

# Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 8th August, 1920.

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

## QUESTIONS (2)—AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES.

### *Charge for Excess.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Will he inquire into the charge of 6s. 8d. per thousand gallons for excess water charged on the Belka extension of the Goldfields Water Scheme as compared with 2s. 6d. per thousand gallons charged on the South Hines Hill extension, and make a reduction on the Belka charges?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES replied: The question is now under consideration.

### *Belka Scheme.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: 1, When will the Belka water scheme extension be completely paid for by the settlers? 2, Will a reduction in the price of the water then become operative?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, Sinking fund at the rate of 2 per cent. is provided. If invested at 4½ per cent. interest, 27 years would elapse before the capital account could be cleared. 2, Yes, if it does not become necessary to renew portions or the whole of the mains.

## QUESTION—CANNING-ROAD, LOANS.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Works: What is the life of the loan or loans used in the making of the Canning-road between Victoria Park and Fremantle?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: In accordance with the provisions of Section 13, Subsection 5, of the Traffic Act interest is charged at the rate of 6 per cent. and sinking fund 3 per cent. Assuming that the sinking fund is invested throughout the period at 4½ per cent. interest, the amount should be sufficient to clear the loan within approximately 20 years.

## QUESTION—FORESTS DEPARTMENT, RESERVES.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Premier: Is the Forests Department leasing parts of their reservations?

The PREMIER replied: Yes. This is obligatory under Section 29 of the Forests Act, 1918, for the unexpired term of pastoral leases.

## QUESTION—UNIMPROVED LAND VALUES, RATING.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Is it the intention of the Government to introduce this session an amendment of the Municipal Corporations Act to enable the municipalities to levy rates on the unimproved land value?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES replied: The preparation of a Bill to amend the Municipal Corporations Act is now receiving the Government's attention.

## QUESTION—OLD MEN'S HOME.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Minister for Health: 1, Has he given consideration to the appointment of an honorary welfare officer, as requested last year by the inmates of the Old Men's Home? 2, In view of the amount collected from the pensions, is it not possible to improve the diet at the Home and make the old men's meals more appetising?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, In view of the existence of an authorised and independent visiting committee, it is not considered that the appointment of an honorary welfare officer as suggested is needed. 2, The rate now paid by the Pension authorities for the maintenance of persons in receipt of full pensions, still fails to

cover the cost of maintaining inmates at the Home. The diet, however, has been improved from time to time during the last three or four years, and is perfectly wholesome.

### QUESTION—MOTOR CARS, THIRD PARTY INSURANCE.

Mr. J. MacCallum SMITH asked the Premier: In view of the loss of life and limb caused by unfinancial and uninsured motor drivers, will he consider the advisability of making third party insurance by all car owners compulsory?

The PREMIER replied: Yes.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the member for Pilbara (Mr. Lamond) on the ground of urgent private business.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### *Seventh Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**MR. WITHERS** (Bunbury) [4.36]: As I have had opportunities to speak on five previous occasions as the representative of my constituency, which is so small in area, members might wonder why I seek on this occasion to indulge in what they might regard as tedious repetition. I have heard it said that one can repeat statements until the end one believes them to be true, and I confess that I believe the statements I have made to be true. I also appreciate the fact that it is more necessary to draw attention to some of those facts now than ever before. Dealing with the Governor's Speech, it may be that it appears to the layman and perhaps even to members of the Opposition, to contain little to their satisfaction in its limited space. The Premier was the architect of the work, and he put up his specifications in as concise a form as possible in such a limited space. There is no one like the architect to understand the future superstructure of a building, and in this instance, even though it is possible that some hon. members did not understand all that was conveyed by the Governor in his Speech, when the Premier

explained the position he showed us what a fine superstructure was to be raised on the skeleton frame indicated in the Speech. That document is worthy of consideration not only by members of Parliament but by the whole of the people of this State. No one could deny, after hearing the Premier's speech, that there was considerable substance in the utterance with which the Governor opened Parliament.

Mr. Mann: In fact, it represented the last word!

Mr. WITHERS: Naturally I expected to hear something about that particular hobby horse of mine, the Bunbury harbour works, and I was rather disappointed to find merely the same references that have appeared previously. In 1924 I believed it was essential that something should be done to extend the Bunbury harbour works and the facilities offering there. If they were justified in 1924, I believe they are doubly justified at the present time, because of the progress made in the South-West. Everyone will agree that the progress in that part of the State during the last few years has been considerable, and furnishes an indication of what we may expect in the future. I was pleased to note that the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths), who usually has a lot to say about his own electorate, had to turn his attention to the South-West this year in order to make his speech anything like its usual length. It is gratifying to know that those who come from the eastern wheat belt can appreciate the prospects confronting the settlers in the South-West. In the course of his speech, the member for Avon referred to the growth of clovers and other pastures, and he did not forget to mention the pests that are prevalent in the South-West. The extent to which the red mite and the lucerne flea have carried their depredations is fully acknowledged by the settlers who have been urging the Government to carry out demonstrations with spraying or other means by which the spread of the pests can be obviated. I have a report of the Bunbury Harbour Board, which is perhaps not so illuminating as those furnished by the board in previous years. Nevertheless there are items of considerable interest to the people embodied in the latest report. I have produced figures in this House year in and year out showing the export trade from the port of Bunbury, and I shall not insist on the figures on members on this occasion. Probably the figures are not so

favourable this time as formerly. The report contains the following:—

There is nothing fresh to report regarding the future harbour improvements, and the promised report of the Engineer-in-Chief does not seem to have been presented to the Government for review.

That is a serious matter. We have been looking forward to definite proposals for the extension of the Bunbury harbour being furnished by the Engineer-in-Chief. If it is not possible for the harbour to be extended and the expenditure of money in that direction is not considered justifiable, it would be better for those concerned to be told definitely that that is the position. In those circumstances we could shape our policy accordingly.

Mr. Latham: You will have to wait until there is a change of Government.

Mr. WITHERS: It has been postponed for years past.

Mr. Latham: But you have never had a Country Party Government.

Mr. Chesson: And you never will have.

Mr. WITHERS: When Lord Forrest left State politics to enter the Federal Parliament he gave the Bunbury people a broad hint to ask for what they wanted and he would give it to them. They were not game to ask for sufficient, and they have not received anything since. We have been like *Oliver Twist*; we have been game to ask, but like *Oliver Twist* we have been knocked back. A meeting was convened by the Mayor of Bunbury, and was representative of the whole of the interests of the South-West. The Chairman of the Harbour Board was present, and he spoke in eloquent terms expressing pleasure at the opportunity of attending such a meeting and congratulating the Mayor on having called it. In a lengthy report he set out the position from the Harbour Board point of view, stressing the fact that unless the residents and the tradespeople took a keener interest in the matter, little sympathy could be expected from the Government. I do not know what more the people could have done. After considerable discussion a motion was tabled that all present form themselves into a committee. There was considerable cross-table talk, and a committee was appointed to wait on the Minister when he has an opportunity to visit Bunbury. We have been told of the wonderful resources of the wheat belt, and we know something of the wonderful resources of the South-West from the

point of view of fruitgrowing. From figures available I find that about 500,000 cases of fruit exported this year passed the port of Bunbury, and were shipped from Fremantle. That goes to show that the port of Fremantle has better facilities than we have. We hear much about Fremantle, not only from people who are actively interested in that port, but from people whose interest should be in the outports.

Mr. Sleeman: What has Fremantle done now?

Mr. WITHERS: It has never done anything, worse luck, but it seems to get what it is not entitled to. The question of so much fruit passing Bunbury to be shipped at Fremantle is a serious one. On one or two occasions shipment from Bunbury was tried, but I am sorry to say it was not successful. The reason why fruit is shipped from Fremantle instead of from Bunbury is because better facilities for handling the fruit are provided at the chief seaport. In 1923 the quantity of fruit shipped from Bunbury was 1,700 tons; in 1924, 1,938 tons, in 1925, 1,173 tons; in 1926, 625 tons, and in 1927, 24 tons, while in 1928 and 1929 the quantity was nil. There must be some reason for this. As the growers were prepared to give Bunbury a trial, and it proved unsuccessful on account of lack of facilities, it is only fair that better facilities should be provided in order to obviate the longer train haulage to Fremantle. If the zone system is satisfactory for wheat, it should be satisfactory for fruit.

Mr. Mann: What is the cause of the falling off in the last three years?

Mr. WITHERS: There has been a falling off in the shipment of timber owing to contract orders overseas having been completed.

Mr. Mann: But you were referring to fruit.

Mr. WITHERS: The reason why more fruit is not shipped from Bunbury is simply because of the lack of facilities. The growers will not ship from Bunbury. Under the conditions existing, it is better for them to pay the extra railage to Fremantle and ship from that port. If the zone system were enforced, trucks released from Bunbury could make the return trip to Bridgetown almost in the time required to haul them to Perth. The Leader of the Country Party stated the other night that he was in favour of the 4ft. 8½in. gauge railway being constructed from Kalgoorlie through certain

areas to open up new land and to Fremantle via Armadale. That is the wrong attitude for the Leader of the Country Party to adopt. He should be sympathetic with the professed desire of his party to endeavour to get the produce of the country shipped from its natural ports.

Mr. Thomson: Did I say otherwise?

Mr. WITHERS: No.

Mr. Thomson: You are imputing motives.

Mr. WITHERS: I am not.

Mr. Thomson: But you are.

Mr. WITHERS: When the hon. member is touring the country, one would be inclined to believe from his utterances that he favoured the zone system.

Mr. Latham: He advocates every territory being served by its own port.

Mr. WITHERS: But in advocating the construction of the 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge line from Kalgoorlie, he must favour hauling to Fremantle produce that should be sent to Esperance or Bunbury.

Mr. Thomson: Did I suggest that the line should go to Bunbury?

Mr. WITHERS: The hon. member would provide a better railway service for people who already have railway facilities in order that they might ship their produce from the principal port of the State.

Mr. Thomson: It would be better if you studied the law of economics and endeavoured to save money.

Mr. WITHERS: Members representing the farming community should not favour centralisation. The Labour Party advocate decentralisation.

Mr. Thomson: And practise otherwise.

Mr. WITHERS: The Labour Party have introduced decentralisation as far as possible.

Mr. Lindsay: The Country Party have not had an opportunity to put that plank of their platform into operation. They might have an opportunity after the next election.

Mr. WITHERS: If they had made a request, the Government might have adopted that plank as well as many other planks said to have been taken from the Country Party platform. The Speech states that the Busseton drainage scheme, undertaken to drain lands allotted to group settlements and older settled portions of the district, has been completed at a cost of £265,000. The Premier remarked upon the justification for that expenditure. If that expenditure was

justified—and I believe it was—other areas are deserving of similar consideration. Perhaps the cost of draining other areas would not be so great, but the land is as valuable, though I would not say it is more valuable, and it is closer to Perth. For a considerable time we have been urging the need for draining the area adjacent to my electorate. I have a letter that was sent to the Town Clerk of Bunbury from the Minister for Water Supplies. It states—

With reference to your letter of the 22nd March, addressed to the Hon. Minister for Water Supply, with regard to the South Bunbury cut, I am directed to inform you that two or three trial lines have been surveyed with a view to diverting some of the water in the Five-mile Brook from the Bunbury Cut, but these surveys have shown that the work would be far too costly to undertake. If money can be made available on the Estimates this year, it is proposed to undertake a contour survey of the area and thoroughly explore the problem. I am unable at the present time to give you any assurance that the money will be available, but will again communicate with you when the Estimates have been passed.

I hope that the Minister will prove his sincerity and have sufficient influence with the Treasurer to ensure that if the whole of the money required is not available, sufficient money will be provided to allow of the water being drained away so that the land in question can be brought under cultivation. The Government have been very active in providing water supplies in dry areas. According to the Speech and the Premier's remarks, wonderful work has been done in the way of providing water supplies in the wheat areas. I heard one man say that in his district a water supply had been provided, but he wanted to know when it would be clean. I am not aware whether he desired filtered water to be put on his land, but when the Government provide a reasonable water supply, people should be thankful for it and should not find fault because it happens to be a little discoloured at the outset. When the Estimates are considered, I hope the Minister will be able to assure me that money has been placed at his disposal for this work. We to-day are suffering from the result of the great amount of clearing that has been done in the hinterland, in consequence of which there is a much greater flow of water than there was formerly. The old natural channels of the coast have become blocked up and some system of drainage is necessary to overcome the difficulty. The next item in the Speech

about which I am concerned is that of main road construction. It is certainly pleasing that so much road construction has been carried out and that the roads to-day are in a much better condition. I do not say that our roads are all that they ought to be, but like all undertakings in a young country, we must be prepared to build up to something better. I believe that in the course of a very few years the roads generally in the State will be of such a quality that it will be a pleasure to travel over them. The benefits that have accrued from the construction of roads are appreciated by the producers and the people in the back country. They appreciate that transport over the good roads now provided is a much different proposition than that of a few years ago when there were no roads at all.

Mr. Latham: Roads are preferable to some of the railways.

Mr. WITHERS: I do not say that, but people in my district are appreciative of the work of road construction carried out. One individual, in discussing the matter, referred to the cost being charged to road boards, and I told him that if the improved roads were a benefit to him, he should be prepared to pay something to the road board for it. He replied, "I would willingly do so. Where previously I had to travel so many miles with my horse and dray over a sand track and only with difficulty could get back in time to milk the cows in the afternoon, I can now pick my fruit in the morning, take it to the railway station in a light car and be back after dinner. Thus I save considerable time and money." He was most appreciative and was prepared to pay his bit to finance the work. If the people are getting such benefit, there should not be any great outcry against a slight increase of road board rates. I do not say that the allotment of charges is equitable; I think it is rather heavy, but when settlers get service, they should be prepared to contribute to its cost. Another question that applies seriously to the South-West is that of the contract system. Quite a lot was said in the House last year about the day labour system of road construction. Under the contract system transport is being held up considerably by the methods used in the making of roads. I know of two cases around Bunbury where the contractor has been allowed to open up practically the whole length of road he was about to construct. Alongside of the road

was a good deal of land that was impassable during the wet weather. For over a quarter of a mile it was impossible in one case for people to get along the roadside owing to the system adopted, and that particular road is not even now completed. The Main Roads Board should take steps to see that only a small portion of the road is worked on at a time, and that this is completed before another stage is tackled. In this way people will not be so greatly inconvenienced as they are at present. Between the Turn-Off and Capel this system of working on one piece at a time and completing it was in operation, much to the advantage of travellers. People certainly had to go off the road for a little way, but were then able to return to it. If that policy were enforced in the case of all contracts, it would be of great benefit to the South-West where so many parts of the country are impassable in the winter time. I wish now to refer to the question of forestry. My remarks might have been different if they had been made yesterday, but this morning a deputation waited upon the Premier and we now know what his point of view is. The reply that he gave to us this morning will doubtless be fully reported in the Press. The Premier was very definite in what he said. The matter, however, greatly concerns the people of the South-West. In that part of the State there are not many people who are not interested in its development along agricultural lines. We do not deny the Forestry officials their rights. We know that we have to protect our timbers, but we also know that in the South-West we have practically all the good goods, timber included. We do not say we should denude our forests for the purpose of agriculture. In none of our deputations have we ever suggested such a thing. We did, however, carry resolutions in the South-West with the object of endeavouring to induce the Agricultural Department to make a reclassification of the lands of the South-West. That is what we desired the Premier to arrange this morning. We wanted him to find out which was agricultural and which forest land. He promised to go into the matter and see if a reclassification was possible. He was very definite on the question of forest conservation and did not mince matters. He gave the deputation his views, and said he was not going to release one acre of forest land. We do not wish him to forego a single acre of what is termed

forest country. I have been over a great deal of the South-West, not only along the roads but across country. I know the South-West over a radius of as much as 80 miles from Bunbury. I also know jarrah country when I see it. Perhaps I could not say how many loads of jarrah were contained on every acre, but I know there are patches in that country which could be alienated for the purpose of agriculture. There was a time when we did not care much about that land. If this question had arisen 15 years ago, probably there would have been no outcry about the land being reserved for forest purposes. To-day through group settlement and other things land which was looked upon as practically useless is to-day considered to be some of our best pastoral land. Excellent pastures are being grown upon some of that country already. It is a pity, in view of the value now attached to it, that some arrangement cannot be made between the Agricultural and Forests Departments whereby any genuine cases for the selection of land that are put up can be taken on their merits. The matter should be investigated with a view to seeing whether the land not only carries jarrah but is capable of reproducing jarrah, or whether it should be released for agricultural purposes. It may be said that roads could not be built from one farm to another in this forest country. I have travelled from Bunbury to Lake Muir. It is mostly ironstone country along the ridges where the jarrah grows, and there is no difficulty about roads there. One travels through this sort of country and suddenly comes upon a gully containing good arable land. I have been through these forest belts, and come upon a flourishing farm of 300 or 400 acres which has been established for 30 or 40 years. I could not realise how people had come to select land in such a part unless they had been lost and obliged to make a home for themselves. I have seen most beautiful farms cleared and growing pastures, very much resembling a park in the midst of the forest. These settlers have never asked for roads because it is not necessary in that class of country to build them. I do not therefore think that new people who may select blocks there will require money to be spent on roads. Quite recently a grant was made to the Balingup Road Board from the Federal Aid Fund to construct a road from Balingup into this very area. It is a develop-

mental road, and is being financed by the State and Commonwealth to serve the settlers concerned. That land, however, has been reserved for forest purposes. The road is being built to where there is no settlement, and where there is not likely to be any if this policy is continued. If the department know that, they should stop the construction of the road at once, and divert the money into some other channel where it could be used to greater advantage. If it no use building a road to suit the convenience of the Forests Department, and it would be of no use as a fire-break. It is the opinion of the Conservator of Forests that if one small farm is allowed to spring up in the middle of the forest and then another, people will be apt to burn-off carelessly and cause a conflagration in the forest itself. I differ from that view. Under present conditions of farming, men do not want a fire-break. A few years ago it was the custom to set fire to the bush in order to get a new growth of feed into which to turn stock. To-day a farmer will put a ring fence around his property, lay down his pastures, and do everything possible to protect them. A good farmer takes off his clover hay and preserves it for the winter. When he does that there is very little left to burn, but he will protect what is there. If his neighbour is a true Australian, as I think he is, he too will protect his property in every possible way. We do not want one acre of land that consists of good forest country. We have never asked the Premier to release a single acre of that. I do know, however, there are other reasons why the Forests Department take this land in the face. It is easier for them to say, "We are going to reclaim all that Crown land in a solid area because it is bounded by such and such properties. If we cut pieces out of it here and there we shall have to alter the boundaries and will get an irregularly shaped block." Boundaries mean a good deal to the Forests Department. If we can show to the Forests and Agricultural Departments that there is an area of land that is not good forest country in the middle of the timber areas, and that it is fit for agriculture, and that genuine settlers are prepared to take it up and improve it and use it for reproductive purposes, they should take that into consideration with a view to making it possible for settlers to take it up. I know from experience that when forest rangers have been asked for a re-

port upon a certain block they have reported against its selection for agriculture. I know of one piece that contains sandy soil. No jarrah grew upon it and there was not likely to be any regrowth of jarrah. It was covered with small timber such as banksia. The ranger did not recommend its alienation because he said it was within the working area. There was only a small area involved, but surrounding it was country from which timber was being cut. He did not therefore want to have it leased. A settler was prepared to take it up on a ten years' lease, fence it and use it for dry stock. It was only fit for an individual who had another area beside it, and had not enough country on which to run his dry stock. This man could have utilised the block to the fullest extent, but the forest ranger would not recommend the alienation because it interfered with the boundaries of the forest area. That policy is not fair to the South-West. The Premier argues that we must have timber for posterity. We know that, but it is possible that we may not require as much in the future as we think we shall. What with steel structures and reinforced concrete, not much timber is used in Perth buildings to-day. Even for roofing purposes steel rafters are used. I do not know that people in other countries, which have taken extensive quantities of our timber for sleepers, will continue to take it in preference to using steel sleepers, and it is possible we shall not have the same demand overseas that we used to have. I am not prepared to argue that question at present, however. As the Premier has pointed out, the South-West may be regarded through one set of spectacles and from one point of view. I have quoted in this Chamber the benefits timber has rendered to the State. On the Estimates of the year before last I quoted figures showing that the haulage of timber represented better business from a railway point of view than the haulage of wheat. Shall I go back on my words of two years ago? It is hardly feasible.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It would not be the first time.

Mr. WITHERS: I believe I have not yet gone back on my word to anybody.

Mr. Lindsay: Last time you did not necessarily convince this side of the House that you were correct in your view of the subject.

Mr. WITHERS: I am not out to convince the other side of the House. I realise to the

full the great benefit timber represents to the State to-day and will represent for all time, but I realise also the benefit agriculture is and will be to the State. Now I shall go on to the dairying proposition. I have used arguments in favour of agriculture; but I think I can also justify my contentions by the report I bring here year after year, perhaps for the purpose of having something to read to the House.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That will all get into "Hansard."

Mr. WITHERS: This is the report of the South-West Dairy Products Ltd., an enterprise that is playing a wonderful part to-day in that portion of the country. As a resident of the South-West I realise that years ago settlers were only stocking their holdings with small herds of cattle. In those days people used to make butter on the farms, and disposed of it at the stores. At that time there was not much demand for local butter, and there were no means of conveying it to the metropolitan area in small quantities. But with the establishment of the butter factory came the means of enabling the farmer to increase his herds. With the introduction of up-to-date farming methods and adequate pastures for the herds, in addition to the facilities offered by the factory, it has been possible for the South-Western farmers to go in for cows extensively. I do not know of a man in the South-West to-day who can say that he has too many cows and cannot get rid of the product. Any one of them can get rid of twice as much cream to-day as he is actually producing. There is a ready market for it. I am not so much concerned that enormous profits should be made; but it is pleasing to know that an enterprise of this nature can be run at the present day to show a profit to the people themselves, this being purely a co-operative concern. The principal persons to derive benefit from the butter factory are the butter producers. After making allowance for depreciation and replacement of obsolete machinery, the South-West Dairy Products show a credit balance of £16,005 2s. 11d. I quote from the directors' report:—

Your directors propose to pay a dividend of five per cent. on the paid-up capital at 30th April, 1929, and a bonus of 1d. per lb. on butter fat supplied by shareholders during the same period, and to transfer to the reserve for bad debts the sum of £500.

It is nice to know that the shareholders receive 5 per cent. on the capital they have in-

vested, and on top of that 1d. per lb. bonus. I have not the figures relating to individual suppliers, but I know that some of them have drawn cheques of over £1,000 from the factory in a year. The turnover for the past year is £199,514 15s. 6d., representing an increase of £54,059 15s. over the previous year's figures. The Busselton factory alone accounts for £25,858 15s. 1d. of that amount. I again quote from the directors' report—

That is a wonderful achievement, and fully justifies the decision of your directors to purchase this factory and equip it with up-to-date machinery.

The purchases of cream at the two factories amounted to 4,045,150 lbs., representing 1,805 tons, for which the company paid £148,071 4s. 3d. They manufactured 2,247,377 lbs. of commercial butter, equal to 1,003 tons 5 dwt. This involved the handling of 102,973 cans. Let hon. members consider the handling of those cans and where they are handled. Most of them are handled on the railways of the State, and produce considerable revenue. Then let hon. members take into consideration the quantity of superphosphate and other farming essentials carried over the railways by reason of the progress of the butter industry in the South-West. The subject is worthy of consideration from every aspect. We know that Western Australia, ever since it was a colony, has not been able to supply the local demand for butter. It is stated by the directors of the factory that even with the present rate of progress—and greater progress is hoped for—they will be able within the next few years to supply not only the local demand but to have some butter available for export. That will be a wonderful result, and will be productive of enormous benefit to the State. A pleasing feature of the report is that the past year is the first one in the company's history when it has not been necessary to import butter from the Eastern States to carry over the lean period. Arrangements are being made for the storage of some of the south-western butter in the metropolitan area to assist in the carryover. That will involve a fair amount of expenditure, but it will be fully justified if the need for importing butter from the Eastern States is obviated. The factories are being enlarged, and eventually this enterprise will be the universal dairy products enterprise of the South-West. An up-to-date factory has been erected at Harvey, and the Busselton factory is showing most satisfactory progress.

The directors are contemplating the establishment of factories at Boyanup and other points in the South-West. If merely the present rate of progress continues, the sons of the south-western farmers, and of south-western residents generally, will have to look somewhere for employment. I have no hesitation in declaring that dairy farming is one of the most popular of industries. I bear in mind that some years ago dairying was considered a terrible thing. Girls used to say, "If my husband ever buys a cow, God help him! I never want to see a cow again." And the boys held opinions of a corresponding character. But to-day things are very different.

Mr. Latham: One still has to milk seven days a week and twice every day.

Mr. WITHERS: There are various conditions of which the south-western dairy farmer is able to take advantage. Not many of the dairy farmers there are without motor cars of their own. They can run into town 15 or 20 miles to shop, get back home in time to milk, and then return to town to attend a picture show or a concert. That was not possible formerly with the old means of transport. In company with the Minister for Agriculture I had the pleasure, at the beginning of the year, of inspecting a farm in a remote corner of my electorate, a farm milking 74 cows. I asked the young fellow on the place how long it took him to milk the cows. His reply was, "Two of us two hours, from the time we yard the cows until the milk is separated and everything is cleaned up." Compare that performance in milking 74 cows with the time the same work would have occupied even a few years ago. Nowadays, with modern conveniences, if the farmer is sufficiently prosperous to acquire them—and most of the dairy farmers are—dairying is not the drudgery it used to be. We must give the farmers credit for the spirit that has raised them to their present position. We hope their position will improve still further, so that they may have time to enjoy the results of their labour and the comforts of life. There are one or two other subjects I should like to touch on. The Governor's Speech mentions a Bill for the redistribution of Council seats. In that connection I would suggest that during this session of Parliament the question of the longevity, or the lengthening of the life, of Parliament be taken into consideration. If we go in for reforms, let us go in for them whole-heartedly. We have had a redistribution of seats for the purpose of putting our



House in order. When the Council has similarly been put in order, the question of the longer life of Parliament might be taken up, at any rate by whichever party happens to be returned to power. Most experienced members of Parliament know that Governments do not get much of a chance in three years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They can do a lot of harm in three years.

Mr. WITHERS: Possibly by merely initiating things which eventually turn out to be good. The harm, or apparent harm, is due to Governments having a term of only three years. I desire to see the life of Parliament extended.

Hon. G. Taylor: Why did you not do it after the last election?

Mr. WITHERS: Youth will not often consider old age. It might not do to lengthen the life of Parliament for some who would not have the opportunity of seeing that life out.

Hon. G. Taylor: Let us extend the life of the present Parliament.

Mr. WITHERS: A good idea, but I fear it would not be acceptable to—

Mr. Wilson: Yes, it would.

Mr. WITHERS: I think it would be acceptable to this side of the House and also to the Country Party, who are quite satisfied with the present Government's legislation. We are the only party putting their policy into effect.

Mr. Panton: And they have no responsibility regarding it.

Mr. WITHERS: That is so. We should seriously take into consideration the extension of the life of Parliament. There will be new members here next session, and I say it is not fair to whatever Government may be in power to have to go back to the country again so quickly. We have put our house in order, and we can carry on, but in the event of our party not coming back to power it would be very hard indeed to have the present Opposition endeavouring to undo the good work this party has done for the State and the people.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Half the people are out of work.

Mr. WITHERS: As I say, I should like to see the Government take into consideration the extension of the life of Parliament. Now I wish to say a word about some of our railways which are likely to be in a serious condition through the forestry position. That position will have a prejudicial effect

upon the construction of South-West railways already authorised. The Manjimup-Mt. Barker railway, or the purpose for which it was introduced, is not likely now to be achieved, because of the fact that a large part of the area to be served has been absorbed by the Forests Department. And if we cannot get that line constructed there will not be much hope of developing that area. Then we have the all-important Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway. It is really important to me to see this work carried out, because of the enormous benefit it will be to the South-West, not Bunbury alone. My ideas, I hope, go farther than Bunbury when we are considering development, and I want to see this railway constructed. When the Minister for Works moved in this House the second reading of the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook Railway Bill, he showed that there was in that district a considerable area of cultivable agricultural land waiting to be developed. That also was the advice of the advisory board, who had been through the area and examined it. All authoritative reports were in favour of the construction of the railway, and the Minister's remarks confirmed those reports from a developmental point of view. But there is a considerable area of that country, at the Boyup Brook end, that will now be affected by the forest reservation. The proposed railway I am most concerned about is that from Collie to Bunbury via Wellington mills. I have spoken upon this in the House on previous occasions. The time is fast approaching when the present railway system will not be able to carry the produce from that district. As showing the enormous amount of trade, I may say that something like 87,129 tons of wheat were shipped from Bunbury this year, and the principal part of it came along the Collie-Narrogin railway. It means that we must have the proposed line, or alternatively go in for extensive alterations at Collie and at Brunswick, the regrading of the Collie line, and other expensive improvements to overcome the congestion that will certainly take place in the near future. That is worthy of serious consideration, and I hope that when the time comes for the Railway Department to consider the position from an administrative point of view for the purpose of effectively handling the enormous amount of produce that will travel over those lines, the department will take seriously into consideration the construction of this proposed line from

Collie to Bunbury. I do not need to stress that question any further, for I know the Railway Department to-day are making inquiries about it on account of efforts I have put forth. I have had the Minister for Railways down there, and he has viewed the position, but of course he does not yet know whether or not the thing is justifiable from his official point of view. I have done my utmost to bring about the construction of that line. The settlers in that area realise it is not for those already settled there, because they are fairly close to the Dardanup-Donnybrook railway, but that it is for the purpose of serving that very considerable area of land extending from Wellington Mills to Collie. Given a railway, there is in that district an immense area where it would be possible to establish those dairy farms and orchards that do so well in the South-West. Last night there was raised here the subject of the danger of railway crossings. We have had experience of that at Bunbury at what we know as the Stirling-street crossing.

Mr. Thomson: If you run into a train at a crossing, you are fined.

Mr. WITHERS: That is so. A man on a bicycle ran into a train at the Stirling-street crossing one day, and was fined for having thus committed an offence. The danger arising at these level crossings renders the question a very urgent one. A fortnight or three weeks ago we had another serious accident at the Stirling-street crossing, when a motor truck carrying sleepers was run into by a shunting engine.

Mr. Lindsay: Has the motorist been fined?

Mr. WITHERS: He is not yet out of hospital, and I understand it is not customary to fine a man while he is still in the doctor's hands. I spoke to the Railway Department about these dangerous crossings a long time ago, but the ex-Commissioner of Railways said it was not the responsibility of the Railway Department to look out for people using the crossing, that it was the responsibility of the people themselves to look out for the train and avoid it. He remarked that there had been no serious accident at the Stirling-street crossing, and I reminded him that there had been one or two very close shaves. However, since then there have been several serious accidents, and seven accidents in all. It shows the danger there is at that point, and, as I see

it, we do not want to wait until more serious accidents happen there in consequence of increased traffic, both by road and railway. I had intended to deal at length with the question of the influx of migrants, but the member for East Perth (Mr. Kennecally) referred to it extensively last night. However, it seemed to me he overlooked one point relating to the Southern Europeans. My attention has been drawn to the fact that we are getting no revenue whatever from those people, numbering in all something over 7,000. That is because they manage to hide their tracks, and the Taxation people cannot find them. If those Southern Europeans were Britishers, at least we would be able to trace them, whereas to-day we have no official idea of their whereabouts in the State. It has even been suggested that the Government should bring down a Bill to levy a percentage of their income through the employers. I do not know whether that would be practicable, but it goes to show how serious is the position when we have that number of people in the State, of whom 98 per cent. are not paying taxes of any sort. Surely that is worth the consideration of the Government. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson), speaking of his travels abroad, has said on more than one occasion that whenever one goes overseas people refer to Australia as a land of strikes.

Mr. Sampson: Yes, it is very unfortunate.

Mr. WITHERS: It is most unfortunate that such an idea should be perpetuated by Australians.

The Minister for Mines: The member for Swan talks about it at every opportunity.

Mr. WITHERS: It is bad policy to publish such a thing to the prejudice of the country. It shows a sad lack of patriotism.

Mr. Sampson: Unfortunately the idea is widespread throughout the world.

Mr. WITHERS: When last I heard the hon. member on the subject, it reminded me of something I saw in the paper recently. Mr. Bruce, referring to Mr. Binnie's statement regarding the finances, is reported as follows:—

Mr. Bruce added that he regretted that Mr. Binnie had denounced in such sweeping terms the manner in which the public finance and administration of the Commonwealth and all the States were conducted. The interests of Australia would be better served if those in positions of authority in industry, commerce and finance would help by co-operation and constructive criticism, instead of indulging in bitter denunciation. Mr. Binnie's statements

were inaccurate and misleading, and might do Australia harm.

Do not these other statements, such as that so frequently repeated by the member for Swan, do Australia harm? We have had other members come back and say that the fruitgrowers in Western Australia have failed to do certain things.

Mr. Sampson: Unfortunately we have a very bad reputation regarding strikes.

Mr. WITHERS: It is always noticeable that in a small community everybody seems to know everybody else's business. In a big place, such as America, they could have one strike per day and it would seem so insignificant as not to be worth while talking about; but because occasionally in Australia we have a strike on the waterfront, it is broadcast throughout the world.

Mr. Thomson: Because the strikers hold up the ships.

Mr. Sampson: While I was away there was no strike, but soon after my return the ships were held up again.

Mr. WITHERS: If the hon. member were to be taken through a chocolate factory, he would not be shown the rubbish heap. We cannot let all those statements go without refuting them.

Hon. G. Taylor: You must recognise that the whole of the transport trade becomes paralysed when there is a wharf strike in any part of Australia, and that such a strike in America would hardly affect that country.

Mr. Sampson: Unfortunately our reputation is too well established in regard to strikes.

Mr. WITHERS: Another statement made by the member for Swan was that trading by the State was bad for the State. I do not know how the hon. member arrived at that view or how the primary producers will regard the subject after I have referred to a matter that concerns them. The State Sawmills have been a wonderful adjunct to the fruitgrowing industry.

Mr. Sampson: It is a well-conducted industry too.

Mr. WITHERS: The State Sawmills to-day have orders for the coming season, and it is a trading concern that is able to supply the whole of the orders received. Last year the output of fruit cases from the State Sawmills was in the neighbourhood of 200,000. The season just closed was responsible for a much greater demand,

not only on account of the record crop, but because of the quality of the cases turned out. The number actually made was 415,000.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: What was used, jarrah or karri?

Mr. WITHERS: Karri, and they were dressed cases, a really finished article. I saw some of them myself and they were a good job. These cases were turned out at the State Sawmills for 8s. 9d. a dozen. That, too, is the prices of cases in the rough turned out at other mills. In this morning's paper Mr. Wickens announced that the Commonwealth were going to enforce the law in respect to dressed cases, but that the enforcement would not take place for 12 months. This will mean that in the future it will be possible to use only dressed cases. All millers will now be able to put in a plant and prepare to make dressed cases. I would like all members opposite interested in this matter to understand that if the State Sawmills had not been in existence fruit growers would not have been getting even rough cases at 8s. 9d. a dozen, let alone the dressed cases at that price.

Mr. Latham: You are just like the chap who tells you, the day after the race is over, of the winner that he could have given you.

Mr. WITHERS: We know that jarrah cannot be bought cheaper at the State Sawmills than anywhere else.

Mr. Thomson: Rubbish; they are part and parcel of the combine.

Mr. Latham: The State Sawmills charge the same prices as other mills.

Mr. WITHERS: Members of the Country Party do not understand what I am talking about; they do not know when good service is being rendered. I know also that my remarks are not sufficiently illuminating for them to realise that they are receiving benefits by the Labour Government being in power. This party has often been chided for being at the mercy of Caucus. We have a platform and if we did not support it we would not be carrying out our job. But we are honest when we go before the electors and tell them that we are the Labour Party and that we have a policy to put before the people, on which policy we ask them to return us. When the Country Party go before the people, they begin by forming branches of the P.P.A.

Mr. Latham: Go steadily now.

Mr. WITHERS: What we are told is that the P.P.A. branches are non-political.

Mr. Panton: Except when they want to elect a candidate.

Mr. WITHERS: They go around districts accompanied by an organiser and urge the appointment of a branch of the P.P.A. for, as they say, the benefit of the district. I do not blame them; I would do the same, but I would still be a Labour man if I became associated with the P.P.A. Members opposite form branches and then say they are non-political. But the Country Party emanates from those branches. Why cannot they be honest and have one thing or the other? We on this side have also been accused of being members of the Communist party. We are nothing of the sort.

Mr. Latham: Nobody ever said you were members of the Communist party.

Mr. WITHERS: Why do members opposite go about the country organising branches? Ostensibly for the purpose of benefiting the farmer and then telling those who join up that they have every right as members of the Primary Producers' Association to have political views of their own. Later we find that a branch of the organisation calls for nominations from those willing to contest seats. When a question is asked, perhaps at another branch, whether it is a political organisation, one member may say "no" and somebody else will get up at the meeting and declare, "Then why is such and such a branch calling for nominations for candidates?"

Mr. Latham: If they desire to do so, there is nothing to stop them.

Mr. WITHERS: That is a question that has to be answered.

Hon. G. Taylor: Then give notice of it.

Mr. WITHERS: If anything of that kind is to be done let it be done in a straightforward way.

Mr. Thomson: You fear the Country Party in Bunbury.

Mr. WITHERS: If it is only the Country Party that is to oppose me, I think I can proceed straight away to write my own ticket.

Mr. Sampson: Tell us the story of your Caucus.

Mr. WITHERS: I would prefer to read something from the "West Australian" regarding the negotiations that have been

carried on between the Opposition parties. This is what the paragraph says:-

Negotiations are still proceeding between the Nationalist Party and the Country Party with a view to cementing their friendly relations and evolving a basis upon which they may present a united front at the general election next March. Representatives of the Parliamentary sections have met, but have not yet completed any agreement, and representatives of the supporting organisations met during the week at a conference to which the Parliamentarians were not admitted.

It is understood that an endeavour is being made to frame a policy that would be satisfactory to both parties. Although it is not known what planks are being considered for inclusion in the proposed common policy, the agenda for the Primary Producers' Conference indicates that no platform is likely to be acceptable to the Country Party that does not provide for economy in administration, the reduction of taxation, increased production and lower costs of production. Assuming that a common policy is agreed upon, the Country Party will still be bound by its constitution to remain a separate entity, and to go before the electors under its own leader, and any arrangement entered into for co-operating with the other Opposition party will be subject to approval by the Primary Producers' Conference, which will commence on August 13.

Mr. Lindsay: What is wrong with that?

Mr. WITHERS: What I have read is more binding than anything I have ever had put on me during the whole period I have been associated with the Labour Party. I do not know whether or not members opposite are taking some planks from our platform, but they give us credit for putting into operation some of the things that they have done. In this morning's paper there is a report of the manner in which a selection ballot is conducted.

Hon. G. Taylor: By whom?

Mr. WITHERS: I am not going to read it, but it is in this morning's paper and members opposite can read it for themselves.

Mr. Thomson: You ought to read it.

Mr. WITHERS: No, I have spoken for about an hour and a half and I am glad to be able to say I have not read very much. In that respect I can say that I have not copied anything from the Country Party, whose members, when they speak, make extensive use of scissors and paste and read clippings by the yard. That seems to be the policy of the Country Party.

Mr. Latham: You are not very generous.

Mr. WITHERS: I cannot afford to be generous on questions of this description, but I do contend that I am just. If I have kept the House going longer than I intended,

I hope members will forgive me. If I am returned at the next elections, it will be my seventh attempt on the Address-in-reply to get my requests attended to; but whether I am returned or not, I sincerely hope the Government will give serious consideration to the matters that I have brought under notice to-day, attention to which will be for the well-being, not only of the South-West, but the whole of the State.

**MR. DONEY** (Williams-Narogin) [6.0]: A friend has suggested to me that I might occupy a little time in replying to the previous speaker's remarks about the Country Party. I might have done so if I had been able to determine exactly what the hon. member desired to convey.

**Mr. Withers:** You must be pretty dull.

**Mr. DONEY:** In common with pretty well all members, I suppose, I examined the Governor's Speech closely, with the object of discovering therein something inspirational. However, I was disappointed; nothing was there. Neither did I find, nor for that matter did I expect to find, when the Speech assessed the agricultural advancement of the State, any recognition of the good work done towards this end by the farmers themselves through their various organisations. For some strange reason there is always a reluctance to attribute any of the numerous improvements in agricultural conditions and services to the body responsible for a great many of them, namely the conference of farmers who year after year meet in Perth and by their insistent work contrive, generally indirectly, to have a good deal of legislation amended to meet their practical needs.

**Mr. Panton:** That is our complaint as trade unionists, too. None of us get any credit.

**Mr. DONEY:** As the baby member of the House—a distinction of which I do not think any other member will be anxious to deprive me—I feel some diffidence about criticising the Government's account of their stewardship as disclosed by the Speech, particularly as, while sitting here, I have noticed that Ministers whose departments are attacked have a habit of not only defending themselves but of counter-attacking, carrying the war, as it were, into the enemy's country. I shall not follow the customary line and criticise the financial position of the State. Not that there is

nothing to criticise: God forbid that I should utter a lie of that magnitude. The point is I am not yet so stupid—or I hope not—as to attempt a task for which I am ill-equipped by reason of my inexperience. At the same time I cannot help observing that no attack, apology or explanation will, in my opinion, coax members to believe that, to quote the Speech, “the finances of the State are in every respect satisfactory.” Surely a deficit cannot be regarded as a satisfactory result of half a dozen successive good seasons. Such a statement appears to me an affront to the meanest intelligence. However, I shall refrain from labouring that point, especially as, perhaps fortunately for me, it has already been ably and effectively disposed of. I desire to come straight away to the question uppermost in my mind, and say a few words, but very earnest words, regarding the provision of a new hospital at Narrogin. Narrogin is a progressive town, as I daresay the House has heard scores of times. It is likewise a clean town, and quite properly is proud of its cleanliness. It is a town that deserves support and encouragement from the Government of the day. Its municipal body teaches the residents a high regard for hygienic methods. Yet, despite all those factors, Narrogin, strange to say, has the regrettable distinction of containing within its boundaries just about the oldest and surely the sorriest-looking, worst-equipped, most cramped and most ineffectively-ventilated hospital in Western Australia. I have often heard the institution described—and in my opinion quite correctly—as a real blackfellows' hospital. It is admitted that no hospital, or so-called hospital, coming within the jurisdiction of the Health Department is anything like as insanitary or ill-favoured as this unfortunate institution. By a strange contrast, Narrogin hospital, besides a highly efficient nursing staff, has two medical officers of unusually high merit, one of them a physician and surgeon whose reputation is State-wide. It has been my unfortunate lot to have both a wide and a close experience of hospitals in various parts of the world, some of those hospitals being in isolated spots; but never before have I seen a hospital comparable with the one under review in respect of general unsuitableness for the task that it is courageous enough to tackle. An hon. member of another place, whose connection with Wil-

liams-Narrogin is just about as close as my own, was an inmate of the institution; and I have not heard, at least for many years, a more scathing or more bitter indictment of hospital equipment and accommodation than fell from the lips of the hon. member in question upon his discharge from the Narrogin hospital. He was a very angry man indeed, and justifiably so. I may add that local people regard their hospital as a scandal, and that I share their view.

The Minister for Lands: Is the hospital run by a committee?

Mr. DONEY: No.

The Minister for Health: It is run by the Government, and the local authority will not do its part.

Mr. DONEY: Fortunately I am able to come to another and a brighter phase of the question. Arrangements are, I am relieved to say, in course of being made to provide Narrogin with a new hospital, and the Annual Estimates will, I understand, contain the necessary item. The Minister for Health and the Secretary to the Medical Department are heartily sympathetic towards the project, and are also in accord with the local desire to have the foundation stone of the new hospital laid in October next. If precautions are taken, as I presume they will be, to treat proposed works on their merits, I feel sure that when items of questionable urgency are being deleted, this particular item will be retained. The Narrogin hospital caters for a wide area indeed. Eastward its operations extend to Karlgarin and into the newer wheat areas, and 70 per cent. of the patients come from outlying districts. One of the functions of government is the care of the health of citizens, and special consideration should be given to those isolated farming and mining areas the occupants of which are possibly more subject to disease and accident than we are. Surely they have a right of access, and quick access too, to modern medical treatment, just as we have. Nothing ornate is desired, but simply a building roomy, clean, and modernly equipped. I am not imputing any blame in this connection to the present Minister for Health. On the contrary, I am happy indeed to seize this opportunity of complimenting the hon. gentleman upon his quite unusual energy and enthusiasm, which have exhibited themselves in the establishment of hospitals, baby clinics, and health centres in various country districts, thus ensuring far better treatment than ever before was available for country

mothers and babies. But here is a little warning that I may be permitted to offer. The Narrogin people are just now worked up to a high pitch of enthusiasm over the hospital question. All profits from local efforts are going towards the fund for hospital equipment. The town and the district are prepared to shoulder their share of the financial burden that is going to be imposed. But this is the point. The temper of the people is such as to make it advisable to warn the Government that if the matter is delayed beyond the year, it would not be surprising to find one fine morning, or perhaps I had better say one sad morning, that Ministers had been murdered in their beds.

The Minister for Railways: Red revolution!

Mr. DONEY: I suppose the most engaging and most important scheme upon the economic horizon at this juncture is the attempt to settle 3,500 farmers or thereabouts upon 3,500 farms. That is a big scheme and a bold scheme. Personally, I like schemes that are big and bold. I think this scheme is likely to succeed, as it is bound to have the ablest assistance that all sides of the House can possibly render. One of the factors which will contribute to the success of the scheme is that modern methods, properly applied, enable us to grow wheat payably on a rainfall of nine or ten inches. Because of this and other factors, I believe the scheme will succeed, with the proviso, however, that applicants are subjected to a far more rigorous test than customary, and that only those men who are strong and possess plenty of grit and experience shall be permitted to settle. In my opinion, the man is always the governing factor. The land, undoubtedly, is of consequence, but not nearly of so much consequence as the man. Quite a number of people hold the view that the 3,500 farms scheme is in the nature of a new departure. Not at all, to my mind. It represents quite a normal way of development. In point of fact it was forced on us by the somewhat tardy and unsatisfactory manner of development in other directions. Some such scheme was, indeed, desirable or even essential if production was to maintain the necessary increase, the increase that we have been led to expect year by year. I am led to remark at this point that nowadays we seem to forget the wonderful land settlement vision of the Leader of the Opposition, which given practical effect to by him formed the firm

basis on which our present day reputation as a grain State was founded. It is only a repetition of the methods of the member for Northam that is being applied now.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. DONEY: At the tea adjournment, I was engaged in the rather unusual occupation of paying a compliment to the Leader of the Opposition. I was pointing out that in these days we are somewhat too prone to forget his wonderful land settlement achievements of earlier days. His work then led up to our present-day successes in wheat production. I would say that the 3,500 farms scheme is the natural re-application of the Opposition Leader's methods of earlier days. I will give the Government credit for the precautionary measures they are taking. They could quite easily have blundered hastily along placing men, in the full flush of their first enthusiasm, on holdings, only to see their efforts end in tragedy. To have pursued that course would have been unutterable stupidity, particularly in view of our experience in other parts of the State. Obviously this is the time to make our preparations and investigations. My only word of caution in respect to this scheme is to suggest that we should co-ordinate the work of the Lands Department and that of the Agricultural Bank in the early stages of development. We should let the new settler know straight away precisely what measure of financial assistance he can expect from the Agricultural Bank. Do not let us be so stupid as to provide materials for endless fights, disappointments and delays in the future, by having not only surveyor's classifications, but Agricultural Bank classifications as well. I imagine we should not have our eyes so firmly fixed on the eastern horizon as to make us lose sight of our requirements nearer home. As we direct our attention towards the eastern parts, we hardly seem to give a moment's consideration to bringing into fuller use, by legislative means and otherwise, the unused cultivable land nearer home, within or about the 20-inch rainfall belt. We give little consideration nowadays to the use of improved methods. It must be patent to every hon. member that there is room there for ample legislative activity along these lines, because improved methods are cheaper and yield far superior results than those that can be obtained by a mere increase in the area under crop. Nor do we hear much nowadays about

the need for fallowing our light land. For the encouragement of anyone intending to take up farming in the light land areas, I would mention an instance that has been brought under my notice of operations carried out near Ejanding. I understand a farmer and his four sons took up 25,000 acres of land, practically the whole of it being scrub country. There are 7,400 acres cleared already and this year, I am told, they have 3,000 acres under crop. Fallowing is now being done with the aid of three tractors. The yields of wheat and oats have been consistently good each year. I understand that last year 10,000 bags of wheat were taken to market. To my mind that is a wonderful achievement. The Agricultural Bank regard this farmer as being financially successful. If the bank is willing to concede that fact, we may depend upon it that the description is perfectly accurate! The bank officials are too cautious and shrewd to concede success to any farming operations unless it is fully deserved. The point I want to make is this: Where this man has led, hundreds of others may reasonably be expected to follow, provided they have the knowledge necessary to enable them to select the right type of scrub land. I take it that there is more of that land available than is comprised in the holding I have referred to.

Mr. Lindsay: Not in that district; it has all been taken up.

Mr. DONEY: Then it may be assumed that there is a good deal more of that class of land in other parts of the State. Like everyone else, I am considerably concerned about soldier settlement in Western Australia. The payments from the Commonwealth grant no doubt did a great deal of good, but the incidence of the payments was nevertheless frequently harsh and inequitable and the problems in connection with that scheme, though to a lesser degree, of course, still exist. I recently perused the findings of Judge Pike, who was appointed a Royal Commissioner to investigate soldier settlement matters. No doubt hon. members have read his recommendations. As they coincide exactly with my views, it will be gathered that they have my warmest commendation. It struck me that if we had a return showing the holdings repossessed in Western Australia, we would be amazed. The reasons for the repossession of soldiers' farms come under the following headings:—

- (1) The wrong man; (2) too poor a farmer;
- (3) over capitalisation; (4) ill health, and

(5) one that we seldom hear mentioned publicly—political interference with Agricultural Bank decisions. I consider that only sound and experienced men should be allowed to remain on their holdings. It has been my experience that soldiers who have been gassed, shell-shocked or have suffered other war disabilities, are but now, by reason of rough living, giving evidence of those disabilities. All such soldiers, I consider, should be taken from their holdings, as Judge Pike suggests, and placed in some more congenial occupation. I know a number of men who were strong, but are now becoming weaklings physically, and in one or two instances, I regret to say, mentally as well. The day is no longer with us, if it ever was with us, when any fool can be a farmer. In these days of high tariff, high freights, high taxation, inflated wages, increased cost of living, and increased costs of agricultural commodities, it takes a man of pronounced ability and shrewdness, as well as of great knowledge of the industry, to make a success of his undertaking year by year. I am, of course, referring to the man who has to find interest annually on the full capital value of his land. His outlook, as I see it, is seldom a promising one. It seems to me that such a man lives constantly in an atmosphere of uncertainty, dogged by interest charges, bills of sale, instalments, store bills, etc. There are one or two directions in which we can assist. We can help him in respect of taxation and freights, which are under our control. As to the tariff, it should at least be possible for us to cultivate some sort of tariff-sense in this State which, by and by, may reasonably be expected to have some Federal result. I am not gainsaying the fact that in Western Australia we have large areas of land that provide ample scope for men with small capital, but I would never settle such men on improved farms nearer home. Since I have been in this House, I have been convinced that there is only one big job before us, although there are a number of little ones as well. The one big job is to lower the cost of production. I do not know if it will ever be possible to get members to think agriculturally, I am rather doubtful about it. There is no doubt in my mind that in Western Australia we have to stand or fall on our wheat and wool. If wheat and wool are down, the whole State tightens its belt. It may be said that from the Governor down to the meanest struggler

for existence in our midst, we are all, in a sense, agricultural labourers in one department or another. The railway man works in the transport department of agricultural development, and everyone else, according to his vocation, falls into his separate department in the same category. I know that the farmer represents the pivot point of our existence in this State, and his problems should be amongst the Government's chief concerns. Like others, I am seeking for unity in outlook regarding our primary industries. It has always struck me that there is very little unity in this House. We have our various outlooks, that of the South-West, of the city, of the North, the industrial outlook, and that which concerns itself with the primary industries. No one of these viewpoints discloses much tolerance for any of the other points of view. In time, we may evolve a party with a purely State outlook. Quite possibly it is not difficult to understand that the party I am looking for is the Country Party. I do know that recently the Country Party has so broadened its constitutional basis as to include the interest of every department of Western Australian activity.

Mr. Lambert: And include all candidates for Parliament.

Mr. Lindsay: Your party allows only one candidate to stand.

Mr. Lambert: No, two—unfortunately for me.

Mr. DONEY: I come now to the operations of the Agricultural Bank. As a general rule these do not need to be interfered with, but there is one direction where a change is imperative. I have never been able to understand why the Agricultural Bank insists upon a fresh mortgage being registered for each fresh loan which it is attempted to raise. I know of farms carrying as many as 10 separate mortgages. I could never see any reason why there should be more than one. I know, of course, that the Land Titles Department, and ultimately Consolidated Revenue reap a fine harvest from the existing system. I also know that, after all, this is only another form of agricultural taxation, and that it is altogether unnecessary.

Mr. Lindsay: How do the other banks do?

Mr. DONEY: I understand they take out a mortgage for the full amount the farmer is likely to require.

Mr. Lindsay: Then why cannot the Agricultural Bank do the same?



Mr. DONEY: That is my own view. We all know that mortgages are very costly instruments. The need for the multiplicity of reports, valuations, registrations, statements of accounts, and all that sort of thing leads to a tremendous amount of delay and expense that, after all, only impede progress and to a small extent impair the usefulness of a very fine institution. As the member for Toodyay has just indicated, it should be quite easy for the settler upon his entry on his farm to forecast his probable loan requirements and to have an inclusive mortgage registered for the full amount, naturally drawing piecemeal upon that sum in amounts of £200 or £300. All that, of course, would be done through the branch offices and on the branch officers' entire responsibility, the matter not being referred to the head office in Perth except upon an unusual situation arising. This suggested amendment of the method would at least secure some semblance of reality to the policy of Agricultural Bank decentralisation, and also it would serve to reduce the huge amount of quite unnecessary work that the present method entails at head office. I hope the Minister responsible will give to this labour-time-and-money-saving suggestion of mine a little attention. Now I wish to refer once more to a matter which has been referred to here a dozen times or more, namely, the needs of Narrogin.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do you want more railways at Narrogin?

Mr. DONEY: No, although there is one I may mention a little later. But the point I want to make here is that year by year, as Narrogin grows and the buildings I am going to complain of get older, the position becomes worse. It is principally in respect of the public buildings at Narrogin that I am going to speak. I am very hopeful that I shall not be forced to take up the running set by my predecessor and annually parade Narrogin woes before the House. For myself I am hopeful that in due course I shall be able to coax the Minister concerned down to Narrogin, let him see for himself that there is a very sensible foundation for these complaints, and get him to apply the necessary remedy. Narrogin is one of the fortunate towns. Its geographical situation has resulted in its becoming a very important railway centre, and also the business and administrative centre of a very wide area. Private and

municipal enterprises have provided it with many fine buildings and conveniences. It is an exceedingly busy town, and its Government officers are especially busy. In view of this, one would imagine that successive Governments would be only too glad to help those towns that help themselves. But it is not so. The Narrogin Government buildings, except the post office, which of course is a Federal building, are disgracefully dark, cramped and antiquated little concerns dotted here and there over the face of the town. When I say they are dark and cramped and antiquated, that is precisely what I mean. They are at once the joke of all the more fortunate towns and the amazement of visitors. I will shortly outline to the Minister a scheme that will entail but very small outlay of money, and will result in the efficient housing of the departments concerned, namely, the Lands Department, the Agricultural Bank, the Savings Bank and the Courthouse, and I will dare hope for the Minister's co-operation. A further improvement necessary to the progress of Narrogin is the provision of an overhead vehicular bridge to connect the two parts of the town that now are cleft by reason of the railway running through the centre of the town. Already the Government have a certain responsibility in this matter, for I understand that when they closed the level crossing connecting the two sides of the town, they did so without having first received proper legal authority for their action. As the result of that illegal action, the traffic is now diverted to one road on the north and another on the south, each about half a mile from the centre of the town. I hope the time is not far distant when the Government will be sufficiently financial to take up this matter and give to important inland towns, or those of them assured of permanency, the administrative offices and conveniences they are entitled to. Now a brief word respecting the railway institute, or lack of one, at Narrogin. I find it necessary here to call the attention of the Minister for Railways to the matter. The convenience is thoroughly well deserved and is highly desirable, as much from an educational as from a recreative standpoint. It is very long overdue. Not that its desirability has not been officially recognised, but financial considerations have always stood in the way. I believe that for eight or nine

years successive commissioners of railways have urged its construction. Just now, as a temporary measure I am pleased to say, a small structure has at last been agreed to. This small building, I hope, is only a forerunner of the larger and better structure the Minister has in mind. I wish to stress its temporary nature and to say I feel sure the Minister will not overlook the fact that provisions are made in this and similar institutes for instruction in all railway matters, as well as in general knowledge. The Minister therefore stands to get a pretty substantial share of the benefits to be gained. I am very glad to see that the slump in wool prices has at last decided the growers of that commodity upon the launching of a wool campaign. I hope that such opportunities for assisting the industry and the campaign as happen to come the way of the Government will be seized with both hands. The bulk of the propaganda, of course, will be carried out at Home, and it seems to me reasonable to hope that the services of the Hon. W. C. Angwin, and the other Agents-General in London, will be amply and promptly available. The imperative need in this State for an active, extensive and profitable wool industry is manifest. Wool and wheat form the two sources from which we draw the wherewithal to conduct the services of the State, and on which we rely for the absorption of our surplus labour. Because of that, its profitable activity is of just as much consequence to the State as to the grower. Hard times have overtaken the industry but hard times hurt no one if they are properly faced. Rather do they have a tonic effect upon the industries concerned and provide a good form of discipline. Forced with our backs to the wall, we are the more determined to protect our rights, and the keener becomes our appreciation of the value of profits. Additionally, new methods are adopted, new markets found and economies effected. We have all noticed, I think, that publicity and unity have already in this State put new life into many a jaded primary industry, and the present campaign, if properly conducted, will, I consider, put wool on a sounder basis than it was even before the decline. It will take persistent and judicious advertising, of course, to slacken the demand for synthetic substitutes. Still, there is this much in our favour that wool is the natural

covering for flesh and blood, while synthetic substitutes are not, and sound advertising will squeeze the utmost benefit out of that fortunate fact. The point to be constantly borne in mind is that the wool question is a national question, and the rehabilitation of the wool industry should be a matter for intense and immediate Government concern. We listened last night to a clever speech by a very able man—the member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally)—who touched upon a number of points, but on no more interesting one than that of the industrial situation. It is a subject whereon he, I suppose, can speak with more knowledge, but unfortunately on occasions more one-sidedly than possibly anybody else in Western Australia.

Mr. Lindsay: Hear, hear! He has studied only one side of the question.

Mr. DONEY: I have no desire to be in any way offensive to the hon. member.

Mr. Kenneally: I shall have to examine that statement to find out where the compliment lies.

Mr. DONEY: Neither did I intend any compliment; I merely intended to point out precisely my opinion of the hon. member's remarks. I think I may say he is an apostle of the doctrine of higher wages and shorter hours; in other words, of less work and more money.

Mr. Sleeman: You do not believe in lower wages and longer hours, do you?

Mr. DONEY: Never mind.

Mr. Pantou: He will not answer that question.

Mr. DONEY: I do not mind saying that I, too, would be in favour of shorter hours and higher pay provided our industries and our production could stand the strain, which obviously they cannot. The hon. member's party constantly hold up America as affording an example of how labour should be treated. They frequently speak of the high wages obtainable in America. What is more natural than that it should be so. America is able to pay out of her prosperity. She is prosperous by reason of her solid factory and land productions on massed lines.

Mr. Lambert: You say that the establishing of factories in Australia is impoverishing it.

Mr. DONEY: I have never said that.

Mr. Lindsay: Your policy is not to give them a fair chance to be started.

Mr. Sleeman: You will not patronise them when they are started.

Mr. Latham: We patronise most of them.

Mr. DONEY: I was showing that America is in a position to be generous to her labour by reason of her wealth. The two countries, America and Australia, are by no means comparable; anyhow they are not fairly comparable. America is rich, not only on account of honest results from honest labour, but because of her quite successful grab at the storehouses of a rather impoverished Europe. These things have given her the wealth that enables her to be generous. If Australia is given a chance to rise, she will reach precisely the same position by and by.

Mr. Kenneally: You want us to accept a period of low wages and long hours and then we might get something to compensate us later on.

Mr. Lindsay: We want more work. That is all.

Mr. DONEY: The party opposite should not attempt to strangle Australia in her youth, as it were, by imposing conditions such as the 44-hour week which she cannot stand. We can pay wages only out of our production. Very good, help us to produce. The Labour Party should help Australia to what I may call economic safety so that we can afford to pay what they ask. It seems to me that just as we are starting to rise, the extremer elements of the Labour Party want to hit us on the head with a club. This, anyhow, should be obvious to all that the biggest industry in the State certainly cannot stand a 44-hour week. I refer to the agricultural industry. It would be quite reasonable to ask for corroboration on that point from Labour members who have farms of their own. They know that to apply the 44-hour week to agricultural occupations is altogether out of the question.

The Minister for Lands: Give us your experience, because you were a farmer at one time.

Mr. DONEY: I do not mind doing that; I am pleased at the opportunity to do so. I can easily recall that I worked from about one hour before sunrise until one or two hours after sundown. I do not claim to have kept it up for too many years, but I kept it up for a time, long enough to put the farm on a pretty successful basis.

The Minister for Lands: What, on a successful basis!

Mr. DONEY: A pretty successful basis.

The Minister for Lands: That is news to me.

Mr. DONEY: I am speaking, of course, from a fuller knowledge than the Minister can have of my concern. I was admonishing the party opposite not to kill production—the goose that lays the golden eggs, nor to claim a monopoly of the democratic virtues. I think I and a number of my friends on this side of the House may claim to be just as good democrats and humanitarians as are our friends opposite.

Mr. Kenneally: The hon. member hides the democratic temperament very successfully.

Mr. DONEY: Will the hon. member explain how?

Mr. Kenneally: Each member of the Country Party hides it very successfully.

Mr. DONEY: Where have I hidden it?

Mr. Latham: There is none so blind as he who will not see.

Mr. Kenneally: One of the members who hides his democratic tendencies has found that he himself could not stand the long hours on the farm, but he wishes to continue to work others for those long hours.

Mr. DONEY: In response to that rather long interjection I would like to point out that the reason I ceased to work the long hours on the land was not because I was unable to stand up to them, or because of a sudden accession of laziness, but because a disturbance occurred in another part of the world and I had necessarily to cease operations. Anyhow, I did not give up a 16 or 17-hour day to take on a 44-hour week. At present I am not in any very precise occupation, but I am still working something like 14 or 15 hours per day.

Mr. Lindsay: And you thrive on it, too.

Mr. Kenneally interjected.

Mr. DONEY: That is a point we are not likely to pursue with any benefit to the hon. member. Just before that mass of interjections, I was remarking that we could only pay wages out of production and I was asking members opposite to help us to produce. I also said that I claimed to be as good a democrat and as sound a humanitarian as anyone on the opposite side of the House. I am just as anxious as they that the finances and resources of this State should be so ordered as to put a coat on every man's back and bread on every man's table. Let me now prove the democracy that is inherent in me. My father used to teach me that all projected legislation should be regarded first and foremost from the point of view of the poorest of the poor

people. He told me something of the virtues of equality of man, equality of opportunity and so on. He also told me the childish stupidity of killing the goose that laid the golden eggs.

Hon. G. Taylor: What has the member for East Perth to say to that?

Mr. Kenneally: You keep your eye on No. 1.

Mr. Latham: We all do that, I think.

Mr. DONEY: I did not catch the remark of the member for East Perth.

Mr. Lindsay: He said you keep your eye on No. 1.

Mr. DONEY: To whom was the member for East Perth referring?

Mr. Kenneally: Evidently you did catch my remark.

Mr. DONEY: The remark perhaps, but not its import.

The Minister for Lands: Now you have joined the most reactionary party in Australia.

Mr. Lindsay: You should ask the Minister to withdraw that statement. It is not correct.

Mr. DONEY: I shall not bother to ask for its withdrawal, but I should like to tell members opposite that there is in existence in Australia to-day an economic force which, if Labour persists in widening the gulf between money received and value given, will force Australia completely out of the markets of the world. There is not the slightest doubt that we in Australia have isolation and costly production to contend with. Do not let us add to it the unnecessary burden that comes from senseless party strife.

The Minister for Lands: Who gave you the right to lecture on this matter?

Mr. DONEY: The rules of the House give me that right.

The Minister for Lands: You do not produce the commodities you speak of. Why do you no longer produce?

Mr. DONEY: The hon. member must know why I no longer produce. The reason is quite sufficient.

The Minister for Lands: I know why and that is why I object.

Mr. DONEY: I would like members opposite to take an Australian view, instead of looking at things from a party viewpoint. The member for East Perth spent a good deal of time last night in trying to saddle the party to which I belong with an express predilection for South-

ern European labour. Does he think that by some strange division of the national sentiment, all the love of Australia and Australians is on his side of the House, and all the love of the foreigner on this side?

Mr. Kenneally: That is indicated by the employment that is given to Southern Europeans.

Mr. DONEY: The Southern Europeans are here and they are here largely at our own invitation. Anyhow, we allowed them to come here when we might perhaps have stopped them. The responsibility, therefore, is largely ours. The point is, they are here, and being here they have to be fed. While they are here they should work, at that particular class of occupation that suits them. Never on any account let them have preference over our own people. I never would give that, nor would members of the party to which I belong.

Mr. Kenneally: Members of your party say differently. Are you denying your own members?

Mr. DONEY: No. I should like to see members opposite a little more consistent than they are. On many occasions I have seen members entering restaurants run by foreigners and taking refreshments there. That means, if it means anything, that they are showing preference for Southern European labour over British labour. There are in this city and everywhere a sufficient number of British-run restaurants, if people desire to patronise them. So much for the consistency of members opposite.

Mr. Sleeman: I think you have bad eyesight.

Mr. Lindsay: Why do you not clean that up before starting upon us?

Mr. DONEY: I should like to make a brief reference to something that appears in "Hansard," and ask an explanation of the Minister concerned. In March last I asked the Minister for Works whether any decision had been arrived at, and if so what it was, with respect to compensation for land resumed along the Dwarda-Narrogin railway. I also asked him to state the date fixed for the settlement of the compensation claims. The Minister replied that the land had not yet been resumed but that plans were being prepared. He anticipated that a "Gazette" notice would be issued by the end of the following month, when claim forms would immediately be forwarded to all land owners concerned, and the provisions of the Public Works Act would then be carried out as claims were received. I

understand that claim forms were not sent out, and I take it the plans have not been prepared. I am anxious to ascertain from the Minister for Works what the compensation is, and when the people concerned may expect to receive their claim forms.

**MR. LAMBERT** (Coolgardie) [8.20]: In addressing myself to this motion I do not know that I shall attempt to be quite as versatile as some other members have been. The member for Swan spoke on pretty well everything, from the League of Nations to fruit-fly. Other members were quite as all-embracing in their remarks. Some showed rather a regrettable despondency by indicating that this might be the last occasion when they would have the opportunity to speak to a motion such as this. I intend to be a little optimistic and express the hope that the great majority of members now in the House will return to their places. I find it a little difficult to speak at this juncture. Members will know that I displayed a disposition last session to acquire more territory than then existed in the Coolgardie electorate. They will recollect the enthusiastic manner in which I supported the desire to extend the boundaries of that district.

**Mr. Lindsay**: We know how enthusiastic you were.

**Mr. LAMBERT**: Having realised that ambition, I find it necessary now to address my remarks not only to the territory that once embraced the historic electorate of Coolgardie, but also to refer to some of the problems surrounding the equally important constituency of Yilgarn. Last season was not a very good one, and was very far from good in the part of the State to which I refer, namely around Southern Cross and over a considerable portion of the Yilgarn district. Had it not been for the foresight of the Minister for Lands and the Government generally in establishing an experimental State farm at Ghooli, and demonstrating to the settlers there what the land could produce with proper farming methods, no doubt there would have been a considerable amount of despondency. Whilst the wheat returns from the Southern Cross district were regrettably low, at the Ghooli State farm, where proper methods of cultivation were indulged in, an average yield of 19 bushels to the acre was realised. What would have been a very disappointing outlook for the farmers in and around Southern Cross, owing to the adverse season, was considerably brightened by the fact that if they were

prepared to adopt proper farming methods, they could obtain results equally beneficial.

**Mr. Mann**: What area was cropped at Ghooli?

**The Minister for Lands**: Last year, about 400 acres.

**Mr. LAMBERT**: This year I think the area is between 400 and 500 acres. Sufficient land was cultivated last year to demonstrate that by the use of proper methods and with even a light rainfall at the right time, wheat-growing could profitably be undertaken in that area. The Government have encouraged fallowing, and the adoption of better methods of farming to the extent that they are even making advances for fallowing. On the miners' settlement and in other parts a considerable acreage of ground is under fallow, and this will be producing next year. I am confident from the results I have seen that if the Government encouraged farmers to adopt improved methods of cultivation Southern Cross would develop into one of the most important agricultural centres in the State. I was speaking to Mr. Moran, a trustee of the Agricultural Bank, recently. He told me he had with the local Agricultural Bank inspector travelled over the miners' settlement. He found a great deal of enthusiasm amongst the settlers. He said it was wonderful to see the transformation that had taken place in that area during the last two years. A large amount of land is under cultivation and under fallow. The stout-hearted men who unfortunately had, after years of toil in the mines, to forsake their avocation, had tackled nobly the problem of carving out a home for themselves in this new centre. They were working under conditions that were quite strange to them, but had engaged in the work with that determination that was characteristic of those who went to the goldfields in the early days. They were making a show that was a credit to them. I am sure the Government will not be unmindful of their obligations to these settlers, who will require water supplies and other facilities to enable them to become successful farmers. At no distant date they will require a railway for the transport of their produce. The granting of all these facilities will be justified in the near future. This brings me to the 3,500 farms scheme. The member for Williams-Narrogin stated that the big territory embraced by the area lying south of Southern Cross to the seaboard,

and east and west of the Narembreen line and the Esperance line, should be opened up in some comprehensive way. This scheme should not be launched in a piecemeal or haphazard manner. It should be properly thought out, planned and organised on a sound basis.

The Minister for Lands: It is being carefully and thoughtfully inquired into.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is the only safe way to attain success. I hope the independent investigations that are now being conducted will justify the immediate opening up of this territory in a comprehensive way, and lead to the launching of a properly organised land settlement scheme. I am convinced this large territory will justify the building of a network of railways radiating from Southern Cross to Ravenshorpe, and radiating from Narembreen to the Esperance line, thus giving all-needed railway facilities for the adequate opening up of this vast and fertile territory. I hope, too, that a railway scheme of this nature will embrace the miners' settlement, because, as I indicated previously, I am confident that it will not be long before railway and other facilities will be justified in that large area also. I would like to refer briefly to the necessity for carrying on the good work that has characterised the administration of the present Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies in supplying rock catchments and other water supplies. I consider that whoever is responsible for the work merits great commendation. Certainly the work is most necessary, and it is to be hoped that the State will have the finances necessary for extending it considerably. The country west of Bullfinch now carries a considerable number of settlers, and needs a water supply if the settlers are to be successful. I trust the Loan Estimates will reveal that there is money available to push on the work. The scheme, I understand, is already surveyed. Undoubtedly, if we expect the farmers settled in that area to become successful, we must give them water supplies as well as other needed facilities. They are now carting water for miles, which is economically unsound, besides being wasteful and disheartening to them. I repeat the hope that funds may be found, during the current financial year, to extend considerably the water supply in the West Bullfinch district. That hope also extends to the provision of school accommodation in new localities. When school accommodation is

needed, we should do everything possible, to ensure that the settlers, who are doing so much to open up our bush lands shall have school facilities that will fit their children for the battle of life. Now to turn for a moment from farming to mining. Some time ago the Minister for Mines authorised boring operations in the Coolgardie district. For some years I have been urging the boring of the big known ore channels in various parts of the State that for one reason or another had been abandoned in earlier days. My pleadings were seconded by the Minister and many of his responsible officers. As a result, a boring plant was put in at Coolgardie. Although the mine I refer to had been abandoned for years, the boring operations at the 400ft. level revealed values up to 6 ozs. per ton. It is deeply to be regretted that outside capital has not come in to sink the necessary shafts and open up the mine. I would suggest to the Minister the removal of any financial embargo at present placed upon the mine, in particular for boring, since such an embargo would be a liability on the mine if it were taken over. I urge upon him the lifting of any such embargo with a view to encouraging outside capital at least to develop the mine.

Mr. Latham: Is this a Crown lease held by the Crown?

Mr. LAMBERT: It is a reservation held by the Crown. Although countless numbers of people scattered throughout the length and breadth of Australia have an abiding faith in the richness of Coolgardie, and although the first bore put down by the Government showed that faith to be justified, yet we have not found outside persons with sufficient enterprise to test the possibilities of Tindalls mine.

Hon. G. Taylor: At what depth was the value struck?

The Minister for Mines: At 200 feet below the deepest workings.

Mr. LAMBERT: At between 400 and 500 feet, which is a considerable depth. It is not a shallow thing. If the results revealed by the two or three bores put down were well known, I think the effect would be to produce sufficient funds to have the necessary development work carried out. The general average of the lode, as indicated by the assays from the boring, show values up to those being got at Wiluna. It is a good big lode, and prospects ahead are most encouraging.

Mr. Mann: The results of the borings were not largely advertised.

The Minister for Mines: They have been advertised in the Press at least four times.

Mr. LAMBERT: I know that the Minister has called attention to the subject on two or three occasions.

The Minister for Mines: I have spoken about it in this House twice.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. The Minister expressed his disappointment that the property had not been taken up. I think that after his present programme of boring is completed, the prospects in this and in other mines in the Coolgardie area would justify him in bringing the plant back to Coolgardie and continuing to bore there. It is peculiar that although the bore started in Coolgardie and obtained favourable results there, it has not produced encouraging results in the many other places to which it has been sent. I say that with great regret.

The Minister for Mines: That refers to the Eastern Goldfields only.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes; I was not speaking of the other fields. With values revealed at 400 or 500 feet depth in a mine which geologically looks sound, which has a good big lode that would employ a lot of people and thus resuscitate the town and create great mining activity, I consider that the Minister would be justified, when his boring programme elsewhere is through, in returning the plant to Coolgardie and there continuing the operations which proved so successful up to the time the bore was removed. I trust the Government will continue to encourage prospecting. Certainly they have given a considerable amount of support and encouragement to mining generally as well as to prospecting in particular during the five or six years they have held office.

The Minister for Mines: There are more prospecting parties out to-day than there have been for the last six years in Western Australia. Seventy-one parties assisted by the Mines Department are out, besides unassisted parties.

Mr. LAMBERT: Only to-night I was looking at some analyses of tin ore brought in by one of the Northern members. The assays showed up to 53 per cent. of metallic tin. The ore came from new country in the North. Such a fact shows that Western Australia is yet far from being completely prospected. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) referred to the

great mineral wealth of America. True, America is rich in minerals such as iron and copper, and in fact all minerals that go to make a country great and wealthy.

Mr. Mann: Except manganese.

Mr. LAMBERT: With that possible exception. Even in the portions of the Commonwealth which have already been explored, we have all minerals and metals necessary to meet the needs of an advanced civilisation, and to cater for a much greater population than Australia possesses to-day. Practically none of the main minerals have as yet been touched. They are virtually in their native state. Take our great iron deposits—and iron means so much to the prosperity of a nation. Take copper. Take the auriferous areas containing gold, silver and many rare metals. They are all to a large extent still untouched, and merely await the enterprise and industry of man to turn them into assets of national value. I have referred briefly to new legislation indicated in the Governor's Speech. I think all the rest of that legislation is overshadowed by a proposal that should play a great part in the future prosperity of Western Australia, and should commend itself to hon. members opposite, particularly members sitting on the cross benches. I refer to the proposal of the Government to establish a rural bank. The hon. members referred to must know that in view of the complex nature of finance to-day, in view of the ever-increasing need for getting the greatest amount out of one's product, the only safe way, and one of the most promising roads to success, is to come closely to grips with finance. The only means by which that can be done is to have control of one's own financial affairs. I do not think we can do that with outside banks. I hardly believe that from outside banks, run purely for profit, one is likely to get the same assistance and the same consideration as from a bank run simply to serve the community, and having no other object in view. Such, I hope, will be the character of the proposed rural bank. The day will come when the farmer will realise that if he is going to push his co-operative movement, his co-operative buying and his co-operative selling, he must have co-operative banking. Co-operative banking is included among the things that will tend to make him successful upon the land. I believe the day

has gone when the farmer was prepared to allow outside speculators to deal in his produce. And he has no more right to be at the mercy of financial institutions, whether they be banks or insurance companies or anything else.

Mr. Lindsay: Do you think the proposed bank will reduce the rate of interest charged the farmer?

Mr. LAMBERT: It should. People speak glibly of the enhanced cost of everything to-day. Primarily the cost of everything springs from banking. There is no doubt about that. Banking is the prime factor of cost. If we had bank interest to-day at 3 per cent. as it was 30 years ago, all production would be on a totally different basis. But in recent years there has been a continuous inflation of bank interest, which has risen from about 3 or 3½ per cent. to 7 per cent., and in many cases to 8 per cent. Indeed, I do not know whether the limit has yet been reached. Thus banking represents a problem that must be grappled with by advanced communities and by men who have to produce and market their products at world's parity or in the markets of the world. I believe it should tend to reduce the rate of bank interest. I do not suggest that it will force the Associated Banks to lower their interest charges; that is hardly likely. If the rural bank is established to lend money to farmers, and has in mind the necessity for clearing sufficient to meet expenses and possibly losses only, then the money available should be lent at considerably cheaper rates than obtain now. I can give hon. members an illuminating instance if I refer to the Bank of Argentina which played the greatest possible part in developing that great republic. I was told by a bank director 10 years after the Bank of Argentina had been established that, had it been a private institution, it could have paid 25 per cent. per annum out of the profits it made. Those profits represented money repaid to the bank and then re-lent to farmers. Like a snowball the money accumulated and being re-lent returned to the bank large and ever-growing profits. It can easily be understood, therefore, that the bank played one of the most important parts possible in developing the Argentine, which to-day is challenging Australia in the markets of the world in competition with our products. Last session we passed the Redistribution of

Seats Act. It was not palatable to me, and I deeply regret that it was passed.

Hon. G. Taylor: It did not appeal to the Government members, because only 12 of their members voted for it.

Mr. LAMBERT: I deplore the fact that representation is to be taken away from the country districts and given to the more congested industrial centres on the coast. I believe that if we look after the country districts, the more closely populated industrial centres will look after themselves. It is far more necessary that a thousand settlers engaged in opening up and developing the State outback should have parliamentary representation, than that, say, 10,000 people in the metropolitan area should be represented. Although I deeply deplore the position that has arisen, it cannot be remedied now. I notice that the Government propose to introduce a Redistribution of Seats Bill that will apply to the Legislative Council. I hope that the same element of stupidity will not be manifest in that legislation, but that the Government will realise that members of the Upper House, so long as they are there, can be of service to the people who are developing the country areas. I hope that any attempt at redistribution will not be so much on a population basis as on one recognising the necessity of giving the outer areas as much representation as possible. The Government propose to introduce a Bill to deal with mentally defective people. That form of legislation is long overdue. I trust the Government will persevere with legislation along sound practical lines, with the object of eliminating mental defectives from our community, and so purging our civilisation of these unfortunates. Recently I read an article that dealt with the history of many families of mental defectives in America. It was appalling to note the effect of mental deficiency upon the criminal records of that country. If the Government introduce a Bill of this description, it will doubtless contain some controversial clauses, but it is to be hoped that all members will realise the necessity for them and help the Government to purge our civilisation of much that is not commendable. The member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) dealt extensively with unemployment. Some have preached the gospel that if we have more work, and still more work, with longer hours of employment, the cure of unemploy-



ment will be achieved. That is not the cause of the problem. The great difficulty in most countries is to be found in the armies of unskilled and undisciplined labour that is so hard to deal with. It will not be solved until civilisation realises that this class of labour must be organised, not in the sense of industrial unionism, but along lines of availability and in co-operation with the Government regarding the creation of work essential to keep men in employment. Until the labour available is organised along those lines and work allocated for them, there can be no cure for unemployment. If there is dislocation of industry there is at once unemployment. The moment a boss decides to put off 50 or 100 men, we have a partial dislocation of industry, and unemployment follows. This problem of unemployment is an economic disease that civilisation to-day will not tackle. Civilisation turns its eyes away and is apt to remark that it is the fault of these people that they are out of work. It is admitted that there are some who are unemployable, but there are a lot of genuine men and women desirous of obtaining work who are unemployed. Under our existing social conditions we are prone to humbug ourselves as we are to get within sparring distance of the cure for this economic disease. Until we tackle the disease along the lines of organisation and allocation of work, it will never be dealt with properly. In conclusion, I will not adopt the distressed attitude that some hon. members have displayed and point to the fact that this may be my last contribution to an Address-in-reply debate. If this is to be my last utterance on such a motion, I shall at least have some very inspiring recollections of those with whom I have associated, including many who have opposed us in politics.

Mr. Withers: That is a very mild way of saying farewell.

Hon. G. Taylor: At any rate, we have listened very patiently to your instructive speech to-night.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is to be hoped that during this last session of Parliament, which will mark our Centenary year, the Opposition will be as helpful as they endeavour to be at most times. Let us all join in an expression of sincere hope that the present indications of a bountiful harvest will continue, and that this year will mark one of the most productive eras in the history of our State.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [8.55]: I propose to make an attempt at a record to-night and to deliver the shortest speech on this motion that is within the knowledge of hon. members. Possibly I may be assisted if hon. members will not attempt to assist me. I have been told that the shortest speech known in Parliament consisted of six words, but I do not think that was in connection with an Address-in-reply debate, and I do not think it was reported in "Hansard." I hope to be able to complete what I desire to say within 15 minutes. The other evening some very startling figures were quoted to this House relative to workers' compensation and the increase in the cost of insurances because of workers' compensation liabilities. They were startling and I am not in a position to say whether the figures were accurate or not. It is common ground that since we passed the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Act in 1924 there has been an immense increase in the cost of insurance. It is common ground, for instance, that the State Insurance Office, which hon. members opposite allege is more economically run than a private insurance office, is now charging 20 per cent. on the wages paid for workers' compensation cover in certain industries.

Mr. Kenneally: And even so, that is less than the outside companies are charging.

Mr. DAVY: That does not matter, for the sake of my argument. I take the State Insurance Office to show that in an office which Government members alleged is the most economically run, a charge of 20 per cent. is levied on wages paid, for cover in certain industries. That is a solid impost. It is said that it is due to the fact that in that particular industry a large number of Southern Europeans are employed, and it is also said that those Southern Europeans have lost respect for the extremities of their bodies.

Mr. Panton: They are not so expert with the axe.

Mr. DAVY: That may have something to do with it as well.

Mr. Sleeman: State insurance will do away with that sort of thing.

Mr. DAVY: It is said that the South-West has been fertilised by the lopping off of fingers and toes. I was told the other day that in the constituency represented by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers), at one private hospital there were eight persons with an aggregate of 30 toes and fingers

missing. When this point was brought under the notice of the House the other night, a Minister suggested that the employers themselves were to blame for employing Southern Europeans. It seems to me it is the duty of any Government to govern a country as they find it, not as they would like it to be. It is the duty of this Parliament to make laws to meet the peculiarities of the population that exists here now, not to make laws that would suit a different kind of population. We have in Western Australia already a large number of Southern Europeans, and we are going to get more. It is not in our power to stop them from coming here. So we have to frame our policy and make our laws to meet the fact that we have them here already. And I take it members can hardly disagree with me when I put forward the principle that we cannot have different classes of people in this State. If any man is allowed to enter Australia and remain here, he must be the equal of any other man in the State. He must have the same laws made applicable to him, and must have the same rights as every other citizen. It is inconceivable that in a country so truly democratic as Australia, we can have different classes of persons, some who have the right to do this or that, and some who have not that right, some who can get a certain kind of employment and some who cannot.

Mr. Kenneally: Would you apply that argument to Asiatics?

Mr. DAVY: I would apply it to every person who is permitted to remain in Western Australia. If we are going to allow a human being to live in Australia, I cannot accept for one moment the theory that we can give to that person a different status from all others. Personally, I am just as enthusiastically keen on keeping this Australia for persons of our own race as any other member can possibly be. I think it is absolutely essential to the preservation of the welfare of Australia that we should remain a pure European race, and for choice a pure British race. But if we have people here and they are allowed by the law to stay here, we cannot consistently as a democratic country, put those persons in any different category from the rest of the citizens of Australia. The argument I was referring to, namely that the employers have only themselves to blame, is not an answer

to the difficulty. Clearly members must agree that it must be only with the greatest difficulty that any industry can stand the strain, not only of paying wages, but of paying 20 per cent. further for the cost of insurance under the Worker's Compensation Act. That seems to me to indicate that our present system of providing compensation to men who are prevented from carrying on their work by injury or sickness requires at this juncture close scrutiny. There are other matters which occur to anyone who has had experience of worker's compensation and which require scrutiny. I can claim to have had a good deal of experience in the last few years of the operation of that Act. It seems to me there are many serious objections to our present system, both from the point of view of the worker and from the point of view of the employer. There are too many cases under the Workers' Compensation Act of the nature which I might describe as borderline cases. There are too many workers faced with the problem of solving whether or not they are covered by the Act. There are too many occasions upon which the judges of the Full Court find themselves in strong disagreement as to whether or not a man meeting with a particular accident or suffering from a particular disability is covered by the Act. My own experience has served to call my attention to such cases. Recently there was the case of a woman, employed as a barmaid in a hotel, who contracted rheumatic fever. It was proved to the satisfaction of the magistrate that the contraction of that rheumatic fever was due to the dampness of the floor. I think we are all in agreement that our Act should be framed to award compensation to such a case. But it is by no means clear that it does. In fact, so far from being clear was it, that we found the learned Chief Justice of Western Australia held very definitely that such a case was not covered by the Workers' Compensation Act. Fortunately for the worker in this case, two other judges sitting on the Full Court decided that she was so covered. There are far too many cases of that kind, and the worker is too frequently faced with the necessity perhaps of having his name go down to posterity as a party in a leading case, when perhaps the payment of compensation in order to enable him to exist was urgent, and needed, if it

were to be any good, to be paid forthwith. Again, we have since our amending Act of 1924, provision made for the payment of lump sums under the second schedule; lump sums not in redemption of weekly payments, but straight out fixed lump sums for certain specified disabilities. When that amendment of the Act was before the House, I opposed that second schedule. It seemed to me to be an illogical method of awarding compensation, ridiculous in fact, to say to a man if he had lost the end of his little finger he was to get a particular sum of money, when perhaps the loss of that finger-end might not mean any loss to him; and to give to another man to whom such a loss was important, the same sum of money.

Mr. Kenneally: You would not suggest that the loss of the point of a finger was no loss to a man?

Mr. DAVY: I do suggest that in many instances such a loss would be no loss of earning capacity at all.

Mr. Panton: It would be a considerable loss if he were a professional pianist.

Mr. DAVY: It would be no loss if it meant no diminution whatever in his earning capacity. On the other hand, of course, as the member for Menzies points out, in the case of an expert piano player it might be very important, a loss for which the sum mentioned in the second schedule might be totally inadequate. So, too, in the case of a watchmaker who, through such loss might be rendered incapable of following his avocation, and so he would be reduced from an earning capacity of £6 or £7 a week to the mere basic wage. I opposed therefore the fixing of these lump sums arbitrarily. And I opposed it also for the reason that it seemed to be absurd to say to a man who might meet with a spectacular accident in which he lost a certain part of his body, that he should be paid a far greater sum than another man who had not lost a part of his body and yet was more seriously disabled than the first. There are many injuries that do not come under the second schedule at all. Under the provision in the old Act for lump sum settlements in redemption of weekly payments there is power in the magistrate of the local court to provide for the investment of the lump sum awarded, or to exercise some supervision over what is to be done with that money, if the magistrate thinks it unwise that the lump sum be

handed straight away to the worker. I submit that in a great number of cases this is unwise; a man who has never handled a large sum of money might well waste it or spend it unwisely. If he is in that position, the magistrate can see to it that the sum is spent wisely or put to some approved purpose. Under the second schedule there is no such provision. The man is entitled to receive the sum of money, and there can be no supervision over what he does with it. From my observation, in too large a number of cases payments made under the second schedule do not do the worker who receives them any good whatever. The money is wasted through inexperience or through lack of capacity to look after a large sum. Another serious disability is the immensely increased cost of doctors' expenses since the increase in the amount allowed for the payment of medical expenses. So I say this Act is not working well at the present time. There are many serious injustices and difficulties, and to my mind it is highly uneconomical; I do not believe the public of Western Australia are getting value for the money. A third objection I see to the present system is that undoubtedly in a great number of cases it leads to fraud. Is not the time coming when we ought to investigate the whole of our system of providing for people put out of action through injury or sickness, with a view to an entire change? I suggest to the Government that that time has come, and that the advice should be sought of those people who know most of the operation of the Workers' Compensation Act. I suggest that such persons as union secretaries, who have had considerable experience of it, and the gentlemen in charge of the State Insurance Office, who also have had experience of it, should be asked for their opinions as to whether the present system is the right one; and if in their opinion it is not, the advisability of substituting for it some wider and broader scheme which will pay compensation with more speed and certainty and will get over the difficulties with which we are faced at the present time. I am not in the habit of offering congratulations to the Government. It seems to me that members of this House who are sitting in Opposition are here to criticise the Government, not to praise them. As a matter of fact, I do not think the Government need much praise from us. It has always seemed to me they are very well capable of praising themselves. I notice that the members of the

Government and their supporters on the cross benches are in the habit of speaking in the most glowing terms of their past performances and of what they are going to do in the future. But I propose to-night to make an exception to my habit of not congratulating the Government, and congratulate them upon one or two things.

Mr. Kenneally: That they have not done.

Mr. DAVY: First of all I should like to congratulate them on last year's wheat yield. Then I should like to congratulate them on the very marked increase in the number of sheep in Western Australia. I do not agree with my friend, the Leader of the Opposition, when he says there were very few things in the Governor's Speech which would give anybody comfort. I entirely agree with the Premier when he emphasises that it must give great comfort to the citizens of Western Australia to read in the Governor's Speech that last year we had such a fine wheat yield, a wheat yield which is the second record in the history of Western Australia and which is well up to, if not above, the average, if we regard it from the point of view of the yield per acre. I would furthermore like to congratulate the Government on having had during the whole of their term of office a group of five years that have been the best in the history of Western Australia.

Mr. Kenneally: Cause and effect.

Mr. DAVY: I do not think I shall be challenged when I say that taken as a group and regarding the whole State, the five years ended the 30th June, 1929, were the best the State has ever had. I do not think my friends of the Country Party will disagree with that. Neither do I think we are ever likely to have a better group of five years unless we discover how to control the rainfall.

Mr. Kenneally: Or keep the Labour Party in office.

Mr. DAVY: I wish to congratulate the Government moreover on the fact that during the last financial year they received in indirect taxation £197,000 and by way of Federal grants £226,000 more than their predecessor received in his last year of office. I wish to congratulate the Government on the fact that they have been able during the last five years of office to spend year by year  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions of borrowed money. I would like to congratulate them on the fact that out of a total of some 20 odd millions of money, five millions of it was obtained at a cost of only 1 per cent. per annum. Surely

any Government with a record like that deserves considerable congratulation. The sad part is that after having congratulated them on those four, five or six items, I then come to the fact that in spite of their having experienced this wonderful group of five years, in spite of their having had 20 millions of loan money to spend, of which five millions has cost them only 1 per cent., and in spite of last season having produced the second record wheat crop in the history of the State, nevertheless they show a deficit of well over a quarter of million of money.

Mr. Lindsay: Are you congratulating the Government on that too?

Mr. DAVY: No, my congratulations stop there. The Premier the other night in a very delightful speech that we all enjoyed—we always enjoy his speeches—told us that the deficit was quite easily explained. The reason for it was that the wheat harvest was smaller than had been expected—a wheat harvest which he told us the other night was a matter to give comfort to the citizens of the State, a wheat harvest which was the second record in the history of the State, a wheat harvest which will perhaps be exceeded this year but which we cannot always hope to exceed.

The Minister for Railways: The average, not the acreage.

Mr. DAVY: The Premier said in effect, "If we had had what I expected, an abnormally good harvest, something more than the second record harvest in the history of the State, then there would have been no deficit." When the Premier made that excuse he reminded me of the man who borrows £100 and undertakes to repay it at the end of the year. When the end of the year comes he says, "Well, I am awfully sorry, old chap, but I find I cannot repay that hundred pounds. I expected to be able to repay it, but I have had a rotten bit of luck; I did not get a win in Tattersall's sweep."

The Minister for Railways: We did not get an average harvest.

Mr. DAVY: What is the good of talking about not having got an average harvest when the State reaped the second record in its history, and, taken on the acreage basis, the yield was still above the average experienced in the past.

The Minister for Railways: It was not. That is an absolute misrepresentation.

Mr. DAVY: There are the figures. The average yield was 10.81 bushels, and I ask

members to say whether it was not above the average yield that we have had in Western Australia.

The Minister for Lands: There were 300,000 acres more under crop than in the previous year.

Mr. DAVY: What have the 300,000 acres got to do with the average yield per acre?

The Minister for Lands: We are carrying 2,000 more settlers. That is the position.

Mr. DAVY: Very well; I shall leave it at that.

Hon. G. Taylor: Why disturb the equilibrium of the Government?

The Minister for Mines: He is not disturbing me very much.

Mr. DAVY: We cannot at the present time be particularly satisfied with the financial position. If we have this deficit of £275,000 after five good seasons and after the second record harvest in the history of the State, what is going to happen when we strike a group of five bad years?

The Minister for Mines: We will go back to the position of our predecessors and have a 2¼ million deficit.

Mr. DAVY: Is that a matter to be put forward with equanimity?

Mr. Thomson: There is not much comfort in it.

Mr. DAVY: Is that something to which we should look forward with pleasure? The Minister for Mines tells us quite happily and calmly that if we do strike a bad time, we shall go back to the worst possible position that any man can anticipate. Is that something we should tell the people of Western Australia in order to hearten them to increased efforts for the prosperity of the State?

The Minister for Lands: Your Government went to the bad to the extent of 2¼ millions in five years—good years, too.

Mr. Richardson: Much of that deficit was inherited.

Mr. DAVY: Whenever I make any statement in this House that seems not entirely to please the Minister for Lands, he always gives the same answer, "You did it, too," the "You're another" retort of the school-boy. I say this—even if the Minister for Lands would rather I did not say it—that we can well expect the Treasurer to tell us his plan to overcome this difficulty. What is his plan to prevent our having a deficit of over a quarter of a million of money after a series of five of the best seasons experienced by the State and in the

year when we produced our second record harvest? It seems to me that by no means have we any reason to congratulate ourselves at the present time on the financial position of the State.

The Minister for Lands: You do not know much about the finances.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret)  
I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	..	17

Majority against .. 6

#### AYES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Maley
Mr. Davy	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Doney	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Latham	Mr. North
Mr. Lindsay	(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Cowan	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Troy
Miss Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Millington	(Teller.)

Motion (adjournment) thus negatived.

MR. LATHAM (York) [9.29]: While listening to the reading of His Excellency's Speech I was reminded of a remark I once read made by that statesman, Abraham Lincoln. He said, "If we first know where we are and whither we are trending, we can better judge what to do and how to do it." I am sure that if Abraham Lincoln could have heard the Speech delivered, he would have made the same comments regarding it, because it conveyed so very little to us of where we were or whither we were going. To-day the greatest consideration should be given to the finances. I regret to say that except for two or three platitudes the financial position as referred to in the Speech is dismissed from notice. People have a right to know how they stand. This House has a right to know so that we may be better able to judge what legislation is warranted, and to understand what we are doing. As the

member for West Perth has stated, the last five years have been the best consecutive years the State has ever seen.

The Minister for Lands: And it has been the best Government.

Mr. LATHAM: I have no desire to enter into a discussion with the Minister for Lands just now. Not only has the yield been very good and the area under crop very great, but prices have been favourable. A little while ago there was a good deal of despondency with respect to future wheat prices.

Mr. Corboy: And that despondency was justified.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, but it did not justify the Premier in giving us a deficit of £275,000 after all these good years. If he was not able to make his finances balance during that period, then the period ahead might well indeed be black. I am pleased to note that the wheat market has lately made a recovery, but how long it will hold up remains to be seen. Only yesterday there seems to have been a drop of 2s. a quarter. We must give careful consideration to the financial position because we are dependent almost entirely upon primary production. Not only should the Speech be a retrospect of what has happened, but an indication of what is in the minds of the Government for the future. With the exception of two or three amendments that are foreshadowed to existing legislation, it appears that very little will be done. I wanted to know what the Government had in mind to relieve unemployment as well as to effect a balancing of the financial ledger. Not one word do we see in the Speech with respect to that matter. It was merely a reiteration of what the people already knew. Apparently it was intended to boost the State on past records. One thing that impressed me the other night was the statement of the Premier when he said that the people of the State were dependent upon its primary industries, particularly wheat and sheep growing. One would think that any legislation that was being brought down and any assistance that was rendered would have been in favour of those two industries. I have looked carefully through the Speech, and failed to notice anything tending towards that end.

The Minister for Mines: We have given that assistance for the last five years, but the previous Government did not avail themselves of the opportunity to do so. We have given plenty of assistance.

Mr. LATHAM: The present Government do not miss the chance to talk about what they have done.

Mr. Kenneally: But you just complained that they were not talking about it.

Mr. LATHAM: I want to know what their intentions are. Apparently the future is left to work out its own salvation.

Mr. Withers: It will be a pleasant surprise for you when it comes along.

The Minister for Mines: You talked about water supplies, but did nothing in all those years. See what we have done in five years.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not say nothing has been done. I am not going to leave it to the Government to say that nothing can be done. There are many ways of helping the primary producer. One way to assist him would be to remove the tariff wall, which makes so costly the tools of trade necessary for carrying on these industries. Of course we have no control over that. We can, however, reduce taxation in this State. The Government have been generous to the primary producers. They have asked for many things, and the Government have given them all, but the producers have been charged for everything, and in many instances a profit has resulted. I object to a profit being made out of the primary producers for services rendered.

Mr. Richardson: Where does their generosity come in?

Mr. LATHAM: The generosity has resulted to their own benefit.

Mr. Corboy: I suppose a profit has been obtained out of the transport of super. and wheat.

Mr. LATHAM: Surely the hon. member does not believe that tale. He represents a fairly good agricultural centre. He knows that the story about these concessions and loss of revenue through wheat transport is mythical. The best paying revenue outside timber is in the full trains of wheat that come to the ports.

Mr. Corboy: And they account for the loss.

Mr. Richardson: You will be joining the Country Party directly.

Mr. LATHAM: We ought to do something to bring down rail freights. The Minister for Railways will probably tell me that the losses will necessitate an increase in freights.

The Minister for Railways: No.

Mr. LATHAM: They have to be made up somehow, either by charging the general taxpayer or the persons who use the rail-

ways. Which is the more logical thing to do I do not know.

Mr. Kenneally: Perhaps the hon. member is disappointed that no increased taxation is foreshadowed?

Mr. LATHAM: No. Our primary industries would then cease to exist. Probably very little thought has been given by the hon. member to the subject. The wheels of industry revolve in this State only by virtue of its primary industries. Had he given a little more thought to that question he would never have made the remark he did about shorter hours of labour and increased wages. We believe in shorter hours and better wages, provided we are all treated alike, and the industries that are taxed to pay those wages can afford the extra burden. Not much consideration is required to realise how little more taxation some of our industries can stand, and how impossible it is for them to bear the burden the hon. member suggests should be placed upon them. The Industrial Arbitration Act requires amendment. I am looking forward with a good deal of concern to learning what these proposed amendments will be. No doubt our Arbitration system has led to the gradual increase in wages and to the consequent increase in the cost of living. It is time we had a stock taking and put things on a better basis. Members opposite do not concern themselves about reducing the cost of living, but that is the matter to which they should turn their attention rather than to increased wages. When wages go up the cost of living goes up.

Mr. Corboy: You remember how another place dealt with the question of stabilising rentals. That would have affected the cost of living.

Mr. LATHAM: A good deal of legislation has been passed during the regime of the present Government that is lying dormant because it has been impossible to carry it into effect. The same thing would have happened with regard to any legislation that fixed rentals.

Mr. Corboy: To what legislation do you refer?

Mr. LATHAM: Many instances could be quoted. One is the Noxious Weeds Act that has never been proclaimed.

Mr. Corboy: No one could uphold that particular Act.

Mr. LATHAM: About £1,000 a year was spent on noxious weeds. When the member for East Perth was talking about ren-

tals, his concern seemed to be for the buildings that had been erected years ago, and that these should be leased at lower rentals. The new buildings, which had cost more to erect, were also to be let at low rentals. If the hon. member's party had seen that the workmen laid more bricks per day the probabilities are that the rentals would have come down. I remember when bricklayers laid 1,000 bricks a day, whereas to-day they lay only 250.

Mr. Corboy: Do not make it too hot.

Mr. LATHAM: I like to be accurate in my statements. I say that 250 bricks a day is the existing rate.

Mr. Kenneally: If the other figures quoted by the hon. member are as correct as these, they are not of much account.

Mr. LATHAM: These are directions in which it is possible to relieve the primary producer.

Mr. Corboy: Your source of information is not reliable.

Mr. LATHAM: It is as reliable as the information given by the hon. member. Members opposite give very little consideration to the concerns of others, only to those things upon which their thoughts and education cause them to dwell. The land tax ought to be reduced. In 1925, after its introduction, the revenue received was £113,865. Last year it was £196,000. If the Government did what the Country Party desire, and asked the people who are engaged in primary industries to pay only one tax, the greater of the two, they would not be taxing a man's income and then taxing his tools of trade whereby he earns his income. That is most unfair. The Premier has stated that the State has derived no benefit from the Federal disabilities grant of £300,000. I admit that the income tax was reduced by 33 1-3 when that grant was made. We did, however, make a profit of roughly £150,000 out of it. The income tax for 1925 amounted to £478,641. That was before the grant was paid. Last year it amounted to £329,603, with the 33 1-3 taken off. Members may say that the population increased, that the wage earners were greater in number, and that there were more taxpayers to account for the income. I admit that the population increased between 1925 and 1929 to 405,000. The expenditure per head of the population has also increased. In 1924 it was £22.88 and in 1928 it was £25.78. The expenditure, therefore, is going up in greater proportion to the

increase in population. The indebtedness per head of the population, including loans, has risen rapidly in recent years. It has increased from £149 to £168 per head of the population. I challenge the Government to say that the most careful attention is being paid to our finances. One would have thought that during the five years when revenue was buoyant, something would have been set aside to make good the deficits of previous years; but, instead, the Government have been spending at a greater rate than they have been receiving. It is amusing to read in the Governor's Speech that our credit is good in London. As pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, that circumstance has no bearing at all on our finances other than that it might operate as an inducement to people to come here and bring their capital with them. But what would be the use of their coming here with capital at the present time? We have no Crown lands available for them. Already there are people looking for land in Western Australia and the Government are unable to satisfy them. And people coming here with capital would not be able to start secondary industries other than such as would limit their output to the consumption of the people in the State. We cannot compete with any country outside Australia. The Premier admits that. Our financial position to-day, under the Financial Agreement, is such that we have to approach the London money market through the Federal Government, who furnish the security for any loans floated. Land is in fact not available. The Governor's Speech informs us that a total of 6,114 applications for land under conditional purchase was received, and that the number of new settlers for the year was 1,433.

The Minister for Railways: There are often 20 or 30 applications for one block. The progress shown is substantial for one year.

Mr. LATHAM: After all, we should be prepared to move more rapidly as we grow older. Our population is increasing much more rapidly now than was the case 20 years ago.

The Minister for Railways: If we have 1,500 new farmers every year, we shall be doing very well.

Mr. LATHAM: Some of the men placed on the farms referred to are in an unfortunate, indeed a heart-breaking position—miles and miles from any railway communi-

cation, with roads almost impassable during the winter. You, Mr. Speaker, know as well as I do that under such conditions profitable wheat growing is an impracticable proposition. People are put out into such areas and allowed to spend their money, with the result that they get into a state of penury. We ought to send our railways out ahead of settlement.

The Minister for Railways: We cannot do that.

Mr. LATHAM: Then we ought to follow settlement up closely. Probably our finances do not permit us to do what Canada does. I am surprised to learn that a railway survey has not yet been made in the Karlgarin area, although the construction of the line has been authorised. Some of the settlers are 35 or 40 miles from the railway, and they have been there for five or six years.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: In my electorate there are wheatgrowers who have waited 40 years for a railway.

Mr. LATHAM: Then they are bigger fools than I should have taken them to be. Inexperienced people go on the land believing they will make a rapid fortune, but they get a rude awakening when they attempt to cart wheat 30 or 40 miles. Many of the settlers, I am sorry to say, are calling meetings of their creditors. It is heart-breaking to see the number of farmers in that position. In many cases the fault is not theirs.

The Minister for Railways: It has not done some of them much harm.

Mr. LATHAM: The farmers will be not much better off in 12 months' time unless wheat recovers. As regards the area of land selected during the past year, it appears that 164 applications were made and 199 were granted. Did the Lands Department go out into the highways and byways and collect men who had not made applications for land and give it to them? The figures are remarkable.

The Minister for Railways: Some of those applications were made in the year before and granted last year.

Mr. LATHAM: Getting back to land settlement, if we had those railways surveyed or under construction, probably there would be more land taken up in areas already fairly settled. Surely to goodness that should be an encouragement to the Government and an assistance to them to reduce the number of unemployed. Last year Par-



liament authorised close on five millions of loan funds. How much of the amount has been spent I cannot say.

The Minister for Railways: About £4,200,000.

Mr. LATHAM: If that money had been spent on reproductive developmental works, we would be in a better position to-day.

The Minister for Railways: Unfortunately the returns are not immediate.

Mr. LATHAM: In the case of a great deal of the expenditure they ought to be. What about the loan money spent the year before, over four millions sterling? I want to touch on the unemployment question. There is no more serious question than that of unemployment confronting this State. We try to excuse ourselves. We say large numbers of people are coming here from the Eastern States. We blame the foreigners. We blame everybody but ourselves. According to the Governor's Speech the Main Roads Board are to spend £1,250,000 this year. Surely if that money is available—and I know that we get £384,000 from the Federal Government, we ourselves supplying the relatively small sum of £283,000—that should be a great help to us. Let me point out that £288,000 is not a large proportion of the loan funds made available to the Government yearly. If there is money carried forward for road construction from last year, we should not have one man out of work in this State to-day. This is the time to make roads in our agricultural areas. We know very well that most of the expenditure on road construction is represented by labour.

The Minister for Railways: We have called tenders for roads.

Mr. LATHAM: If we employed 5,000 men every working day, six days a week, throughout the year we should only be spending a million of money. For the life of me I cannot see why we do not employ every one of the unemployed on road construction. It may not be convenient for some of them to go into the country, but surely it is better for them to be working even away from home than to be starving at home.

The Minister for Railways: We have called tenders for well over £100,000 worth of work.

Mr. LATHAM: It ought to be done early, instead of being left to the end of winter.

Nobody knows better than the Government that seasonal employment ends immediately after seeding operations.

The Minister for Railways: We cannot get out plans and specifications for a huge expenditure on roads in two or three weeks.

Mr. LATHAM: I may be very dull, but I see no great engineering difficulties in the construction of roads in our agricultural areas.

Mr. Corboy: The difficulties are not engineering difficulties.

Mr. LATHAM: Then why do we want plans and specifications?

The Minister for Railways: There are many different kinds of roads.

Mr. LATHAM: These are a standard type of road.

Mr. Lindsay: And the specification is a standard specification.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, and there are no engineering difficulties. The difficulty is one of organisation. I believe the Federal money is available, and we ought to use it and see that no man is deprived of his manhood through being made to walk about the streets or accept charity. Such things take the best of the man out of him. In my younger days I remember walking around looking for work and being very glad to take it even at a low rate of wages. But it was heart-breaking to have to look for work and to receive more kicks than halfpence. A man is deprived of his manhood when he is compelled to take charity. Every member of this party is anxious to help the Government in dealing with the unemployed problem. That is not a political question. It ought not to be a political question. We should all get together and help these people. Some of them, in the course of time, may well occupy the positions we now fill in this Chamber. At least let us clean up the unemployment liability. It is a liability of the people of this State. It is one of the worst things we have. To say that it cannot be done is useless. I remember when the people of New South Wales were in exactly the same position as our people are in to-day. Many of them went across to New Zealand, and work was found for every one of them who went there.

Mr. Panton: There are large numbers of unemployed in New Zealand to-day.

Mr. LATHAM: Possibly. I have not stated the contrary.

Mr. Kenneally: Every country on earth, with the exception of France, has a big unemployed problem.

Mr. LATHAM: An unemployed problem does not strike me as being inevitable in a young country like Western Australia in the same way as it is in older lands. We are a primary producing country, with a great deal of Crown land yet available for the production of a marketable product that is exportable. While we are in such a position we ought to be able at least to clean up the unemployed problem we have here. I quite agree with the Government that we should not offer inducements to people to come to this State until we are ready for them. No worse inducement has there ever been for creating unemployment here than the 3,500 farms scheme, which is talked about so much.

The Minister for Railways: The Government are not responsible for that.

Mr. LATHAM: I am not blaming the Government; but the scheme has been so broadly advertised that people thought there ought to be a lot of work available here. We ought to see whether it is not possible even to anticipate the granting of loan funds and provide work for our unemployed, thus relieving the State of its greatest liability. The Governor's Speech mentions that the number of sheep in Western Australia has increased by over half a million during the year. That is not a startling increase, and does not advertise Western Australia too well as a sheep-raising country. I think the reference would have been better omitted. According to the Statistical Abstract the number of sheep at the 31st December last was 8,447,480. An increase of half a million, being the natural increase, plus sheep brought here, is not a great increase at all.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: The greatest increase was in the South-West.

Mr. LATHAM: That is admitted.

The Minister for Railways: We had two or three years' drought in places, and yet there was an increase of half a million sheep.

Mr. LATHAM: In the South-West, there has been a considerable increase in the number of sheep and I hope that next year the natural increase will be more like two millions.

The Minister for Railways: We will reach the ten million mark.

Mr. Kenneally: And then the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will give the Government credit for the increase!

Mr. LATHAM: I am glad to know that he will; I am sure he will give the Government credit for everything they are entitled to. There have been references to industrial troubles. I was sorry to hear the Premier dismiss that phase with the suggestion that they merely represented 25 minutes of trouble. That in reference, among others, to a dispute between two unions, for which the primary producers had to pay! Not only did we lose our first wool sale, which represented a considerable loss to us, but we had to pay demurrage charges on the wheat held up in consequence of the dispute. I think the Government should have been generous to the farmers and foregone that charge.

The Minister for Railways: We went fifty-fifty.

Mr. LATHAM: The farmers were charged over £700 for demurrage.

Mr. Lindsay: And would not allow us to unload the stuff ourselves.

The Minister for Railways: Who would not allow you to do so?

Mr. Lindsay: The unions. Why did you not charge the unions the demurrage, not the farmers?

Mr. LATHAM: The strike cost us losses under other headings, and, in addition, increased our handling charges at the sidings. All this was merely because two unions decided to have an argument between themselves. Surely the primary producers should not be handicapped like that. Prior to the recent rise in the price of wheat, the farmers were nearly on the breaking line. Should they ever get on that line, there will be more unemployment and difficulties than we have experienced for a long time past. Dealing with the question of markets, I acknowledge that a former Labour Government purchased the site for the markets and that the present Government put up the buildings. I will not suggest that the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) was not unmindful of the necessity of markets for Perth, for I remember he introduced legislation that was not acceptable to the Country Party section of the Government of the day.

Mr. Corboy: You are not telling us about the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition when he was Premier.

Mr. LATHAM: I am not saying anything of the sort, for I am fully aware that he did

not have at his disposal the money that has been available to the Labour Government during the last five years. He had to tackle a deficit of £688,000 that he inherited from the Labour Government, and when he left office the finances were in a splendid condition for the incoming Government. I want to be generous to the present Administration. I cannot understand the attitude of the Markets Board. I remember reading a statement by the chairman of that board when he said that if the consumers did not get their produce cheaper than obtained then, the markets would not have served the purpose intended. I wish that the chairman had added that if the producers did not get a little more than they were receiving, the markets would not serve the purposes intended.

Mr. Corboy: Hear, hear!

Mr. LATHAM: The man who grows the produce, works longer hours than the member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) advocates, and gets less return for his labour, is the greatest loser.

Mr. Corboy: Do you think the Government have regard only for the consumers?

Mr. LATHAM: I quoted the remarks of the Chairman of the Markets Board.

Mr. Panton: And he said he hoped the producer and the consumer would each get a better deal.

Mr. LATHAM: I will accept that assurance from the hon. member; no such statement appeared in the newspaper report.

Mr. Panton: I heard the chairman make the statement.

Mr. LATHAM: I will not argue, but will accept the hon. member's assurance. Then again, I cannot understand the attitude of the Government from another standpoint. The member for Perth moved for the appointment of a select committee to investigate the markets question and he did a good deal of work in connection with that project. When the Government were selecting speakers for the opening day of the markets, the member for Perth was omitted. I do not know if that was his fault, but I think acknowledgment should have been made of the services rendered by that gentleman.

Mr. Panton: I do not think he was in the State at the time.

Mr. Davy: Yes he was; I was with him. We could not get near enough to hear the Minister's speech.

Mr. LATHAM: I think the Government should have extended recognition to the

member for Perth. Dealing now with water supplies, I am glad the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies is present because I cannot reconcile some figures that have been placed before me. I shall be glad of the Minister's help in that regard. On the 31st July, I asked the Premier what money had been spent on the Narembeen water supply scheme, and also the amount spent on water supplies in the Esperance district, both being under the provisions of the Migration Agreement. The Premier replied that £63,488 had been spent on the Narembeen water scheme and £64,961 on the Esperance water supplies. In the second annual report issued by the Development and Migration Commission, I find this statement—

Narembeen water supply.—The estimated cost of the Narembeen water supply was £76,197, and the scheme has been completed. An amount of £75,820 has been advanced to the Western Australian Government to the 30th June, 1928.

According to those figures, and comparing them with those supplied by the Premier, I find that the Government made a profit of over £12,000.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: You know better than that. There is no such thing as a profit. In these matters, if there is any money over, or a scheme is constructed under the estimated cost, the balance is used for other works.

Mr. LATHAM: Will the Minister say that the Government received £75,820 from the Federal Government for work that cost £63,488?

Mr. Sleeman: That was because the work was done by day labour.

Mr. LATHAM: The Government drew one per cent. money from the Federal Government and spent it in another direction. It would be far more honest to say that the cost was £63,000 and that the Government wanted the extra money for some other purpose.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: The point is that you got the work done for £63,488 and that is all for which you are called upon to provide sinking fund and so on.

Mr. LATHAM: And you drew £73,000!

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: I did not get a penny of it, only the £63,000.

Mr. LATHAM: Then the statement in the report is incorrect.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: So far as I know, it is. We built it at below the estimated cost.

Mr. LATHAM: It looks to me as if we have been getting money we are not entitled to. The next scheme, that at Esperance, cost £64,961 and an advance of £67,000 was received for the work. The Commission's report states—

The scheme, which has been completed, was estimated to cost £80,000, and a total amount of £57,322 has been advanced by the Commonwealth Government to the State in connection therewith.

So they made £3,600 out of that work. This is 1 per cent. money, and it seems to me that if we are going to make profits like that, and are to be charged the rate of interest that is charged against us, the Government are going to have a very profitable investment in their water supplies.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: The department received and spent on the Esperance scheme £64,961.

Mr. LATHAM: And they drew from the Federal Government £67,000 for that work.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Not for that work. It would be utterly impossible.

Mr. LATHAM: I would be glad if the Minister would get the officials to read that report, and if it is not accurate to see that it is corrected.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: I have no jurisdiction over the Development and Migration Commission and their figures.

Mr. LATHAM: At all events the Minister should see that we are not debited with an amount that we should not be debited with. Apparently somebody is not doing his job in the Treasury.

The Minister for Agriculture: The Treasury will see to that.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Do you think the Federal Government would be so stupid as to permit us to draw more money than we were entitled to?

Mr. Sleeman: You have been told that the works were built at a cost below the estimate.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not want that sort of stupid interjection. I desire to say a word or two about the Esperance water supply. Recently I went down to the district to enlighten myself—principally for educational purposes. I found that a great

deal of money had been spent down there on works that to me seemed utterly useless. I refer to those big dams. I do not see how it is possible to fill them in the type of country in which they have been constructed. After all, the Minister will say he is prepared to accept the advice of his engineers in preference to mine. But I say that if £64,000 or £65,000 had been spent in putting in a water scheme at Shark Lake, just this side of Esperance, it would have been invested to better purpose. The local people told me there was 18 feet of water in that lake and that the water is never lower. If it were possible to spend £64,000 in putting a pumping plant on to that water and reticulating the area, we should have something to show for it.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: But £64,000 would never have done the job.

Mr. LATHAM: Why? What is the distance? To my mind it would suffice. I am not much of an engineer but, mercifully, God gave me a certain amount of common-sense.

Mr. Sleeman: You are not showing it to-night.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course I am not showing it to the hon. member. It would be impossible for him to discern it. I do know that it is perfectly feasible to pump that water on to the highest part of the sand plain, whence it could be reticulated by gravitation.

Mr. Corboy: But do you know the cost of the piping?

Mr. LATHAM: It would cost no more than it costs in other districts. Of course it would not be possible to give every man a service, but then not every man has a service to-day.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: The cost would be prohibitive.

Mr. LATHAM: I have heard that statement before. The money would have been much better spent as I suggest. We have the dams down there, but I defy the Minister to say that there has ever been a drop of water in them.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Because we have not had a sufficient rainfall to get a flow off the catchment.

Mr. LATHAM: There will have to be considerably more rain than has been recorded up to the present to fill such dams. No practical private person would have put down a dam in such country.

Mr. Corboy: We don't go there to look for farmers who can afford to put down dams.

Mr. LATHAM: The farmers are there, and they are entitled to the best the Government can give them. But it is my responsibility as a member of Parliament to see that the money is spent in the best possible way in the interests of the State. I know that the people of the district will be quite unable to carry that liability, and therefore the people of the State as a whole must do it. So we must see to it that the money is spent wisely.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: You are a bit late; the money is already spent.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course so, but I hope the balance will not be spent until investigation is made of that Shark Lake project. Another thing I want to talk about is this: Recently the local governing bodies had a statutory declaration sent out to them by the Main Roads Board. It is of quite sufficient interest to read to such members as are present to-night. The local authorities were asked to make a statutory declaration to the effect that they had duly paid their workers. It is an insult to the intelligence of men doing honorary work in the interests of the State. The declaration reads as follows:—

I, ....., of ....., in the State of Western Australia, do solemnly and sincerely declare:—

(1) That I am a member of the firm of ....., and am duly authorised to make this declaration.

(2) That the said firm has paid to all the workmen employed in connection with the fulfilment of Contract, No. ...., dated ....., made between the said firm and the Main Roads Board of Western Australia in current money of the realm all wages due to such workmen in strict accordance with the conditions relating to the minimum wage rates, and that the hours of labour of such workmen have been in strict accordance with the conditions relating thereto as provided in the said contract.

Surely we can trust the members of a local authority. The people in their own district trust them. If they sign a contract that they will do certain things, it ought not to have to be followed up by a statutory declaration. It is the greatest insult I have ever heard of us being sent out to a body of men doing honorary work for the State. It savours to me of political control.

Mr. Panton: It savours of a large number of men not being able to get paid by other men who have taken a contract.

Mr. LATHAM: I am talking, not of contractors, but of local authorities being asked to sign such a declaration.

Mr. Panton: Evidently the local authorities let the contract.

Mr. LATHAM: They have always been able to live up to their liabilities, or alternatively they have been superseded by the Public Works Department. What occurs to me is whether it was not an instruction from the Trades Hall. It is about time we cut out this kind of thing.

Mr. Panton: I know that very many men have been unable to get their wages from the contractors.

Mr. LATHAM: But I am speaking of local authorities. Do not put into my mouth words that I have not used.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Do you not know that contracts have been sub-let?

Mr. LATHAM: The local authorities have been asked to sign a declaration to the effect that they have paid the workmen by coin of the realm. It is a blooming insult to people doing work in an honorary capacity in the interest of the State. There are some ways in which we might give effect to the ideals put forward by the member for East Perth last night. The first, of course, is to put the primary industries on a sound business footing. If the hon. member will assist us to do that, the probability is that he will realise his great ideals all the sooner. I wish to correct an impression which might have been gained by some members as a result of a statement supposed to have been made by the Leader of the Country Party relative to his trip abroad. The hon. member said that the Leader of the Country Party had taken us for a mental tour through Africa and India and had ended up by saying that of course Australia would have to consider the coolie question. If the hon. member had gone to London and had realised, as the Leader of the Country Party realised when he visited Africa, what that actually meant to the producers of this country, the chances are he would not have uttered the remarks he did. When I was in London I saw a tremendous quantity of fruit packed quite differently from ours. It was packed in a far more expensive way than we could ever afford to pack it, some of it in wool, some in sawdust, and some even in cork. If we were to employ labour at its present cost and try to market our produce in the same

way as it is marketed from Africa, we could not possibly compete. My idea and the idea of the Leader of the Country Party may be summed up in this way: Do not let us damn our own industries first, but use that great influence which the Labour organisations possess to-day. They have their annual meetings of workers of the world. I remember a resolution being carried at a meeting on the Esplanade. Let them tell their comrades in other countries that they have to bring their people to our standard of living and pay them the same rate of wages that we pay. If that were done, the difficulty of marketing our products on the same lines as they are doing would be overcome.

Mr. Panton: Let the hon. member tell the primary producers to pay those men the same rates of wages so that they can enjoy the proper standard of living, and not ask us to do it.

Mr. LATHAM: And if we told our people here to do that, we should very soon cease to export anything.

Mr. Panton: You are asking us to do it.

Mr. LATHAM: We have not a world-wide organisation. While listening to the member for East Perth last night, I would have liked to interject more than I did, but I knew that to do so would be disorderly. An attack was made by him on the foreigners coming here, and yet he and his friends are the people who send fraternal greetings to the foreigners on the 1st May. The hon. member says in effect to those foreigners to whom the greetings are sent, "You are not to come to our country, and if you do come you shall not have the right to work." It makes me feel sorry indeed for the unfortunate people who are coming here. If we are going to adopt an attitude of that kind it would be better to prohibit their coming entirely.

Mr. Corboy: It is that fraternal feeling amongst the primary producers that has kept them where they are.

Mr. LATHAM: The member for East Perth did not display any very fraternal feeling last night when he spoke on behalf of his party. He referred to those people as being below the mental standard, and yet they could more than compete with Australians. He said they were unfit to marry into Australian families.

Mr. Withers: Do you think they are?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not say they are but I am not questioning their mentality. I do not put myself on a pedestal and judge them as the hon. member did. The Southern Europeans were doing clearing work at the same price as that paid to British and Australian labour. They were doing the work better, and were not causing the trouble with the storekeepers that our own people were causing. It is regrettable to have to make that statement, but it is a fact, and I defy anyone to contradict it.

The Minister for Lands: Are you referring to Southern Europeans?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes.

The Minister for Lands: I can show you that they were not receiving the same rate of wages.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister may have some instances.

Mr. Panton: Any number of instances.

Mr. LATHAM: When the Government cut them off from work finance by Agricultural Bank advances, what was left for those people to do? They had to accept lower wages or starve. They could not come to the City of Perth and go around the streets cadging. Had they done so they would have been put in gaol by orders of the Government. They were forced into doing it.

The Minister for Lands: Why all these heroics?

Mr. LATHAM: I say it is true; I am not indulging in heroics. If the Southern Europeans had been allowed to carry on the work, they would have been receiving exactly the same rate of pay. Thirty shillings was the standard rate and 30s. was paid until the Government denied them the opportunity to work.

The Minister for Lands: That is sheer nonsense.

Mr. LATHAM: It is true. They were forced by the Government to take a lower rate of pay; otherwise they would have had to starve.

The Minister for Lands: That is not true.

Mr. Panton: I suppose Mussolini will step in now.

Mr. LATHAM: I have no brief for Mussolini. I would not mind if he issued a prohibition to-morrow against their coming here, but once they are here they have a right to live.

Mr. Panton: But not to get preference.

The Minister for Lands: They are getting 25s. and even £1 and I have proof of it in my possession.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister may have some instances.

The Minister for Lands: I gave the information in the House last year.

Mr. LATHAM: I am not going to put our people on a pedestal. I do not say they all observe a standard of honesty that cannot be questioned, but the Government forced the foreigners into accepting a lower rate of wages. The member for Menzies referred to Mussolini. We are told that we ought to be Australians and that we want to live within our own country, and yet the Government of this State are purchasing foreign-made motor cars and providing work for people in foreign countries. If there are no Australian-made motor cars to be had, why not buy motors manufactured within the Empire? If we follow the argument to its logical conclusion, that is what ought to be done, for we ask England to trade with us. We send some of our wheat to Italy. We say that Southern Europeans when they come here to earn a living have no right to send their earnings away to keep their families in the country of their origin.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Italy has 30,000,000 bushels of wheat to export this year.

Mr. LATHAM: For years we have been sending wheat from the pool to Italy, and probably we are doing likewise this year.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Statistics tell us that Italy has 30,000,000 bushels of wheat to export this year.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not say that the Minister is wrong. Our wheat might be used in Italy for blending purposes, as it is used in England, in order to make a better class of flour.

Mr. Pantoni: Do not forget that we import macaroni.

Mr. LATHAM: Macaroni is manufactured here. I do not think much is imported. I had no intention of speaking at this late hour of the night and any further remarks I shall reserve until the Estimates are before us. I would appeal to members to get together and help the men who are out of work and walking the soles off their boots in their efforts to get a living. I am willing to do anything I can to assist. That

is the big question before us, and I sincerely hope it will be seriously tackled by the Government.

On motion by Mr. Corboy, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.29 p.m.*

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*Tuesday, 13th August, 1929.*

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

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Eighth Day.*

Debate resumed from the 8th August.

**HON. J. CORNELL** (South) [4.35]: Some members who have preceded me have referred to the Governor's Speech as being barren of anything of a constructive nature. If we compare the Speech before us with others that have preceded it, we find very much similarity between them. Governor's Speeches may be characterised more or less as a book of chronicles. They tell us the story of what has been done, and endeavour to conceal the story of what is going to be done. Like the proverbial curate's egg, this Speech is good in parts. It serves no other useful purpose than to produce a few headings under which a member may address himself to the House. It is only fitting I should open my remarks with the mining industry, despite the fact that it is on the downward grade, and the agricultural industry is on the upward grade. It was a province which was practically all mining that gave me my political birth. One place we should always remember and put first is the place of our birth, political