collic he was faced with a troublous situation. That, however, did not for a moment excuse his action in ignoring the laws of the State in the way he did.

The Minister for Employment: You are starting off by making a statement that is entirely inaccurate.

Mr. DONEY: I say without hesitation that when the Minister took the line of least resistance, as he certainly did at Collic, he must have been at his very worst. This is not a matter as members opposite wish us to believe of whether the miners' requests were reasonable or unreasonable. Had it been such a question, in all probability I would have been on the side of the miners.

The Minister for Mines: Not you.

Mr. DONEY: Like other members of this House, I do not find it difficult to see the point of view of men who work underground in the damp, in the dead air and sometimes in the dust that unfortunately often prevails there. The point at issue is whether it is appropriate for a Minister of the Crown publicly to disparage the decision of a court of law on the ground that the court's decision is not, in his opinion, sensible—

Mr. Raphael: Do not forget your Government started it.

Mr. DONEY: —and then carry on and substitute his own decision for that of the court's. It is a most amazing position. The only good thing I can say about it is that it certainly demonstrates the possession of much nerve on the part of the Minister. It seems to me to be a case where the judge was against the Minister, and so the Minister set out to square accounts by ridiculing the judge. There can be no doubt whatever on that point. The court, too, was against the Minister, and so the Minister ignored it. Normally the acts would be regarded as those of a dictator, but in the matter under review, I think they were just the acts of a

Government that for a moment, perhaps, had forgotten its functions; or perhaps the Government was caught napping by the very clever Minister for Employment. For all I know, it might be that the Government just wilted under pressure, because undoubtedly there was pressure. One thing I am sure of is that had our old friend Mr. McCallum been alive to-day and a member of the present Government, he certainly would not have concurred in that decision of the Government. He was far too long-sighted for that.

I believe Mr. McCallum was in charge of the relevant Bill when it went through the House and, when referring to the various agencies auxiliary to the court, Mr. McCallum said, dealing, of course, with broad principles only, "We set up at the head of the machinery a court," meaning the Arbitration Court. It is very plain that Mr. McCallum intended that the decisions of those auxiliary bodies, insofar as points of law became affected, should receive the concurrence of the court. I cannot see how it could be otherwise. After all, who is the more likely to be best able to sum up a position of this kind? I ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether it would be a judge and his court, trained for many years to balance nicely, honourably, technically and with due observance of the law of the land the various points submitted by contending parties; or a Government with a manifest and perhaps, in a sense, excusable bias toward a strong body of its supporters? There is, of course, no need to answer that question. As I view the position, it seems always that the Government goes out of its way to placate the big unions. I have noticed that all along the line, although it does not apply to all of the big unions. For instance, there are the big railway unions. Members will have noticed that those unions adopt a very reasonable attitude towards the court. The point I wish to make is that we do not hear of the Government circumventing the law for the benefit of the weak unions. I do not recall the Government's having shown any great anxiety to yield to the persuasion of the Sustenance Workers' Union.

Mr. Styants: Where is that registered?

The Minister for Works: There is no such union.

Mr. DONEY: If the Minister and his colleagues like to take advantage of a small technical slip of the kind referred to, they are at liberty to do so. But that was a body

of needy men requiring a great deal of generosity and kindness from Ministers. Instead of giving them that consideration, Ministers waved the big stick, because theirs happened to be a small union.

The Minister for Works: They belong to the strongest union in the State.

Mr. Thorn: Yes, by compulsion.

Mr. DONEY: I did not hear the Minister's interjection.

The Minister for Works: I said that they belonged to the strongest union in the State.

Mr. DONEY: There can be no doubt that the weak unions, when they worry the Government for some benefit or other, generally get short shrift. Anyhow, the sustenance workers did. There can be no two opinions about that. I do not blame the Miners' Union at Collie for the action it took. I think it handled its case shrewdly indeed, and, assisted by the weakness of the Minister or the weakness of the Government, succeeded in its demands, probably beyond its greatest hopes. I do not blame the Minister for appointing a conciliation commissioner, for, after all, I suppose that was justified, at least as far as a layman can judge the matter, by the wording of Sections 169 and 170 of the Arbitration Act; but I do blame him for his attempt, in which he succeeded, to humiliate the judge.

Mr. Cross: Tell us about Section 169 of the Arbitration Act.

Mr. DONEY: I do not think the House would thank me if, knowing as little as I do about it, I attempted to interpret its meaning. The hon. member can read it and decide its meaning for himself.

Mr. Cross: Do you remember when your Government overrode all the Arbitration Court awards?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DONEY: No; the hon. member is making a big mistake. He knows as well as I do that no individual on this side of the House ever attempted to do so stupid a thing as that.

Mr. Cross: You supported emergency legislation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DONEY: That is an entirely different thing.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Canning must keep order when he is called to order. I demand that.

Mr. DONEY: The financial emergency legislation in no way disparaged the Arbi-

tration Act. I think I can truthfully say that we on this side of the House have observed the Arbitration Act much more properly and completely than has the Labour Government, although one might naturally expect quite the reverse.

Mr. Cross: But you supported legislation that overrode the provisions of the Act.

Mr. Warner: You will go for a little walk yet.

Mr. DONEY: I would not like to see the hon. member go for a walk, not of the kind referred to.

Mr. Thorn: I would, so long as he did not come back.

Mr. DONEY: I think he is far more useful in relieving the tedium of the House. However, I was saying that I blamed the Minister for his successful attempt to humiliate the judge, and to show that the law can be circumvented and a sound legal judgment set aside merely if one has force upon one's side. That sort of example surely can produce no good, and I am sorry that the Minister, who, somewhat to my surprise, will insist upon treating this subject lightly, should be so satisfied with his action. My fear is that what has happened at Collie will happen again and again.

Mr. Thorn: It is no laughing matter.

Mr. DONEY: Far from it. It is quite proper for me to say that Mr. President Dwyer holds a singularly select place in the minds of thinking men in this State.

Mr. Raphael: Do you come into that category?

Mr. DONEY: The hon. member's judgment on that point does not interest me. We feel proud to own Mr. President Dwyer. Constantly his integrity is being applauded, and yet this is the man, than whom no one in a judicial position in this State is more liked, selected by the Minister for this humiliation. I ask the Minister, where does the President of the Arbitration Court stand now? Does the Minister want to get rid of the Arbitration Court? If the Minister replies to these questions, I should like to ask him what type of court he would introduce in place of the existing court. Does the decision of the Government mean that Mr. President Dwyer is always wrong merely because the Minister says he is wrong? It is pertinent to ask who is Western Australia's final legal authority in these matters. I think the Minister pretends to believe he has made a big contribution to the cause of in-

dustrial peace in this State. If we take a long view we find he has not done so. He has done an ill turn to the workers, to industrial peace, and to our conception of right, truth, integrity and justice. Without doubt he has made the work of future Governments very much more difficult than it was before he started to tamper with the laws of this State.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: And the Arbitration Court.

The Premier: He has carried out the law. What are you talking about?

Mr. DONEY: When he appointed a conciliation commissioner he carried out one phase of the law in a manner with which I have no quarrel. When he dealt publicly in a highly disparaging way with a Justice of the Arbitration Court, then I say if the Premier thinks he did not overstep the mark, I am greatly surprised at his judgment.

The Premier: You were talking about the law being carried out. Now you are twisting to something else.

Mr. DONEY: I am privileged on the Address-in-reply to talk about any number of things. The Minister exceeded the law and set up one of his own.

The Premier: No.

Mr. DONEY: I will leave that subject for the time being and will await developments. Members opposite, as well as those on this side of the House, may expect the same trouble as occurred at Collie to crop up again and again in different parts of the State.

Mr. Raphael: In 1999.

The Minister for Employment: Why be so pessimistic?

Mr. DONEY: I expect that during the session every member from the Great Southern districts will make fairly copious references to the water supply question. Two members have already referred to the matter.

The Minister for Works: We have just been told you do not want a water supply.

Mr. DONEY: In that respect I am not wholly in agreement with my friend on my left, though generally I am. In any case, the Minister misunderstood the member for Pingelly. I do not approach this question in a spirit of criticism.

The Minister for Works: Your friends have been putting the lid on it.

Mr. DONEY: I readily admit that the Minister for Works and his officers, have, so far as I can learn, dealt with water supplies

along the Great Southern and throughout the State to the best of their ability. All applications that have been received from the council at Narrogin, and have passed through me, have, I think without exception, been given attention. But the position is extremely unsatisfactory, as the Minister knows. This is not because of any shortcomings, or rather any major shortcomings, on the part of the Country Water Supply Department; mainly it arises because we happen to be at the mercy of the annual rainfall. I approach this question in a spirit of hope, based upon the report submitted by a committee that has been responsible for the hydraulic survey. This survey has just been completed and will shortly be submitted to the Minister.

Members will appreciate that the record low rainfalls along the Great Southern have been a grievous disappointment to those districts. I refer particularly to Brookton, Pingelly, Katanning, Broomehill, Tambellup and Narrogin, as well as to the agricultural towns and areas adjacent to the line on the east and west sides. I regret to say that the Narrogin reservoir contains only approximately 8,000,000 gallons, compared with a holding capacity of 75,000,000 gallons. I believe that the supply in the dams at Pingelly and Katanning is almost exhausted. At the other towns mentioned, the quota of rain caught has been miserably small. Obviously the interest on the part of the Great Southern in the hydraulic survey reports is a very live one. Although the outlook is gloomy, I readily admit that some sharp and heavy downfalls may save the situation. Country members know, though many in the metropolitan area may not, that it is not so much the quantity of rain that falls as its shedding capabilities. Frequently 16 or 18 inches by way of sharp downpours will fill a reservoir, whereas 20 to 22 inches falling at intervals may not more than fill it to three-quarters capacity. I hope that in the near future we shall get some of those heavy downpours. When speaking on this subject during the discussion of the Public Works Estimates last year, I asked the Minister to secure data touching the cost of bitumenising the catchment surfaces. He undertook to obtain the information. I hope he will tell me, when he has finished talking to the Premier, whether those costs have been ob-

tained. If so, I trust he will take the earliest opportunity to pass the information on to the House. If the report on the hydraulic survey suggests a scheme that can be accepted by the districts concerned—that is my earnest hope—Narrogin will have no great interest in the question of bitumenising the catchment surfaces. The information will not, however, be lost, as there are many centres in the State where the surfaces of the catchment areas are of undoubted porosity. All parts of the Great Southern are keenly interested in the financing of any scheme that is brought down. The cost will undoubtedly be high. I do not want to frighten members by giving the figures I have heard. The total cost of the scheme will undoubtedly run into a substantial figure. If the Minister has the information I should like him to tell the House, as nearly as he can, the basis on which the costs of such a scheme will be levied. I should also like to know the nature of the referendum which the Minister will find it necessary to take. He has already made reference to the matter, but left his hearers somewhat in doubt as to the nature of the referendum. When embarking on a scheme such as the comprehensive water scheme of which I am speaking now, one invariably looks to the future. That means that this particular scheme is likely to be conceived upon a scale big enough to accommodate not merely the population there now, but a very much larger population in respect of both humans and stock. That, I suppose, may be taken for granted. Perhaps there might be twice the population and three or four times the present number of stock. Thus, perhaps not for another generation or so will the scheme be utilised to its fullest capacity. That amounts to saying that the present population will not benefit except from, say, half the amount likely to be expended upon the scheme. The Government will probably decide that the present population along the Great Southern railway, and in the various towns interested, can hardly be expected, in the initial stages and unaided, to carry the annual charges which the department will have to levy. I do not know whether what I am going to mention now has been brought to the Minister's notice, but some six months or rather more ago Sir George Pearce, when travelling along the Great Southern railway, was in conversation with my colleagues from Pingelly (Mr. Seward) and Katanning (Mr.

Watts). When they referred this matter to him, he expressed himself favourable to the idea of Federal aid for the project.

The Minister for Works: That must have been more than six months ago.

Mr. DONEY: In the circumstances I shall have to allow that very likely it was more than six months ago. Anyhow, the easement in cost which the hon. gentleman, as he then was, referred to was probably in the way of subsidising interest and sinking fund payments in the earlier years. He said then that an application to the end I have mentioned would have a good chance of success. The gentleman named is not now—most unfortunately, I consider—in any position of power; but nevertheless I think I can make some use of him in suggesting to the Minister that the possibility I have referred to is at least worth probing by him and his associates in the Government. If the source should prove barren, then I take it we would receive from the Government the same type of assistance as has always been given, I believe, with similar water supply projects, not only in this State but also in the Eastern States. I cannot recall a single instance—and I have looked up quite a number of cases—where the Government concerned has been so short-sighted as to overload financially those who are expected to pay for the scheme. We have a case in point in this State—the goldfields water scheme—the expenses of which are certainly being met at the moment by those who are concerned in their payment: but up to about five years ago, as the Minister well knows, the deficits on the amounts payable totalled the huge sum of £1,875,000, representing a total loss over the State.

The Minister for Works: What total?

Mr. DONEY: £1,875,000.

The Minister for Works: A total loss?

Mr. DONEY: It is a total loss in this sense, that it is money that was not paid during the years in which it became payable, money which the Minister will not in the future expect to receive again. I do admit, of course, that indirectly, through other channels of revenue, the Government certainly will receive that money back.

The Minister for Works: We have the scheme. Is not that worth anything?

Mr. DONEY: In passing on the information which I have just made use of, I have done no more than allocate particulars contained in last year's report on the working of one of the Minister's departments, the

Water Supply Department; so he may rest assured that I am right. The Minister having signed that report, I of course give credence to everything contained in it.

The Minister for Works: The money is owing, but the assets are there.

Mr. DONEY: Will the Minister tell me that that amount has not been written off?

The Minister for Works: It is still there.

Mr. DONEY: I am asking whether the Minister will tell me that the amount has not been written off?

The Minister for Works: It still stands. Governments cannot write off amounts.

Mr. DONEY: I know that. When the Government writes off—that is only a term, since I had to use one—the Government will have to pay just the same. It might be put this way: Has the Minister's department any hope of ever securing that money? Does the department intend to secure that money? I do not think it does.

The Minister for Works: Why?

Mr. DONEY: For all practical purposes the money is lost.

The Minister for Works: It is hard to make you understand that the scheme stands against that money.

Mr. DONEY: I understand all that.

The Minister for Works: The asset is still there.

Mr. DONEY: What the scheme stands for as security is the capital expenditure upon it, plus such expenditure as there has been on maintenance. That big deficit is still there as a departmental debit; but there is nothing whatever in the scheme, apart from its usefulness, to represent that deficit in addition to actual capital outlay.

The Minister for Works: The scheme is worth more than ever it was.

Mr. DONEY: The Minister knows as well as I do that the deficit is no longer charged up to the users of the water. The Great Southern is expecting very big things from the installation of this scheme, not only from the point of view of the householders, but also from the standpoint that it will promote a big forward movement in that area in the direction of improved and more extensive pastures and improved and more stock. I regard this as about the most promising move that has been noted on the Great Southern horizon during the past 30 years. That we are expecting great things is based not merely on conjecture. The land that will

be affected in some parts will be sections classed as amongst the most difficult to deal with. I refer to the second-class, sandy soil that nevertheless is highly suitable for the growth of clovers. Many farmers and graziers in that area, particularly west of Narrogin and, for that matter, in many parts east of Narrogin, and especially in the fertile Williams area, have made their life's success through their planned application of super and to selected clovers and grasses. The unfortunate part of it is, as the House will understand, that in many parts east of the Great Southern there is insufficient water for a greater number of stock than is carried at present, so the installation of this scheme, if it proves acceptable to the farmers, will remove the principal deterrent factor to a more general success in fat stock raising and dairying east as well as west of the Great Southern line. The sooner we get finalised consideration of the report upon the survey, the better we, in the Great Southern areas, will be pleased. I was gratified indeed to note the Minister's reply to questions I put to him last week in which he indicated that the departmental officials were prepared to expedite the consideration of the report to the utmost extent possible. My colleague, the member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) made one or two references to the Narrogin School of Agriculture. I too wish to allude to certain phases. Particularly do I desire to urge greater use than is at present being made of this highly successful institution. I am naturally very proud that this fine agricultural school is in my electorate, but nevertheless I wish to stress the fact that it should not be regarded as a Narrogin school at all, but as a school that belongs to the whole of the State. I am hopeful that any member with any agricultural sense at all, will take some interest in this very useful institution at which are taught subjects pertaining to all phases of land work. The pupils attending the institution come from every part of the State and I have noticed that the boys who go through the school are intensely proud of that fact. They recognise the dignity, importance and general usefulness of the work for which they are being trained. I am glad to know that the highly successful work carried out there by Mr. Shelton and his expert staff is recognised by everyone who has been privi-

leged to go over the institution. The stage is never set for the benefit of visitors, who, when they go there, see the students at their everyday work. Nothing at all is altered, and although visitors from many parts of the world have inspected the school, invariably they have gone away well pleased and astounded that work of such a nature should be carried out on such an intensified scale in this State. I daresay the principal boosters of the institution are the fathers of the boys who have gone there. Those lads are taught up-to-date methods of agriculture, practical and scientific, and return home to teach their fathers and brothers. Thus we can see that a vast amount of good ensues from the boys' connection with the farm school. The point is that if the institution is as good as we say it is, why not have more of it? We certainly should. At a Narrogin meeting of farmers the other day this question was discussed and a resolution was passed that the holding capacity of the School of Agriculture at Narrogin should be increased 100 per cent. I do not know that that is feasible at the moment, for the reason that to increase it to that extent would mean an increase in the size of the farm, and in the quantity of stock and plant, and might necessitate augmenting the teaching staff. Still, I think there is room for an increase of 50 per cent. in the scholars taught there, and the changes I have referred to would probably be sufficient for that purpose. I wish to correct some figures mentioned by the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Wolff, as he then was—I am assuming that the figures quoted by the member for Pingelly were correct—in which he said that the number of scholars taught annually at the school was 35 and that, as a general rule, about as many would-be students were turned down. The number of students in attendance at the school is something like 75, so I would like to correct that point. There can be no doubt that the living conditions for the boys at the farm are bad, and it surely is up to the Government to do something towards improving the position. I want the Minister particularly to note that there should be a sick ward at the school. There is no provision for the lads when they are ill, apart from the visits paid by the local doctor. When I was last there I saw three or four lads who were suffering from rather severe bouts of influenza, and there could be no

doubt about the condition of the rooms they were in. Those rooms certainly could not be regarded as calculated to assist towards a quick recovery. For years the Narrogin and Muresk institutions have been starved for funds. That certainly should not be so. I will admit that since the present Minister for Agriculture and his predecessor assumed charge of the Department of Agriculture, there has been some activity in regard to new buildings.

The outlook is therefore more encouraging now than it has been for several years past. Finally, might I say that when Mr. and Mrs. Shugg, who preceded the present principal and his wife, left the Narrogin School of Agriculture, they and their work were so highly regarded that it was considered almost impossible to secure persons of like ability to succeed them. I am, however, happy to recognise that in appointing Mr. and Mrs. Shelton to succeed them, the Government has made a very wise choice indeed, so that the good work done in the past will certainly be continued. I had intended to refer to the need for an appointment of a veterinary department at the school, but the member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) has adequately dealt with that point. I would therefore merely add, in closing, that I am entirely at one with him in the matter, particularly in his opinion that if such a department could be started at the school, the difficulty now being experienced by this State in its supply of veterinary officers would in part at least be overcome.

On motion by Mr. McLarty, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.22 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 17th August, 1938.

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

QUESTION—MINING.

State Prospecting Scheme.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: With reference to the State Prospecting Scheme mentioned in the "West Australian" of the 12th August, 1938—1, Is it not a fact that this scheme, alleged by the Minister for Mines (Mr. Panton) to have been inaugurated by the late Mr. Munsie, was in operation during the administration of the late Mr. Seaddan? 2, If not, and there were two schemes, in what respect do they differ?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1. No. The present scheme was inaugurated by the late Mr. Munsie in May, 1933. 2. At the time Mr. Munsie took over from the late Mr. J. Seaddan, the assistance for prospecting comprised sustenance orders for 7s. per week for married men and 10s. per week for single men, who were registered with the Unemployment Relief Department, and the loan of prospecting tools. The present scheme provided for a flat rate of 15s. per week, and allowed men on the goldfields and in the country in straitened circumstances, but not necessarily sustenance men, also to apply. It was operated by the Mines Department, and also authorised the issue of explosives, prospecting tools, and rail passes. Previously passes were issued only to men sent from Perth and this was altered so that men on the goldfields could proceed to other districts. Supervisors experienced in practical mining were appointed to inspect regularly prospectors' operations, and to assist them with advice. The present scheme is a very complete one in all ways.