

this Chamber would only act upon their personal promptings, knowing the position of Western Australia, they would unite in doing everything possible to increase the production of this State, not only in the direction of agriculture but also in every other direction. There can be no two opinions as to where the obligation lies to find some money to recompense Western Australia for the annual loss with which the State is faced as a partner in the Australian Commonwealth. I only hope that the Minister for Industries will do as he promised last session, namely, bring down a Bill to establish the Council of Industrial Development upon a more acceptable and a permanent basis. When that has been done, let all parties in this House devote, not one or two or three hours, but if necessary two or three weeks, to making the Federal Government realise their obligation to assist us as a young, struggling, and undeveloped State.

On motion by Mr. Latham debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 3.49 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 7th August, 1923.

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

QUESTION—MELVILLE RESERVOIR, DISMISSALS.

Mr. HUGHES asked the Minister for Works: 1, How many men have been employed on the Melville reservoir? 2, How many men were dismissed during the last week? 3, For what reason were the dismissals made? 4, If it is necessary to put men off temporarily, would it not be possible to distribute the time off equally amongst the men?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (for the Minister for Works) replied: 1, 110. 2, Nine men stood down for one week; four men transferred to another work. 3, The excavation being practically completed. 4, No. Preference is given to married men.

QUESTIONS (2)—ROAD MAKING.

Width of Feeder Roads.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it a fact that feeder roads 16ft. 6in. wide are being cleared to the proposed Narembeen-Merredin railway? 2, Is he aware that it is impossible to get up-to-date machinery along these roads? 3, Will he issue instructions to have these roads cleared 22ft., as has always been done previously?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (for the Minister for Works) replied: 1, Yes. 2, No. 3, Answered by No. 2.

Group Settlement Facilities.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Premier: 1, In view of the almost impassable nature of the roads to several group settlements, will he state what steps he purposes taking to place the roads in a condition to facilitate and cheapen transport? 2, To what vote is the cost of providing road facilities to groups to be charged?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Such steps as are possible at reasonable cost. Roads are in most cases new, and require time to consolidate. 2, Development of agriculture.

QUESTION—LAND SETTLEMENT, WESTONIA.

Mr. HARRISON asked the Premier: 1, Has the land on "Sheet 6, locations near Westonia, Yilgarn District," been opened for selection? 2, If so, how many applications for these blocks have been approved? 3, Is it a fact that the Agricultural Bank will not advance to the selectors of these areas? 4, Are the reasons given by Agricultural Bank officers correct, namely, that the subdivision is outside the first and second zone of railways constructed or authorised? 5, Will he authorise advances to be granted on this area equal to those advanced on adjoining areas, seeing that if the present Bencubbin line were linked up with the railway system either at Merredin, Carrabin, or Bullfinch, this area would be within the 12½ mile limit? 6, Has his attention been drawn to the survey of this area with regard to facility for the transport of products?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Six. 3, Yes. 4, The Agricultural Bank trustees have refused to advance on land more than 12½ miles from existing railways until they receive an assurance of provision of railway facilities within a reasonable period. 5, This is a matter for the trustees alone. 6, No.

RETURN—RAILWAY COAL SUPPLIES.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, ordered—That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing:—(1) The weekly coal orders (tonnage) by the Railway Department to each of the following mines (separately): Proprie-

tary, Co-operative, Westralian, Cardiff, and Premier, and the supplies received by the Railway Department from the above mentioned mines (separately) from 6th January, 1923, to 28th July, 1923. (2) The tonnage amount of coal from Eastern States to the Railway Department from 6th January to 28th July, 1923.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day.

Debate resumed from 2nd August.

Mr. LATHAM (York) [4.38]: I do not intend to make a long speech on the Address-in-reply because there is a greater necessity to-day for work than for talk. The State demands from almost everyone a good deal more work to assist in every way, not only in the direction of production, but also in helping to make a success of the schemes launched by the Government to create a favourable name for Western Australia throughout the world.

Mr. Underwood: I do, and I think every Government migration scheme?

Mr. LATHAM: I do, and I think every section of the House agrees with the scheme, too. Whether we agree with the details is a different matter. An active migration policy and land settlement constitute two of the main planks of the Government's programme.

Mr. Underwood: Do you intend to stand on your own at the next election?

Mr. LATHAM: Of course the Country Party will stand on their own and we are entitled to do so. We are entitled to reap a share of the success of the policy of the present Government. The migration scheme is not altogether what we would like it to be. There are, and will be, mistakes in all big schemes. This migration scheme is a gigantic activity. A little assistance and advice to the Minister controlling it will be of advantage. Mistakes are being made. In my opinion the officials in London are not doing the job they were sent Home to do. Not sufficient care is exercised in the selection of migrants. If that were not so, it would be impossible to get men here who are physically unfit for the work they are asked to do. We know that impersonation takes place. I do not agree with the statement that the whole of the people coming out are not satisfactory and are not physically fit. The majority of them are satisfactory. I have had opportunities of seeing many of them in the country districts.

Mr. Munsie: Where did the statement come from that the whole of the migrants are unsatisfactory?

Mr. LATHAM: The statement emanated from several sources. I will not say who made the statement. We know very well some of the migrants coming to Western Australia are not quite desirable, but when we express our opinions on that matter, we should consider the language we use.

Mr. J. Thomson: Hear, hear!

Mr. LATHAM: The Leader of the Opposition made a statement on the subject and

the member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson) said he did not desire any correction, as he intended to express his own ideas. We must be most careful in our statements. Very few of the migrants are physically unfit. A mistake, however, is being made by sending the people direct to the land. The Government should try to settle Western Australians first. If we find work for them, they will assist the Government to provide work which will absorb the migrants coming to our shores. It will be a difficult matter to settle all these people, but I can point out to the Government some means by which we can settle the whole of the people on the land.

Mr. Marshall: Can some of them be placed in the York district?

Mr. LATHAM: There is little land in the York district not used to its fullest extent. There is some and I will deal with that later.

Mr. Heron: You are getting pretty close to election time to make such statements now.

Mr. LATHAM: If we go in for a sound immigration policy, it will fill our vacant spaces and promote our industries. We must get our primary industries under way before we can expect to make substantial progress with our secondary industries. Western Australia has spent a vast sum of money in providing transport facilities and in making roads. We shall have to spend a tremendous lot more. Vast sums have been expended in providing railways and water supplies, but we shall have to spend still more. If we are to settle people who will fill our vacant spaces, it will provide one means of making these facilities pay interest and sinking fund.

Mr. Underwood: Where are these vacant spaces you refer to?

Mr. LATHAM: There are many vacant spaces.

Mr. Underwood: Where are they?

Mr. LATHAM: In the South-West and in the wheat areas.

Capt. Carter: And there is a lot of land unused.

Mr. LATHAM: That is so. There is plenty of Crown land available, and there are vacant spaces to be filled in the Esperance district. In some cases we must provide means of access to these areas.

Capt. Carter: Why not support a Closer Settlement Bill?

Mr. LATHAM: I know considerably more about closer settlement than the hon. member and I defy him to prove that I have not supported it.

Mr. Marshall: The Leederville electorate is more closely settled than your district.

Mr. LATHAM: That is so, and I wish that the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter), could unload some of his constituents in the country areas.

Mr. Underwood: Can you place more settlers in York without a Closer Settlement Bill?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, land can be purchased in the York district more cheaply than similar land can be bought in the Eastern States.

Mr. Wilson: But the migrants have not the money to make such purchases.

Mr. LATHAM: Then for goodness sake, let us get people who have money.

Mr. Wilson: Hear, hear!

Mr. LATHAM: Not sufficient encouragement is given to people with money to come to Western Australia. We advertise ourselves too cheaply in London.

Mr. Underwood: I suppose you want to sell your block.

Mr. LATHAM: I would not sell my block for anything the hon. member might offer. What I want to see, is some of our land put to better use than it is to-day. If we are to have a successful immigration policy, we must watch our finances, we must be able to show the people in Great Britain that we are not going to overtax them when we get them out here. Members might well study the return which "Scrutator" published in the "West Australian" a little while ago, when he made a comparison between Western Australia and Queensland.

Hon. P. Collier: He may not be an authority.

Mr. LATHAM: From "Scrutator's" figures we find that when we get a big turnover in one year we are actually driving capital away, whereas the Labour Government in Queensland are prepared to encourage the people of that State to stay there.

Mr. Marshall: That is wise administration.

Mr. LATHAM: In Queensland taxation does not reach the height familiar to us in Western Australia. People here are selling their property and going to Victoria, where they will not be so highly taxed.

Capt. Carter: Selling big estates to Eastern capitalists.

Mr. LATHAM: Nothing of the sort! For the most part they are splitting up big estates and selling them in blocks. "Scrutator" shows that in Queensland a taxable income of £500 pays 11d., while one of £12,000 pays 41d. In New South Wales a taxable income of £550 pays 15d., and one of £12,000 pays 23½d., whereas in Western Australia one pays 5½d. on an income of £500, and 55d. on one of £12,000.

Capt. Carter: We do not want to overtax our small men.

Mr. LATHAM: That is so, but neither should we overtax those men who will invest money in the State. At present there is every inducement for men of capital to leave the State and invest their money in the Eastern States. Not only do we require to be careful in the selection of our migrants, but we should exercise care in their despatch also. It is inadvisable to have men sent out here during the winter months. Rather should they be sent out when we can absorb them in the agricultural industry, at seeding time and harvest.

Mr. Munsie: And what will happen to them in the slack time?

Mr. LATHAM: They will have a chance to get settled in billets before the slack time is upon them. At present we have seasonal

unemployment, on top of which we are receiving shiploads of migrants. If the migrants arrived here during the summer and got properly started at farm work, the farmers would be disposed to retain them through the slack season; but a farmer requires a lot of inducement to take on new and untried men during the winter. We often hear of farmers in want of cheap labour. Why, the worst labour a farmer can hire, is the man who knows nothing about farming! Farmers have placed new chums in charge of their teams, the men have left the teams in the paddock, something has occurred to frighten the horses, and as a result valuable machinery has been damaged. Farming machinery is too costly to be entrusted to the care of men without knowledge. Taken as a whole, the farmers have done a great deal for the assistance of the immigration policy. It is a mistake to think that the farmer sees in that policy a large influx of cheap labour. The cheapest labour of all is that labour which will serve best. Expert labour at £4 per week is much cheaper than that, at 30 shillings, of men who have just arrived from another country. Again, it is of no use the Government thinking they can economically place, even in group settlements, new arrivals without previous training. For a considerable time it is impossible for those men to earn 10s. a day. Yet they are paid 10s. a day, and so the land is over-capitalised, and will have to be written down.

Hon. P. Collier: That is what happened to the Soldiers' Settlement Scheme.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not wish to criticise without offering something constructive. It would pay the Government handsomely to send contractors down the South-West to clear that land in a big way. Then we could give the newcomers the lighter work of burning off.

The Minister for Agriculture: You would put the newcomer on the land without any training whatever.

Mr. LATHAM: Nothing of the sort. All I say is, let us give them the easier work to start with.

Hon. P. Collier: In any case, clearing is not much of a training for a farmer.

Mr. LATHAM: Certainly not. Still, it all helps him in the acquirement of local knowledge. While I always champion the farmers, I must admit there are in the State a few who do not give the newly arrived migrant a fair deal. When they get him out they set him at root picking and keep him at it until he is absolutely fed-up. Still, such farmers are few and far between.

Mr. Underwood: If the new-chum knows a "better 'ole" he can go to it.

Mr. LATHAM: The hardest employer of all is the migrant who has been here a little time and is clearing by contract. He gets new arrivals sent up to him, and he sees to it that they earn their money.

Hon. P. Collier: If he be contract clearing, he must get value for the wages he pays.

Mr. LATHAM: Admittedly, but, as I say, he is the hardest employer of all. We require

to send newly arrived migrants to farmers of repute. I have known new-comers serene in the belief that they were going on to a beautiful farm, when as a matter of fact they were being sent out to a clearing contract. I should like to see land made available for our own young people, who as established farmers would readily assist the migrants and train them for the land. The Government are not doing sufficient to place our own young people on the land.

Mr. Heron: Where would you get the land?

Mr. LATHAM: There is a considerable area along the coast between Ravensthorpe and Esperance, good agricultural land which will produce more quickly than any other land we have. It is isolated, certainly, but it would be just as profitable to spend a million of money putting in the necessary railways there as it would be in any other part of the State.

Mr. Corboy: Do you know that a lot of that land is taken up?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, some of it in districts that have scarcely ever been visited by a white man. It was taken up under pastoral lease, but if it be declared an agricultural area the selector is free to go in there.

Mr. Marshall: You would not get this Government to permit a selector to go on pastoral land.

Mr. LATHAM: I am convinced that this Government will do as much for land settlement as would any other Government. It would have been wise if the Government had acquired some of the land along the Great Southern and established groups there. Land there can be bought for very much less than it can be acquired elsewhere. Its price would run from £4 to £12 per acre. It is good citrus country, entirely suitable for dried fruits, and in addition is magnificent dairy country. Nothing could be better for closer settlement. If the Government were to purchase some of the properties down there, they could show the adjoining people the land's capabilities, and at the same time place many of those who are looking for land to-day.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Have they not the Avondale estate?

Mr. LATHAM: There is only some 1,800 acres of it left.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The Government worked it.

Mr. LATHAM: Which is not to say that they made a success of it. However, I should be pleased to see the Government try the remainder of the estate under closer settlement.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That land was purchased for £4 per acre, before the big prices came.

Mr. LATHAM: Land has greatly increased in value because we have Eastern capital buying land in this State at prices from 25 per cent. to 50 per cent. below those paid in the Eastern States. When, a little while ago, I said we had a great many vacant spaces, I was referring particularly to our light land. I appreciate very much the establishment of a light-land farm by the Minister for Agriculture.

Member: It is not going to be in your district.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not care where it is to be established. I am content that it should be established. There are so many varieties of light land that the Minister will have to be careful not to set up experiments that will mislead the farmers. He can get a hundred farmers who have made a success of light land. There is in my district, between Bruce Rock and Wickepin, a man who put into the pool 7,000 bags of wheat grown on light land.

The Minister for Agriculture: Is that Finklestein?

Mr. LATHAM: No. Finklestein is another good example. The man I have in mind is Buttesworth, who farms all light land. If farmers engaged on light land were taken to one of these farms so that they could see for themselves the class of land and hear from the farmer himself what he is doing, how he is working his land and how he is fertilising it, they would have an example to follow. I have heard people talk of making a success of light land, but there are so many varieties of light land that we must be careful, when using the term, not to mislead the public. I hope the Minister for Agriculture will not stop after establishing one farm; I hope he will see his way to establish several light-land farms. The failure of farmers on light land has not always been due to the farmers themselves. Frequently they have been held up by departmental officers for super and machinery, and this has been the cause of a great many failures. I hope the Minister will start light-land farms in various parts of the State. If he establishes one in the York electorate I shall be pleased, but if he does not I shall not be disappointed, so long as he takes active steps to educate the people to the use of this land. I am convinced that some day every acre of this land will be utilised. It could be utilised to-day in areas of 5,000 acres. It could be successfully farmed, but capital is necessary. We seem to be lacking in people who are prepared to spend their money on agricultural lands. The money which is coming into the State to-day is being used to purchase properties from the pioneer farmers that are anxious to get out if they can see a return of a few thousand pounds. Another thing which will assist the farming community is the establishment of an agricultural college. I was pleased to notice in the Speech the declaration of the Government's intention to establish an agricultural college. When they do establish it, I hope due consideration will be given to the report which was presented either to Parliament or to the Minister. It is useless to appoint commissioners or select committees to inquire into such matters and report to the House or the Minister if we are not guided by such reports.

The Minister for Agriculture: It should not have been restricted to within 20 miles of Northam.

Mr. LATHAM: The country within 20 miles of Northam lends itself as a site for an agricultural college. It would be ridiculous to establish such a college in the wheat area where wheat alone is grown. We want to be able to instruct the college students to carry out every branch of farming, and after they have been educated we want them to go out and disseminate among the farming community the knowledge they have acquired. To-day we have a band of inspectors who are not competent to advise the farmers. I say advisedly they are not competent. Yet they are going from farm to farm telling the farmers what they ought to do. But for the assistance of the experts from the Agricultural Department—and even some of them have a limited knowledge—we should not be making very much headway.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is no unity in the department.

Mr. LATHAM: I admit that the Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bank should be under the one head. The one policy affects both. They should be under the one Minister not under two different Ministers. Such an arrangement is necessary if we are to get our agricultural industry placed on a good footing. I wish to reply to some of the statements made in a report, not from Wellington-street but from Beaufort-street. It is a well drawn up report and, though I disagree with a good deal of it, I do agree with some of it. One item in that report referred to the agricultural industry. I think the report should have shown the increase in the value of production in the agricultural areas.

Hon. P. Collier: That would be misleading because of the exceptional war prices.

Mr. LATHAM: The framers of the report could have easily stated that in certain years wheat brought 9s. 4d., 5s., or 4s. 8d. a bushel.

Mr. Wilson: The public know all about that.

Mr. LATHAM: But the British delegates, who are visiting us to obtain a clear knowledge of the position, do not know it.

Hon. P. Collier: It would not be wise to do that because to quote those abnormal prices would be misleading.

Mr. LATHAM: Without such figures the report is incomplete. The figures given are apt to mislead. Anyone reading them would conclude that the agricultural industry was on the decline, whereas the reverse is the case. The area is increasing.

Mr. Munzie: The report says so, too.

Mr. LATHAM: The report says—

Mr. SPEAKER: From what is the hon. member quoting?

Mr. LATHAM: A newspaper.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is he quoting from the statement read by the Leader of the Opposition in this House last week?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then the hon. member cannot quote that because it is a report of a speech delivered in this House.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Give a few words of what you remember.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may speak from memory, but he cannot quote the report.

Hon. P. Collier: You are quoting from a separate article that appeared in the newspaper.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand the hon. member is quoting from a report of what was said in this House.

Mr. LATHAM: It is a statement of a report compiled by the Labour movement for presentation to the British delegation.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the report that was read by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Lambert: The hon. member is quoting from a newspaper.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the newspaper report contains the article read by the Leader of the Opposition in this House.

Mr. Corboy: Not necessarily.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may correct me if I am wrong. The Leader of the Opposition read a statement to the House, and I presume that the paper from which the hon. member for York is quoting contains a report of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. LATHAM: It is a separate article and does not refer to our debates.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not desire to rule the hon. member out. If he assures me that what he is quoting is not a report of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, or of the article read in this House by the Leader of the Opposition, he may proceed.

Mr. LATHAM: I am not prepared to give that assurance. The "Statistical Abstract" of 1917 shows that the agricultural areas produced close on six million pounds worth of agricultural products. Since then the production has been gradually increasing. While the increase may perhaps be due to the higher prices received for our agricultural products, and though the area under cultivation may be smaller, still, by better cultivation and greater knowledge on the part of the farmers, it has been possible to increase the yields and therefore make the land much more valuable than it was previously. To-day the agricultural districts are responsible for more than one-half of the value of the State's total production. If my memory serves me, reference was made in the Beaufort-street report to the population of the agricultural areas.

Mr. Munzie: Only of certain districts.

Mr. LATHAM: In defence of my electorate, I would point out that York is sending more staff over the railways to-day than ever in its history.

Mr. O'Loghlen: But your district should have more people.

Mr. LATHAM: Not only are the people going in for cereal growing, but fat lambs and marketable stock are being raised in increasing numbers every year. It is hardly fair to infer that these rural districts are not progressing.

Mr. Munzie: That document simply said that certain districts had lost population during a given period. They may have increased their output.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, and I can tell the hon.* member why. In the olden times farmers could get cheaper labour and cheaper machinery. To-day these people are not utilising their land, owing to the heavy taxation and the difficulty of making anything out of their land.

Mr. Mansie: Then the report is true.

Mr. McCallum: Is it to be wondered at when all you are paying is 25s. a week?

Mr. LATHAM: That is the minimum paid to a newcomer.

Mr. McCallum: I say it is the maximum.

Mr. LATHAM: It is the minimum. There may be isolated cases, of course, but we cannot deal with them. In the majority of cases agricultural labourers are receiving £2 or £2 10s. a week, and in some places they are getting more. I could give the names of men who are paying more.

Hon. P. Collier: Some may be, not many.

Mr. LATHAM: The lowest priced labour is generally the dearest labour. It was rather unfair to quote those districts as declining when they are really doing better than ever before. The York district is doing much better. It is not long since the Government purchased some estates in the York district, subdivided them, and sold them. The people who took up the land failed and had to sell out. The areas were not sufficiently large to enable them to make a living, and the fact of the blocks having been made too small was due to a lack of knowledge as to what the land would produce. Were the estates subdivided to-day, I venture to say that these men would make a success of them. This it is that accounts for the loss of population in the district. I should like to see the Government start some of their group settlements there. It would be a much cheaper proposition than in the South-West. I desire to see the South-West settled, and I wish to lend the Government scheme all possible assistance, but I do want to see the people given a reasonable opportunity to make for themselves something over and above the value of the work they are putting in. I am a little afraid that unless we are very careful, these group settlers will be over-capitalised and will not be able to make good. If group settlements were started on some of the Great Southern lands, there should be no fear of over capitalisation. The Great Southern lends itself to group settlement and to more economical group settlement than we are getting in the South-West. In addition to that, the facilities are established, and the new settlers would have no difficulty in marketing their produce. I wish to make a slight reference to the attitude of the "West Australian" newspaper.

Mr. Lambert: Would not closer settlement assist you?

Mr. LATHAM: No. Let me refer to the Wilberforce estate, which was subdivided but not in conformity with my ideas. The areas were of 4,000 to 5,000 acres. Such areas are in excess of what is necessary for a man to make good. Members should not lose sight of the fact that the whole of the land around York is not first class land. There is a lot of hilly

country of which 5,000 or 10,000 acres would not be too much, because it could be utilised for sheep grazing only, and even such areas would not produce very much feed. Regarding the "West Australian," any one reading it would be apt to think that the Premier could not possibly make a mistake. Well, the Premier is only human, and in this respect one ought to be very careful. If a man be placed on a pedestal and gets a fall, he is likely to be hurt rather badly. The "West Australian," by publishing such articles, is really doing more harm than good to the Government. I was pleased at the tenor of the closing remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. It makes one think that everything in the garden is lovely from the Opposition point of view. I do not know whether members of the Opposition are trying to lead the Government astray, or whether they are in earnest, but if they are in earnest, there is very little room for members on this side of the House to criticise the work of the Government. Our criticism should be in the direction of assisting the Government to carry out the policy that any party in power must carry out at the present time. That is a land settlement policy combined with an immigration policy, and, of course, such a policy must be carried out on sound lines.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.15]: I congratulate the member for York (Mr. Latham), upon the moderate tone of his speech. I was not clear, however, concerning some of his remarks. He said that people were leaving Western Australia and going to the Eastern States on account of the high taxation, and in the next breath said they were coming from the Eastern States to Western Australia and spending their money here.

Mr. Latham: To buy wheat lands.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It appears that each set of people is leaving its own State for another because of the taxation. Taxation in Western Australia is high because we have only primary production here. A comparison between Western Australia and the other States shows that the taxation in this State is the lowest, except when the Customs and Federal taxation is included, when it becomes the highest. Per head of the population Western Australia pays much more through the Customs than is paid in the other States. The total taxation in Tasmania is between £7 and £8 per head, but in Western Australia it is between £12 and £13. Western Australia pays less in direct taxation than any of the States with the exception of Victoria. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) has moved that this House should thank His Excellency for the Speech he has delivered. I am of opinion that it is the worst Speech ever delivered at any opening of Parliament in this State. There is nothing new in it from first to last. It contains no policy of proper development, and no public works policy. The Government are relying solely upon soldier settlement and the new settlement scheme. The Speech says that

the migration agreement was signed on February 9th, 1923. A copy of that agreement was laid on the Table of the House before the last session closed, and the signatures of Ministers were attached to it. There was nothing new about that agreement. The Speech then relates what advances have been made to soldiers. The Government have been careful to include the amounts advanced to their ordinary clients. They say they have advanced £1,077,735. I should like to know from the Premier if this includes the money advanced under the Industries Assistance Act. If it includes advances to ordinary clients it must include the amounts temporarily loaned for cropping under the Industries Assistance Act. The trustees of the Agricultural Bank control all the moneys advanced under that Act. If these advances are included it will considerably reduce the amount to which I have referred. Then we come to the railway policy. A great proportion of the railways mentioned in the Speech were authorised in 1915. With the exception of one or two railways, the Government have had no policy of railway construction, for nearly all these railways were promised to settlers many years ago. The Speech also says there has been a considerable amount of capital brought into the State. I am not aware that large numbers of settlers have come from the Eastern States. I do know that some came here with a view to settling in the Esperance area. One of them informed me that two or three others came with him from South Australia, but the treatment they received was such that they returned without taking any steps to view the land. They could get no information whatever. This one man stuck to it and now has a good block. This shows that very little encouragement has been given to people in the Eastern States to settle on Esperance lands. The Government have given us the fresh news that we still have a deficit. Everybody knows that. Apparently it was necessary to remind us lest we should forget it.

Mr. Marshall: It is so old, we might well forget it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was thought necessary to set apart portion of the Speech to remind us of the deficit. We are also told that the revenue has increased considerably during the year. During the period referred to it amounted to £7,207,492. That is the largest revenue on record for Western Australia. One would have thought, in view of this fact, that greater endeavours would have been made to bring the revenue and expenditure more closely together. The Premier has made excuses for the position of the State. I hardly think that, when he introduced the Licensing Bill, he anticipated he would collect the amount he proposed to get under it. I believe he felt he would receive far less than he stated, otherwise he would have fought more strenuously than he did. The Premier also claims that the Government have had to find the money for the upkeep of hospitals. Even if the Hospitals Bill had been pressed last session, the amount received

would have been so small that it would have been encumbent upon the Government to find practically as much money for the maintenance of hospitals as they had to find for the previous year. In view of these circumstances the Government cannot claim that they have suffered a decrease in revenue from these sources. The revenue last year was undoubtedly large. It was £2,361,405 in excess of the revenue received by the Labour Government during their last term of office. This excess amounted to practically half the revenue received by the Labour Government during that year. In place of this large revenue of over seven million pounds there is still a deficit for the year of £405,351.

Hon. P. Collier: And all the bills for June held over until July.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When the revenue is large the Government should endeavour to make it meet the expenditure. The Premier has referred to the Labour Government's deficits, and instanced the financial years of 1914-15 and 1915-16. During the last year in which the Labour Government held office the deficit was reduced. When they found the revenue was decreasing they took steps to stop expenditure. They weighed every shilling of expenditure in the balance. Ministers were instructed to spend no sum of any magnitude without the consent of the Treasurer.

The Minister for Agriculture: Those instructions exist to-day.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But they are not carried out. In his report for the year 1915-16, the Auditor General said that there was an amount owing to the Government by way of outstanding accounts of £100,000, or £40,000 more than the deficit left by the Labour Government. He also stated that the amount owing by the Government on the 30th June of the year 1915-16 was only £50,000. The incoming Government had all the advantage of this position to carry on the affairs of State for their first year of office. The Labour Government could have done what the present Government are doing. They could have said to the farmers who were given advances during the drought, that they must repay the interest on loans or get out. I would remind the Premier that the Labour Government not only had droughts, but went through portion of the war period. The droughts did more injury to our farmers from the financial point of view than the war did. The Labour Government, however, said it was their duty to see that the State prospered and the settlers were kept on the land. They did not enforce the payment of interest owing to the department, for had that been done the settlers would have had to relinquish their holdings. We did not say, as the present Government say to settlers on the Peel estate, "Pay up or get out." That was the reason why the Labour Government had a deficit of £360,000 when they went out of office. I have carefully perused the speech delivered by the Premier last week. I read it in the "Daily News," which gives a very fair report. I should like to have read some

extracts from it, but owing to the ruling given by you, Sir, I cannot do so. The Labour Government were turned out of office because the people were led to believe we were wanting in financial ability, that we did not know how to control the State's money, and were building up deficits which would ruin Western Australia.

Mr. A. Thomson: A lack of business acumen.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I will come to that. This doctrine was preached throughout Western Australia to such an extent that people came to believe it. The people were told, "We want on the Treasury bench not carpenters and joiners or labourers, but men of business acumen and ability." Let me ask hon. members, have business acumen and ability been displayed in increasing the deficit since 1916 by £4,550,916? I honestly believe that if the Ministers in office since 1916 had paid the same attention to details of administration as Labour Ministers paid to them, the deficit would not be the amount that it is to-day. We realised that the Government are the same as a private individual. Governments must curtail their expenditure if their revenues are curtailed. If a private individual continually expends more than his income, he will quickly find himself in the bankruptcy court. The Labour Government were severely condemned at the time because their expenditure exceeded their revenue for a year or two. From that day to the present time, no matter how much has been spent by another Government in excess of revenue, no fault whatever has been found, but the finances have been regarded as satisfactory. As the Leader of the Opposition said the other evening, the present Minister for Mines, who was Treasurer in the Labour Government, was abused up hill and down dale for his deficits. He was stated to be unworthy of the position which he held. Some members then sitting on this side of the House almost went so far as to say that he should be indicted before the criminal court of this country for various things which he had done unconstitutionally. Certainly there could not be a readier method of discrediting a party than by indicting a Minister for unconstitutional actions. Of course it was all moonshine, designed to mislead the people. I was pleased to hear the Premier say the other day that the people are coming to think more of the political question than previously. If that is so, I venture to say the life of the present Government will be very short indeed. All we want is that the people shall think for themselves; then we need have no fear. But the people must not be led astray by such articles as we sometimes see in the Press, such an article as was published to-day. That article throws the responsibility for the six millions deficit on the Labour Party. The amount of the deficit was £1,360,000 when we lost control of the finances.

Hon. M. F. Troy: We have been out of office for six years.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Does the Press believe that the people will swallow such tommy-

rot? I agree with the Premier that the people are beginning to think, and to realise the position. Once they have grasped the position, they will cast their votes in the ballot box for a change.

Hon. P. Collier: We shall soon have the "Sun," a non-political, impartial paper.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Not only the Press has accused us of extravagance. Our new Agent General stated in the Legislative Council that he would not agree to any measure providing for an additional penny of revenue to the Labour Government until the Government became more economical. In those days the Upper House blocked us in every possible way from receiving revenue. They tried to put us in financial straits, but they failed. Not only did they try to block our Bills in order to prevent the carrying out of our policy, but they went so far as to try to prevent us from raising loans.

The Minister for Agriculture: Why this resurrection?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would not have resurrected these matters but for the fact that the Premier's speech on Thursday last dealt entirely with that aspect. The Premier went back over the whole period the Labour Party were in office, year after year. Then he pointed out that he himself was a good little Jack Horner who pulled a plum out of the pie. According to the Governor's Speech, which shows that we still have a large deficit, a deficit of £405,351 for the year, there need be no worry over that. The sinking fund, we are told, has increased by £188,847 above the amount of the deficit. In fact, there is no deficit, and we have a surplus of £188,847. Have hon. members ever reflected that the sinking fund payments are made from loan moneys? Have hon. members ever realised that on that amount of sinking fund we are paying a higher rate of interest than the Sinking Fund Trustees are receiving, and that that has been the case for several years past? It is costing us £7,000 or £8,000 more per annum to build up the sinking fund than we would pay by way of interest on the loan if the sinking fund did not exist at all. So that the sinking fund to-day is increasing instead of decreasing our burden. That is, unless the present Government have adopted the principle which was formerly enunciated by the present Minister for Mines, as to keeping the sinking fund and giving bonds in its place. If the present Government have done that, there is no increased expenditure on the sinking fund. I remember, Mr. Speaker, and so do you, how the present Minister for Works rose from the chair which I now occupy, to point out with holy horror that this country would be ruined, that the confidence of investors would be destroyed, if the then Treasurer, the present Minister for Mines, did anything but hand over the cash for the sinking fund to the trustees.

Mr. A. Thomson: And the other States borrow without sinking fund.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. Have the former Opposition and present Government

carried out their policy in this respect during the last two or three years? Approximately £700,000 of sinking fund money has been invested not in loans raised years ago, for which the sinking fund was provided, but in the 1920-21 loan. I do not know how much may similarly have been invested in the last loan. In all probability, the Government are to-day carrying out the Labour Party's policy for the purpose of keeping the sinking fund in the State. That seems to be the position disclosed by the financial returns. The Premier dealt with immigration, and I must thank him for the reference which he made to myself. It is true I was proud of the former immigration policy. It is true we had unemployed at the time. According to the Premier's figures, the Labour Party during their term of office brought into this State 33,429 migrants. Whether his dates are right or not I do not know. He gave five years. During 1910-11 the Labour Party were not in power. However, I was much struck with the Premier's statement, and I looked through the figures. Notwithstanding the fact that in five years we introduced into this State some 33,000 migrants, the Premier told us last Thursday that we were against immigration and did not mean what we said. Under pressure from this side of the House, he withdrew that statement. He said there were unemployed in those years. Why? Because there had been a drought. But there was no reference to a drought in the Premier's speech as published. Hon. members are well aware that in 1915 there was no work whatever in the country, because the farmers had no money to provide work. It was necessary for the Government to come to the assistance of the farmers. If any Government have ever assisted the farmers of Western Australia, the Labour Government have done so. At all times when there has been no need of assistance, that assistance has been granted. In 1911 there was a partial drought on the outskirts of the eastern area. The Labour Government went to the assistance of the farmers then, and kept them on the land. I am pleased to say that through Labour's action on that occasion many of those farmers are prosperous to-day.

The Minister for Agriculture: Any Government would have taken the same action.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, but the present Government do not give the Labour Government credit for having taken such action.

Mr. A. Thomson: You had to protect the assets of the State, surely.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, and in doing so we protected the farmer.

Mr. Lutey: And that is all the Government are doing to-day.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is correct.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: What is good in the case of the present Government was wrong in our case. We are told by the Premier that we spent very little money in agricultural development, and that practically we only carried out a public works policy. No settlement, no agricultural de-

velopment, only a public works policy. Let us weigh the matter for a few moments. In 1911, or in the last session of Parliament prior to the elections which returned the Labour Party to office, the then Government tried to buy the electors of this State, and passed through Parliament no fewer than 12 railway Bills.

Hon. P. Collier: In one session.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. With other railway Bills carried by Parliament previously, their policy left us to construct 900 miles of railway in the agricultural districts. It will be seen, therefore, that if our policy was one of public works, we were merely carrying out a policy imposed on us by a previous Government.

Mr. Lutey: Of which the present Premier was a member.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes.

Hon. P. Collier: And so we were saddled with the policy, and accused of having had a bad policy.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The public works policy for which we were condemned was the policy of the previous Government, which we honoured in its entirety. I am pleased to say that, so far as this party is concerned, we did not carry out the tactics which have been followed since. If Parliament authorised a work the Labour Party carried it out: they did not break faith with the public; they carried it out in its entirety. To-day we are accused of having carried out a public works policy which was provided for us by the Government that preceded us.

Hon. P. Collier: And if it was a bad policy they were responsible.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was their policy. We were committed to the construction of 900 miles of railways.

Hon. P. Collier: Some of which are not constructed even to-day.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The mileage of railways that we built was not as great as that constructed by the Government which preceded us. That mileage was between 600 and 900, roughly speaking.

The Minister for Agriculture: Was the Dwarda-Narrogin railway authorised at that time?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That was authorised in 1915. Moreover, the Labour Party did not do what has since been done, and that is, to carry the railway Bills in the closing session of the Parliament; the Labour Party put through those measures in the opening sessions. Notice the difference in the policy of the two parties. There was no attempt on the part of the Labour Party to buy the electors. We knew what was necessary.

Hon. P. Collier: Our programme of railway construction was 600 miles in 4½ years.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Regarding our public works policy, it is true that we spent a fairly large sum of money, approximately £200,000, for the purpose of providing water supplies in agricultural areas. The previous Government made no provision for water supplies in the agricultural districts, and when

a partial drought took place in 1911 the farmers were without water. We put down thousands of bores and we constructed hundreds of dams. We know of course that some of the bores yielded salt water, but generally the result was satisfactory, and since that time there has never been the shortage that was experienced in 1911. We all know, of course, that in 1915 there was a drought throughout the State, and that we suffered severely from it. All these works that I have enumerated we are entitled to associate with agricultural development; they are part and parcel of agricultural development. If the railways had not been built many people would to-day have no means of taking their products to market. Indeed, I doubt whether there would be any settlers at all in those parts.

Hon. P. Collier: The progress is due to our "unwise" public works policy.

Mr. Piesse: Who said it was "unwise"?

Hon. P. Collier: The "West Australian."

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier went on to make comparisons between the expenditure in the periods of the Labour Government and that of the present Government. He told the House that the Labour Party were in office for five years and expended only £2,012,000 in agricultural development. Of course, railways played no part in agricultural development; we know, too, that water supplies played no part in agricultural development!

Hon. P. Collier: And harbour improvements are not included in agricultural development!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: All these things render no assistance whatever to the farmers!

Hon. P. Collier: Not a bit!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Without these necessary utilities, where would agriculture be to-day? How is it possible to establish a farm unless you have a railway to take the produce to market? Then, of what use is it to take the products to a port unless there are harbour facilities? I would like to analyse the Premier's figures. He said, "The Labour Party expended £2,012,000 and we spent £7,760,000 on agricultural development in a similar period of years." Then he asked hon. members to look at the difference—16 per cent. as against 61 per cent. But let me ask the Premier how many railways he included in his figures? I would ask him, too, how much he spent on water supplies? Are not members in this House crying out, year after year, for railway extensions? Do they not continually point to the fact that some farmers are unable to obtain a decent livelihood because of the absence of transport facilities? I ask the Premier—because he did not make this clear—whether his figures do not include £5,497,611 in connection with soldier settlement? I further wish to ask him whether his figures do not include £450,539 for group settlement? So that, after deducting these two amounts, there should be left for ordinary agricultural development, £1,711,850. The Labour Government, without having special

settlements to provide for, had to construct railways, provide water supplies and build harbours for the settlers already on the land, and, according to the Premier, they spent £2,012,000 as against £7,760,000 expended by the present Government in the last five years. It is about time the people were told something about the true position. We are aware that a considerable sum spent in connection with soldier settlement has been used in buying out those already on the land; in other words, we have in recent years relieved the individual of liability and placed that liability on the State. What has been done in this direction has not added to our wealth, and neither has it added to our production. The greater number of soldiers who have gone on the land have been placed on farms purchased for them.

The Minister for Agriculture: Not all of them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was pointed out in this House not so long ago that 80 per cent. of the soldiers had been placed on the land in this manner. A very small percentage indeed had taken up Crown land.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is not so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We know now that there will shortly be a very big demand for a reduction in the purchase price of these properties.

Mr. Wilson: It will cost the State half a million.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We know that in many instances too much has been paid for the farms. Those who have perused the report of the Royal Commission will realise that the soldiers cannot make good with the load they have to carry. The State cannot possibly gain to the extent that the Government would have people believe. How can we say that this money has been spent in what we term "agricultural development"? The member for York (Mr. Latham) put the position clearly when he said that the farmers who had sold out their properties had gone to the Eastern States.

The Minister for Agriculture: Nonsense!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am quoting the deputy leader of the Country Party; it came from him. He said distinctly that the farmers who had sold out had gone to the Eastern States with their money.

Hon. P. Collier: And it comes from Mr. Monger, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Those people who sold their farms and who received money from the State, have certainly gone somewhere else. The State, and not the individual, is guaranteeing the liability, and the five millions of money has gone somewhere. Of course, we have certain assets, but is that what we would call agricultural development in the ordinary sense? What has been done in recent years should not be compared with what was done before. Taking the Premier's own figures we find that he has spent in agricultural development actually £300,150 less than did the Labour Government.

The Colonial Secretary: The deputy leader of the Country Party said that those people had left the State because of the heavy taxation.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of course, we know that if they had not sold their properties they would have remained.

The Colonial Secretary: I think he was referring to taxation as the cause.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am pointing out that what has been done in this direction cannot be termed agricultural development in its true sense. It is misleading. If the Premier had dealt fairly with the matter he would certainly have included the amount spent on railway construction, water supply, harbour facilities and other matters incidentally connected with the industry. But he did not do that. I much prefer that all these details should be given to the public in a fair and proper manner, and as I stated a little earlier, the Labour Administration did that and had nothing whatever to be ashamed of. The Labour Party endeavoured, during the period it was in power, to do its utmost in the direction of advancing the State. It has done so since, and will continue to do so. Their votes have always been cast in favour of agricultural development and the rendering of assistance to all primary industries. If we turn to mining we find that, since the present Government assumed office, a sum of only £150,000 has been spent on this industry. The fact remains that the present Government take cognizance of one type of primary production only. They do not realise that to make Western Australia a thickly populated and prosperous State, there are other industries besides agriculture that must be fostered. It is true that most wealth comes from the land, but other sources of wealth require to be encouraged side by side with the agricultural industry. The Government have done very little to foster those other forms of industry, and even in the case of agriculture they have spent much less than the Labour Government, as I have already shown the House. As to expenditure on public works, the accusation was levelled at the Labour Government that we spent large sums of public money. When Labour took office we found that the railways were in a bad way. There were not sufficient trucks to take the farmers' produce, nor sufficient locomotives to draw the trucks to market. There were inadequate water supplies for the railways. The necessary conveniences at sidings to enable farmers to handle their produce satisfactorily were lacking. The result was that the Labour Government had to build nearly 100 locomotives, approximately 2,500 trucks, and another 100 carriages and brake vans. All these were necessary in order that our railways should be provided with sufficient rolling stock to cope with the traffic.

The Minister for Agriculture: You had to do a lot.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, and if the truth be told, the Government who follow the present occupants of the Treasury benches will have to pursue the same course as we had

to do in 1911. Our predecessors in office had neglected to keep the railways up to standard. Should not all these items of expenditure be taken into account under the general heading of agricultural development, seeing that they are all incidental to that development? Should not credit be given when that work is carried out, instead of merely saying, as the Premier did, "The Labour Government spent two million pounds; I spent seven millions." As to the Labour pamphlet regarding the migration scheme, which was read by the Leader of the Opposition, I had the pleasure of reading that document before it was presented to this Chamber. The document places the position, as it prevails to-day, very fairly before the public. No fair minded person could take exception to the statement as a whole.

Mr. Munsie: No one attempted to criticise it.

Hon. P. Collier: They have abused it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The figures published in that pamphlet were taken from Government returns, and anyone else, had he so desired, could have procured exactly the same figures by perusing Government reports. In order that the publication might be fair, an attempt was made to get returns brought right up to date, so that the document, as a whole, would not be misleading. Nothing could have been fairer. As the member for York (Mr. Latham) said, we have been receiving too many migrants; there is no work for them at the present juncture. I have seen migrants walking the streets of Fremantle. There could not be stronger evidence of the position than is furnished by the statement appearing in the "Sunday Times" last week-end, that of those receiving meal tickets from the Government, 80 per cent. are migrants.

The Minister for Agriculture: Is that a very accurate sort of newspaper?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not saying that the paper is accurate, but that the statement supports the contention that too many people are coming into Western Australia at the present time.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Is not the "Sunday Times" as accurate as the "Primary Producer"?

The Minister for Agriculture: That is a horse of another colour!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: At any rate, the "Sunday Times" does not favour the Labour Party. It is safe to say that never has there been so much bungling in connection with migration as there has been this year. During June, July and August, hundreds of men have been landing week after week, although those months comprise the slack period of the year, when there is nothing for them to do in the agricultural areas. The stories told by some of these migrants are harrowing indeed. I do not blame the farmers for the position; if they have not the work for the migrants to do, they cannot provide them with employment. Migrants who are coming to Western Australia now will do the State more injury than has ever been done before under a policy of migration. I do not subscribe to the state-

ment that all these men are not suitable. I believe the bigger percentage of them are suitable. Not only have we to contend with those who come to the State assisted by the Government, but we have also to contend with those who pay their own passages. Over the latter type of migrant we have no control. In all probability a large number of those who pay their own passages may be those we consider unsuitable. It is also true that a little while ago—I believe the practice is stopped now—many migrants came to the State under the auspices of the Overseas Settlement League, and over those migrants the Immigration Department had no control.

Mr. A. Thomson: They were ex-service men.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. All they had to do was to go to the committee of the Overseas Settlement League and say that they wished to migrate to some part of the British Dominions, selecting Western Australia or some other part of the Dominions, as they desired. Their passages were paid for them and there was no control over them when they came to Western Australia. I know of some instances, and I had the position placed before me fully when I was last in London. As to the provision of water supplies, I am pleased that the Government have taken some action to meet the requirements of the metropolitan area. I am afraid, however, that the Government are over-doing it. I had hoped that any Government undertaking to provide a water supply for the metropolitan area would have made that supply available by degrees. One of the greatest objections I had against the creation of a metropolitan water board, elected by the local governing authorities, was that I was afraid such a body would borrow a large sum of money to undertake the work, in order to make a show after their election, and thus burden the rate-payers with increased taxation for years before the full scheme was required. Apparently, that is the very step the present Government have taken. If water rates are to be increased during the next few years by 2s. 9d. in the pound, there will be one of the greatest outrages in the metropolitan area that we have ever heard.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the scheme.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I believe the rates are to go up next year and the increased rates will continue for many years, and the people will have to pay now for what is provided to satisfy the requirements for the next 30 or 50 years.

The Minister for Agriculture: You believe in the policy of payment for services rendered?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, but not for a large expenditure of money before it is necessary. It is a question whether too much has not been taken in hand at once. No doubt the Government have gone into the matter very carefully, but metropolitan members must realise that once the people are charged 2s. 9d. in the pound for water rates, some nasty questions will be asked about the imposition.

Hon. P. Collier: It will not matter much because the rates will not be increased before the next election.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Government will take good care on that point. Regarding tramway extensions, I was a member of the Royal Commission appointed to deal with proposed extensions in the metropolitan area. In my opinion the tramway along the Perth-Fremantle-road should not be constructed for some years to come.

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear! That is so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Some time ago the Government conducted a sale of land in the Dalkeith estate and prior to the auction being held, the Chief Traffic Manager, Mr. Lord, the Chief Engineer for Existing Lines, Mr. Light, and the General Manager of the Tramway Department, Mr. Taylor, were asked to inspect and report on the proposed routes via the Perth-Fremantle-road to Claremont and from Nedlands through Westana-road and around the river to Claremont. These officers reported in favour of the lower route round the riverside. The land I have referred to was then put up for sale. There is not the slightest doubt that the fact was made known that the tramway was to proceed along the route recommended. As high as £300 was given for some of the blocks.

Capt. Carter: And quarter-acre blocks at that!

The Minister for Agriculture: They are beautiful residential sites.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that.

The Minister for Agriculture: A tramway line will be constructed there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Perhaps so.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, trams for everyone!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Government, above all others, should keep faith with those they have business with. The fact that the report of the officers was made known at the time the blocks were sold at the Dalkeith estate more than anything else influenced me as a member of the Commission regarding these routes. The report of the Commission shows that if the lower route were adopted, a surplus of £100 per annum was anticipated, and that if the route along the Perth-Fremantle-road were adopted the surplus—I speak from memory—would be about £240 per annum. Members should realise that the operations of the tramway along the Perth-Fremantle-road route will rob the railways of revenue, whereas the other route should have provided increased traffic for the trains. Apart from this aspect, however, it is the duty of the Government to keep faith with those people who bought blocks on the promise of the construction of a tramline. I believe an announcement regarding the lower route appeared on the plans of the subdivision of the Dalkeith estate.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Before tea I was dealing with tramway extensions. The Westana-road tram should be the first to be constructed in Claremont, if only for the reason

that it was promised to those who purchased land in the Dalkeith Estate. Therefore to first construct the tramway along the Perth-Fremantle Road would be a breach of faith, and would lead the people to lose confidence in the promises of the Government. As for tramway extensions generally, anybody who goes much about the metropolitan area must realise that several are necessary. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Gibson) will bear me out in saying that if at Fremantle we had anything like the population of Perth, the local authorities down there would not hesitate to construct a number of new tramway lines. The new tramway to Inglewood will pay from the start. At Victoria Park also there is a large population wanting tramway communication. I understand they are prepared to guarantee interest and sinking fund on the outlay, which means that the necessary line could be laid down without additional cost to the general community. Many other lines proposed, although perhaps not quite so urgent, are really necessary to the convenience of the public. At the same time I hold that we should first construct those lines farthest from the railway; we ought not to set up competition between the tramways and the railways, as we should do if we were to construct tramways alongside existing railways. I cannot avoid reference to the railway bridge at Fremantle. Only last year I was informed by the Minister that the bridge was perfectly safe. The Commissioner of Railways, in his report, intimated that a new railway bridge was necessary. More recently the Commissioner has reported that an expenditure of several thousands of pounds on the foundations of the bridge is necessary to make the structure safe for traffic. I trust that, as early as possible, the Government will make a start with a new bridge, higher up the river. The site has been tested and proved satisfactory. It would be disastrous if the means of communication between Perth and the port were to be cut. Moreover, we cannot accept the risk of anything happening to the old bridge, especially while there is a train on it. We have dreadful examples from other parts of the world where railway bridges have gone down, with serious loss of life. It is essential that we should preclude any such calamities here. I hope that at an early date the Government will enter upon the construction of the bridge higher up the river. I see that another expert has been brought over from Melbourne to inquire into the provision of cold storage on the wharf. It is about time we put more reliance on our own officers. Imported experts have cost this State very large sums of money. If I were to speak exclusively on behalf of my own electorate, I should approve of the recommendations put up by the visiting expert, because he is of opinion that the sheds should be constructed on the north side of the harbour, in my electorate. But anybody familiar with the working of the Fremantle harbour must know that for the convenience, not only of the general public, but of the fruit grower and of the shipping, the cold storage should be on the south side of the harbour. I cannot see why that should entail

any extra cost. The newspaper reports the expert as saying that it would cost less to erect a single storey building than to put up one of two storeys. There is no necessity for the taller building, for on the vacant land between Cliff-street and the present sheds there is a sufficiently large area for all requirements. Moreover, the cold storage could be used for frozen or chilled meats, for which at present there is no accommodation. The Wyndham meat is the best I have tasted in this State.

Mr. A. Thomson: What about using the Fremantle freezers?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The place is too far away.

Mr. Stubbs: You suggest a small cold storage building?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. For the export of fruit. It could also be used for chilled or frozen meat. At present this meat has to be lifted out of the ship and taken away to private cold stores, with the result that it deteriorates during transmission.

The Minister for Mines: You propose a cold store; not freezing works?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. The proposal is a cold store for the protection of fruit awaiting shipment. There is no suggestion for a freezing chamber. This proposed cold store would assist the Government in bringing down chilled meat from Wyndham.

Mr. Harrison: Would it be occupied to its full capacity the whole year round?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, if used for meat as well as fruit.

The Minister for Mines: It would be used for meat when not required for fruit.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. The "Kangaroo" can bring down 300 tons of frozen meat, or 150 tons of chilled meat. In other words, she can carry in her cold chambers 300 tons of frozen meat, the carcasses being stacked, whereas chilled meat has to be hung, and so her chambers will accommodate but 150 tons of it. There would be no difficulty whatever in bringing that chilled meat to Fremantle if we had there cold stores in which to keep it. If the store were built on the south side of the harbour, it would be convenient for everybody concerned, the shipping, the trade, and the consumers. In conclusion, I am reminded of the advice frequently given by one who was a highly respected member of this Chamber when first I was elected to Parliament. I refer to the late Hon. F. H. Piessie, the then member for Katanning, who used to urge younger members of Parliament to be always fair in their criticism. I hope that in future, when we are dealing with the financial position of the State as it affects the Labour party and the Government, greater fairness will be shown than has been exhibited recently. I repeat that the agricultural industry has no better friends than members on this side of the House. In my opinion, no metropolitan member who would do or say anything prejudicial to the farming community, is fit to be a member of this Chamber.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Or of any other.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The prosperity of the metropolitan area is dependant on the de-

velopment of the State. If the State does not prosper, the metropolitan area must go down. So, in my opinion, the warmest supporters which the country districts have in this Chamber are those representing metropolitan seats. This is the last session of the present Parliament. Next session not all of us will be here, but I trust that those who are here will see to it that the country districts are fairly treated, as they have been in each of the preceding Parliaments in this State.

Mr. Wilson: What about the Country Party members?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They can look after themselves. I say again, the country districts can have no warmer supporters than they have in members on this side of the Chamber.

Mr. PIESSE (Toodyay) [7.45]: The big subject to-day is undoubtedly immigration, and with that goes the question of the settlement of our idle lands. There is a very large area of land suitable for agricultural settlement if it were only provided with water supplies. I say emphatically that the great need of the State to-day is the provision of water supplies. I want to say straight out what the Government ought to do. From Yilgarn almost right around the coast to Israelite Bay there is an immense area of land highly suitable for agriculture, and it could be successfully settled in a very short space of time if only the Government provided water supplies. Water should be conserved in key dams. I am glad to notice in the Speech a reference to key dams, and that the Government have declared their intention of constructing key dams. I hope they will be provided in the unsettled country also, because it will then be possible to quickly settle such parts, and the activities of the settlers will very soon compel the Government to provide transport facilities for their produce. The position in Western Australia is very different from what it was 12 years ago. When I entered Parliament in 1911 the settlement in the wheat belt was comparatively small. There was a strip of settled country abutting the goldfields line, but even the Dowerin loop country was then in its infancy. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) pleaded for fairness towards those who had controlled the affairs of the State in the past. I wish to pay a tribute to the Labour Government. Members of the Opposition have complained from time to time that we have not given them the credit due to them. In speeches I have made in this House, I have again and again expressed appreciation of the service rendered to the farming community while the Labour Government were in power. Even they themselves seem to have forgotten some of their own good work. Their first efforts to help the farmer came in 1911 when they established the seed wheat and fertiliser board. I was closely associated with that board and I can testify to its great service to the farmers. Then followed the establishment of the I.A.B., also during Labour's term of office. I give the Labour Government all possible credit for

their work in this connection. They have good reason to be proud of what they did for the farmers at that time. The only fault we had to find with them was their endeavour to get the farmers to repay the whole of the assistance granted from 1911 to 1915 out of the proceeds of the one harvest in 1915-16. That was during the administration of Mr. W. D. Johnson.

Hon. M. F. Troy: They did not get it.

Mr. PIESSE: No, because they realised the folly of insisting upon it; nevertheless they attempted to get it. Anyhow, I appreciate their work, and the same applies to every man who was on the land at that time. No better assistance could have been granted than was granted by the Labour Government of the day. The position is almost similar now, notwithstanding the efforts of the Labour Government and of their successors in office. Last season many farmers had to cart water for distances ranging up to 20 miles from a railway. The time has come when the Government should realise the seriousness of water carting and should endeavour to overcome this big expenditure of effort which in money must represent thousands of pounds each summer. I am not here to ventilate any grievance in behalf of the farmers. On the whole they have done well and there are few complaints to make, but I repeat that, if we are going to settle that big area at present lying unoccupied, water supplies must be provided, and to provide them thousands of pounds must be expended. It would be impossible for any farmer to establish himself on vacant Crown lands unless the Government provided a water supply. The farmer could not meet this want by his own efforts. The Government should realise the noble efforts made by the farmers to help themselves, and the time has arrived when they should liberally assist the farmers, not by means of loans, but by means of establishing reservoirs to ensure permanent supplies. It is regrettable that the migrants coming to Western Australia are not all of the type we desire, but that is only to be expected. It is impossible to obtain from the Old Country anything like the number of migrants required and all of the proper type. These men, however, are willing to work. As an employer I admit that one-half of the migrants coming here need to be taught. When we employ farm hands who know their work, they can be sent out with a team or a machine or an axe and trusted to do their work without supervision, but the newcomers need to be trained; they lack a knowledge of local conditions. Soldier settlement in this State has undoubtedly been very unsatisfactory. I heard it stated this afternoon that some of the soldiers' properties had been over-capitalised. It is not so much a question of over-capitalisation as of being called upon to pay the interest charges almost immediately. In a few instances the scheme is working satisfactorily, but in the majority of cases it is working unsatisfactorily because of the calls made upon the resources of these men right from the outset. Those who were responsible for the scheme

failed to realise that after a man has taken up land or has been settled on an improved holding, there have to be met a multitude of expenses which amount to a considerable sum. In order that a settler may get a reasonable return, he must have more capital than is provided under the scheme. The remedy is to grant a liberal period free of interest. This I consider should be five years at the very least. The Government should have a proper inquiry made into the existing state of affairs so that the soldiers might be given relief.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: Have you read the report of the commission?

Mr. PIESSE: Yes, and I consider the commission should have fixed a term. I am informed that it would be impossible to specify a term.

Mr. Corboy: Of course it is. Practically every case varies.

Mr. PIESSE: I have read the report of the commission's finding as published in the "West Australian."

Mr. Corboy: What the "West Australian" published did not reflect the commission's report at all.

Mr. PIESSE: Then I shall read the full report.

Mr. Underwood: Buy the "Daily News."

Mr. PIESSE: I have not had an opportunity to read the full report, but I hope it suggests a solution of the difficulty.

Capt. Carter: Perhaps the "Primary Producer" will print it.

Mr. PIESSE: I hope relief will be given to the soldier settlers, because they include many good and solid men.

Mr. Underwood: Why not get the report? Why speak before you have read it?

Mr. PIESSE: I understand that the Commission did not recommend any period.

Mr. Corboy: Do you submit that it is possible to do so in view of the variety of cases?

Mr. Underwood: Until you have read the report, do not assert anything.

Mr. PIESSE: The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) will have an opportunity to speak presently. I trust that these cases will be dealt with on their merits and that the merits will be fully considered.

Capt. Carter: Special inquiry was made into every case.

Mr. Underwood: For Heaven's sake read the report.

Mr. PIESSE: Every case is supposed to have been dealt with on its merits and yet the commission suggest that the soldiers should continue as before. Have not the Government written off hundreds of pounds in respect of land clearing?

Mr. Underwood: No.

Mr. PIESSE: The Premier told us that £6 or £7 per acre had been written off in some instances. Yet the member for Pilbara denies it. He seems to know very little about it.

Mr. Underwood: You ought to read the commission's report before speaking.

Mr. PIESSE: The member for Pilbara denies the Premier's statement. Anyhow, the

position of the soldier settlers demands immediate relief. There should be a period of five years free of interest.

Mr. Underwood: Read the report.

Mr. PIESSE: Another section of people or the land that find themselves in an unsatisfactory position are the fruitgrowers. Enormous quantities of fruit have been exported and have shown a very small margin of profit. The Commissioner of Railways has seen fit to grant some slight relief in the matter of railrage. Ten years ago I despatched to the goldfields many hundreds of cases of fruit at a railrage cost of about 6½d. per case. To-day it costs about 1s. 2d. under the goods rate—more than double. The Commissioner says he is desirous of encouraging the consumption of fruit and, with this object in view, he is willing to carry it at a flat rate of 1s. 6d. per case.

Mr. Marshall: What do you imagine the growers pay for the transport of stock from the Murchison?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PIESSE: The flat rate of 1s. 6d. is a fairly reasonable concession, but over short distances the rate is of very little use; in fact it means a loss. I understood we were to have a flat rate for dump or flat cases of 1s., which would encourage the consumption of fruit in various parts of the State. There should also be a half rate for half cases. A full-sized case is generally more than one household can take.

The Minister for Mines: You will want a flat rate for a single orange directly.

Mr. PIESSE: If we could get that, the fruitgrowers would be able to get rid of fruit in smaller parcels. The same principle should be adopted in regard to fruit despatched in bulk.

The Minister for Mines: The question of a flat rate was not the principal item. It would not make much difference if we had a lower bulk rate. The trouble is to get the people to take the fruit.

Mr. Underwood: It is a question of what Monger wants.

Mr. PIESSE: A lower rate would make all the difference.

Mr. Underwood: It would make no difference to Monger.

Mr. PIESSE: I cannot continue my remarks with Mr. Monger's name flying round so often. I ask you, Sir, to assist me to continue my speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PIESSE: I regret the Government have not established vine group settlements. There is no industry for which this State, with its good rainfall and excellent climatic conditions, is more suited than the vine growing industry. South Australia admits that the Western Australian currant is equal to their best.

Mr. Marshall: Are they any better judges than we are?

Mr. PIESSE: They are large consumers of the Western Australian product. The returns per acre from this industry are high, and the prospects for new settlers are good.

If the Government would establish some of these settlements, it would prove to the people how profitable an industry this is. To produce currants in Western Australia costs about half what it does in Mildura and South Australia. The cost of planting in this State is less than half what it is in these other places, and the price of land here suitable for the purpose is less than £5 an acre as compared with £30 an acre over there.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Give us your idea about small holdings of 80 acres.

Mr. PIESSE: That matter has been so frequently discussed in this Chamber that we become weary of the subject. Does the hon. member refer to group settlements?

Mr. O'Loughlen: I am thinking of your district.

Mr. PIESSE: There is no better district than the Toodyay for the small holder. Land is constantly changing hands there, and numerous small holdings are being established.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What is the size of these small farms?

Mr. PIESSE: We have been told that the Buckland estate has not received the patronage the Government expected for it.

Mr. Underwood: The purchase price was too high.

Mr. PIESSE: The reason is that the holdings are too small, namely about 60 acres each. My advice to the Government has always been to subdivide into holdings of not less than 100 acres.

Mr. Mann: For vine growing?

Mr. PIESSE: The holdings should not be less than 100 acres for vine growing, so that the settler may embark upon the dairying industry as well. Had the State been cut into larger holdings it would have been better for all concerned. I know of one man, however, who has done exceedingly well upon a holding of 84 acres. He lives in the Toodyay district. In the course of the last 14 years he has been able to place to his credit over a thousand pounds. He is producing trussed hay and oats for racing stables. He is now increasing the size of his orchard and is doing well. I am a small-holding man. Settlers should do well with 100 or 200 acres in a suitable locality. What more could man desire than a comfortable home, paid for in full, and proceeds sufficient to keep himself and his family? So long as I am a member of this Chamber my slogan will be "water, water, water" for the wheat belt. When we can get water into the wheat belt we should have an immensely improved position in this State.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth) [8.10]: It has been said to-night that we ought to be fair. It is time the Country Party government administering the State meted out justice to the metropolitan area. As they are nominated by the Country Party executive, everything they do is for the country areas. No regard is had for the requirements of the metropolitan area.

Mr. Latham: You are getting all the tramways you want.

Mr. Clydesdale: What are you talking about?

Mr. A. Thomson: You got the Como tramway.

Mr. HUGHES: The Premier informed a deputation that the Lord street-Maylands tramway extension would be built. This was like some of the jobs he promised the unemployed; if they lived long enough, they would probably get them.

Capt. Carter: The member for North-East Fremantle said to-night the Government were doing too much in the matter of water supply.

Mr. HUGHES: In the metropolitan area?

Capt. Carter: Yes.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member must have misunderstood him.

Capt. Carter: You were not in the House.

Mr. HUGHES: I doubt if the hon. member would take the view that the Government were doing too much in the matter of water supplies.

Capt. Carter: The member for North-East Fremantle said that. There is no cohesion in your ranks. You are not pulling together.

Mr. HUGHES: Perhaps we are not as well disciplined as some of the parties in this House. The Speech said that a large proportion of the deficit was due to loss on the railway workings, and that the gross profit from the railways was £875,517. If we include interest, £766,000, and contributions to sinking fund, £126,000, we find a deficit on railway working of £216,483. The Commissioner of Railways has furnished the House with a tabulated statement showing ton mileage statistics for various years. The ton mileage is shown for various classes of merchandise carried over the railways, and the average earnings are shown as 2.02 per mile. The high rates refer to passenger traffic, and the lowest to fertilisers. The rate per ton mile on fertilisers is .53, slightly over ½d. per ton per mile. This is 1½d. below the average rate, or 25 per cent. of the normal rate which should be charged for freights. The ton mileage of fertilisers carried during the year was 15,732,837. The allowance which has been made to farmers on that item amounts to £98,000. Then we have the item, wheat. The average rate for this is 1.2. The ton mileage for the year is 40,652,597. That is practically 1d. per ton per mile below the average rate, or a saving to the farmers on that account of £135,000.

Mr. A. Thomson: And what is the next heaviest tonnage.

Mr. HUGHES: I am dealing now with the rates.

Mr. A. Thomson: The other does not suit you.

Mr. HUGHES: I will read the whole return, if the hon. member desires it. The whole return is an indication of concessions given to the agricultural industry.

Mr. Clydesdale: How does it compare with the other States?

Mr. HUGHES: Very badly.

The Minister for Mines: What do you suggest?

Mr. HUGHES: If the Minister will possess himself in patience for a while, I will tell him. Those two items of concession to farmers in railway freights amount to £233,000, or £17,000 more than the actual shortage on railway working. I am not one of those who are hostile to the farming industry. I know very well that the farming industry is essential to the State. I agree that struggling farmers should be given every possible assistance.

Mr. Latham: How are you going to discriminate?

Mr. HUGHES: I would go further than the hon. member interjecting. We have heard quite a lot about the man who is blazing the track in the agricultural areas. But there are men out blazing the track as well as the agriculturists. I consider that the labourers who do the clearing are pioneers just as much as the farmer who owns the property.

Mr. Latham: Admittedly so.

Mr. HUGHES: There are certainly some farmers who need all the assistance that the State can give them, but there must be a huge number of prosperous farmers as well.

Mr. Latham: Do you know many of them?

Mr. HUGHES: Yes; the hon. member interjecting is one.

Mr. Latham: We know one of them who is attached to your party, and who is very prosperous indeed.

Hon. P. Collier: Did you think we were all poor?

Mr. HUGHES: I believe that if we could afford it, we would all be wise to have farms. To show the degree of prosperity existing amongst the farmers, one has only to turn up the income tax statistics. The wage worker and the salaried man, including the men on the highest salaries, pay on an average income of £225 a year. Yet the average income of farmers is £539, or two and a half times the average income of wage workers and salaried men.

Mr. A. Thomson: What a prosperous community we are.

Mr. HUGHES: It goes to show that, whilst there are some struggling farmers in the State, a large number no doubt, there must also be a considerable number of prosperous farmers, in order to get an average income so large relatively to the average income of wage workers and salaried men.

Mr. Underwood: Why don't the wage workers take farms?

Mr. HUGHES: It is not everyone who can be successful on a farm. I believe the hon. member, while on a farm, made a salary. I may ask what the hon. member has done with the farm? The income tax figures show that the farmers are becoming more prosperous from year to year. The average figures for the last three years are £349, £386, and £539, showing an average increase in two years of £90. In view of these figures there should be a reconsideration of the method of

giving assistance to struggling farmers. A farmer who is earning £10 per week, after having been helped to prosperity by the State, should pay the proper freights over the railways. The time has gone when that man is entitled to ask of the metropolitan area and other parts of the State quarter rates for railway carriage. I believe the bulk of the prosperous farmers would realise the justice of that claim.

Capt. Carter: Put that up to conference and see how you get on.

Mr. HUGHES: It is time there was a little consideration for the metropolitan area from the farming community. The member for York (Mr. Latham) asked how the necessary discrimination could be effected. I hold that it would be easy to give concession rates to those farmers whose incomes are below a certain amount. It would be an easy matter for the Commissioner of Taxation to issue to a farmer a certificate stating that his income for the previous year had been less than, say, £5 per week. The farmer then, on consigning or receiving goods, could produce that certificate to the Railway Department and so obtain the reduced rate. Or a bonus could be given to the farmer at the end of the year if his income had been below a certain amount. Surely there is sufficient ingenuity in Ministers, or else in their staffs, to devise ways and means of granting such a concession to farmers who need it, instead of pursuing the present plan of granting the concession to every farmer, whether he be one like Mr. Hedges, with 25,000 acres and a tremendous income, or a struggling farmer.

The Minister for Mines: You are building up a nice lot of trouble for the next Minister for Railways.

Mr. HUGHES: After the general election the new Minister for Railways will deal with the matter.

The Minister for Mines: But I do not think you should make his task quite so hard.

Mr. HUGHES: It does not speak well for the ingenuity of Ministers if they cannot solve a little problem like that. There is one matter of vital importance to the metropolitan area to which the Governor's Speech makes no reference, although a Government supporter endeavoured to palliate the omission by alluding to the subject. In the metropolitan area we are suffering from one thing in particular, and that is a severe epidemic of extreme land-lordism. Throughout the city and the suburban areas there has been an epidemic of rent raising. In order to show the extent of it, and the avarice of the average landlord, I shall give the House the benefit of one particular case which has come under my notice. I refer to the series of shops known as Baird's Arcade, in the centre of the city. This is a typical case. As hon. members no doubt are aware, Baird's Arcade is simply a lean-to placed on each side of the passage from Hay-street to Murray-street. It is subdivided, not by proper walls, but simply by partitions about 6ft. high, separating shop from shop. Recently this property was purchased by Brennans,

Ltd., who are nothing more or less than Mr. James Brennan trading under that name. For what purpose he so trades I do not know, but I will give some information which may enlighten hon. members on the subject. Mr. Brennan has seen fit to turn himself into a limited liability company.

The Minister for Mines: For the good of his health, probably.

Mr. HUGHES: I think it worth while to read out the list of shareholders. The company is divided into 63,000 £1 shares, of which James Brennan owns 33,500, Mrs. Brennan 6,250, and eight little Brennans a total of 18,750 between them. Mr. Brennan and his wife and eight children, out of the 63,000 shares, own 58,500. Then there is one Lovell holding 2,000 shares, and one Ahern and one Deans, owning 1,000 each, and one Burkitt who owns 500 shares. Only 4,500 of the shares are not held by Mr. Brennan himself, or his wife, or his children. The articles or association provide that at a meeting of shareholders there shall be one vote one share. So that Mr. Brennan, with his personal 33,500 votes, has a majority.

The Minister for Mines: That is better than the mayor of Perth.

Mr. HUGHES: Mr. Brennan has more than half the shares, but, to make doubly sure, the articles of association provide that he shall exercise the votes for the eight children. Thus there is no chance whatever of any other shareholder having a say. Mr. Brennan purchased Baird's Arcade for £48,000, and immediately notified the tenants of altered conditions. One lady was occupying three windows, for which she paid a weekly rental of 30s. each, or £4 10s. in all. He notified her that in future her rent would be £4 for each window, or £12 per week. Thus her rent was raised at one swoop from £4 10s. per week to £12. Further, notwithstanding the fact that the lady had been eight years in the business and had worked up a goodwill, notwithstanding the fact of her having been eight years a tenant, he called upon her to pay an incoming of £100 per window.

Mr. Clydesdale: Did she show any profit?

Mr. Stubbs: Is your information correct?

Mr. HUGHES: I can verify it for the hon. member if he cares to be at the trouble.

The Minister for Mines: Would you discuss the matter with Mr. Brennan?

Mr. HUGHES: I did discuss it with him, and he said it was time Bolsheviks like me got out of the country. The only reply I could give to that was, "You are an Irishman, and I have often wondered why my ancestors used to deal so harshly with landlords, but you have furnished me with the information." Now, had Mr. Brennan succeeded in getting his ingoing and his rentals, the terms of the new leases were to be £4 per window on the western side and £3 per window on the eastern side, with ingoings of £100 per window on the western side, and of £75 per window on the eastern side. Had that little game come off, Mr. Brennan would have received back the total amount expended

in purchase money, £48,000, in four years' time by means of the rentals and ingoing. Surely a landlord who wants to invest £48,000 in city property and aims at getting back the whole of his capital cost in four years, is an extremist in the most extreme sense. Surely there should be some law to protect tenants from exploitation of that description. Mr. Brennan's deal did not come off. Some of the tenants interviewed me and we held a meeting to discuss the position. I saw Mr. Brennan and, as the law was all on his side, the only thing we could do was to tell him that if he did not adopt a more reasonable attitude we would work up an agitation against him and his business. After a long discussion he agreed to forego the ingoing and the levy of £100 per window; but he was not going to do anything more. After further negotiations, however, in the course of which the tenants stood firm, we finally got him to reduce the rent to £3 5s. per window on the western side and to £2 15s. on the eastern side. It must be remembered that all the tenants I refer to are struggling for a living in a small way. Five or six of them are returned soldiers, for whom Mr. Brennan was most solicitous. Even with the reduced charges I have quoted, Mr. Brennan will get a return of between 17 and 20 per cent. profit, and within a space of five or six years he will get back the whole of his £48,000. Surely it is time this House took some action to save tenants from ramps of this character!

Hon. P. Collier: Rents throughout the city have been going up in the same way and the public have to pay in the long run.

Mr. HUGHES: While Brennan's is the worst case—if hon. members are doubtful about the figures, any one of the tenants occupying shops in the arcade will show them what sort of accommodation they get for the money they have to pay—we should remember we have a remedy. Every decent minded person should pass by Brennan's windows. A man who is not fair and square should not get public support at all. That would put such people in a reasonable frame of mind. With the law on their side, they take advantage of their position and squeeze people out of their living, destroying businesses which have taken years to build up. A little further down Hay-street another business man was paying £33 per week, plus rates and taxes, for a mere shell. Eighteen months before the expiration of his lease he was informed that he would be given a renewal. He was put off from time to time, however, until a month before the lease expired he was informed that his rent would be increased to £45 per week, plus rates and taxes. The result of the rapacity of that landlord is that the tenant, after working for 25 years in Western Australia, is practically ruined because of the exorbitant demands made upon him. That man went to the goldfields in the early days and as a result of his labours, saved £5,000. He borrowed another £3,000 to invest in the business in Hay-street and he has been working hard to keep his family

going. After all this, he is confronted with ruin. Around the corner there is another property: an hon. member of the Legislative Council is concerned in this—and the rent has been raised from £3 10s. to £8 per week. A little further on there is a chemist whose rent has been raised from £16 to £24 per week, and in Murray-street the rent of a warehouse has been increased from £20 to £40 per week.

Mr. Stubbs: I don't know how they can stand it.

Hon. P. Collier: The money that people have to pay for the increased rent is added to the price of goods.

Mr. HUGHES: People who are running small businesses are being squeezed out of existence. Most of them are doing little better than getting a decent living, and with the increased rentals they will be deprived of their businesses. In Baird's Arcade one man, who was a crippled returned soldier, had to go. He had invested all his money in the business but the takings would not warrant his paying the increased rent, and he had to lose all.

Mr. Mann: Are you referring to a confectioner?

Mr. HUGHES: Yes.

Mr. Mann: He sold out very well.

Mr. HUGHES: It was a forced sale. If we go out into the suburbs we find that, owing to the war period, and the action of the Government in ceasing to erect workers' homes, there is a shortage in house accommodation, and property owners who have dwellings to lease have not been slow to take advantage of the position by increasing rents. When I came to Perth in 1911 I had to find a house for the accommodation of my people. Houses were so scarce that in order to secure one at the bottom of Adelaide-terrace I have to pay a week's rent in advance to get possession of the property. I had to pay 17s. 6d. per week rent, which was considered enormous in those days. I made inquiries at the same house a few days ago and I ascertained that the rent is now 27s. 6d. per week. I also ascertained that the lady, who is occupying the house at present, had to pay £60 ingoing. The house was advertised to let and the advertisement set out that the tenant should buy the furniture, which was valued at £60. The lady told me that she took over £30 worth of furniture, and, in effect, had to pay £30 for the key for the privilege of taking the house at a rental of 27s. 6d. per week! During the last 12 years the only repairs to the house were represented by the expenditure of between £10 and £20 for painting. When I spoke about the exorbitant charge for ingoing, I was informed that it was a comparatively cheap house, considering the others that had been offered to her. Hon. members representing metropolitan constituencies know that these cases can be verified and that there are many such cases on record. There are many instances of extreme landlordism that can be verified. Right in the heart of my own electorate there are several terraces, each comprising seven or eight houses, the frontage

for each house being 15 feet. Ten years ago the rent was fixed at 8s. a week, and for those premises now the occupants have to pay from 10s. to 18s. a week. The landlords absolutely refuse to do anything in the shape of repairs to those buildings. The unfortunate occupants are compelled to take the houses because they are the cheapest available, although they are forced to pay 18s. for houses that should be condemned by the municipal authorities at once. When the Premier, in reply to a question, informed the House that it was not the intention of the Government to bring forward legislation to set up a fair rents court, he showed a total disregard for the urgent requirements of the metropolitan area. Not only in the city but in the suburban areas, rack-renting landlords are making the position unbearable for people. The time has arrived when the Government should bring forward legislation to place some restrictions upon landlords, because just now there is a temporary building boom. We have heard a lot about inability to secure the services of bricklayers and artisans generally in the building trade. Within the last 12 months 80 per cent. of those engaged in the building trades have been unemployed.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is nonsense. You cannot prove it.

Mr. HUGHES: We can prove the statement. Within the last 12 or 18 months I introduced a deputation to the Premier. It was representative of the building trades. We appealed to him to make more money available for the erection of workers' homes in the metropolitan area to give some relief to those men. To-day the building trade is exceedingly active, in consequence of which if the Government recommenced the erection of workers' homes here, they would not be able to find labour to go on with the work immediately. Knowing that there is no possibility of getting relief by way of increased housing accommodation to meet the city's requirements for the next 10 years at least, it is the duty of the Government, in fairness to the people of the metropolitan area, to impose restrictions which will protect people from the ravages of unfair landlordism. There is one other matter that presses very heavily on those who rent premises. I refer to the method the municipal authorities are obliged to adopt in levying rates. For many years we have been advocating an alteration in the rating system from the improved to the unimproved basis. Everyone seems to be in favour of the proposed alteration. All the municipal councils are in favour of the alteration, and every member of Parliament I have spoken to is favourable. We cannot secure redress, however, because the Government absolutely refuse to introduce a small amendment to the Municipalities Act. The unfortunate citizen of Perth is between the devil and the deep sea, what with landlords on one side and the municipal authorities on the other. In making up their annual assessments the municipal authorities take the annual rental value, the total rent for the year and, after making

certain deductions, allow the balance as the annual value. So, if the landlord raises the rent, the next time the municipal valuer comes round he raises the valuation. Directly that is done, the landlord finds an increase in his rating, and he immediately raises the rent to meet it; with this difference, that if the increase in the rates amounts to 3d. per week, he puts up the rent by one or two shillings. So we get a continual see-saw between the municipality and the landlord, while the unfortunate tenant suffers. I have an invitation to attend a deputation asking for a tramway extension to the Church Lands estate, but I must tell the people who invited me, and the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter), that I do not think the proposed line is warranted. There are others more urgently needed.

Capt. Carter: In your electorate!

Mr. HUGHES: True. The most urgently required line is the extension from Lord-street up through Maylands. Behind the Mt. Lawley station, right along to the Peninsula, there is an enormous population. Yet between 9 a.m. and 12 noon there are but two trains from Maylands to Perth. It means that those people are practically without transport facilities.

Capt. Carter: You require, not a tramway, but to see the Minister for Railways, and ask for more trains.

The Minister for Mines: I think he requires to see beyond the boundaries of his own electorate.

Mr. HUGHES: From Mt. Lawley, where the Minister lives—he is fortunate enough to be independent of both trains and trams—after 9 o'clock there is no train until four minutes to 10, the next being at 11.16. There is no other until 12 noon. With practically no tram service, it means that the people are most seriously inconvenienced.

Capt. Carter: How far is it across to the Inglewood extension?

Mr. HUGHES: From the Peninsula, a couple of miles.

Capt. Carter: But from the principal residential area it is less than a mile.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not begrudge the hon. member his tram line, if he can get it, but what I believe he will get is merely a promise.

The Minister for Mines: What are you to have as an election stunt if you get everything now?

Mr. HUGHES: For the election we could write a little brochure of the history of the Minister.

The Minister for Mines: You could publish that, but we could not publish a true one about you.

Mr. HUGHES: No, it would not be spicy enough to make good reading. I am sure we could compile a good brochure on the Minister. His photograph on the front page in the attitude of a tumbler would make the brochure sell well.

The Minister for Mines: I could easily describe what you would look like.

Mr. HUGHES: Probably the Minister would wait until I got outside.

The Minister for Mines: No, I should prefer to say it while you were here.

Mr. HUGHES: I remember the time when, perhaps, I should have had the Minister on my side. I recall when he and Senator Pearce, addressing a meeting in Lane-street, Boulder, said—I am not prepared to state which one said it—that the man who took rent was a thief. It shows what environment will do. I can remember as a boy 11 years of age attending the first political meeting addressed by the Minister. I believe he had a long period of unemployment at about that time.

Mr. Marshall: Was that the time he went to sleep by the engine?

Mr. HUGHES: I believe it was.

Hon. P. Collier: It was a very cold night.

Mr. HUGHES: There was a time, when I thought much better of the Minister than I do to-day.

The Minister for Mines: I am not likely to lose any sleep over what you think of me.

Mr. HUGHES: No, the hon. member is past caring what anybody thinks.

The Minister for Mines: I should not call you anybody.

Mr. HUGHES: A man with such a political past has to be pretty strong in his resistance to public opinion. Only the other day a man was telling me of a country where they deal stringently with politicians—stand them against the wall and shoot them. I told him such a method would be of no use in this State, because the bullets would not be strong enough.

Mr. A. Thomson: A sapient remark, for you!

Mr. HUGHES: In view of the wretched railway service, it is time the Government launched out on a policy of tramway extension. Generally the people have to walk, and in consequence the railways lose a lot of revenue. The Minister, of course, has a car, one of the rewards for giving up the making up of wild statements, such as he accuses me of doing.

The Minister for Mines: I will give you a ride home sometimes, if you behave yourself, but it will be in the back seat, for I would not have you with me in front.

Mr. HUGHES: I will lose nothing by being kept out of the Minister's company.

Mr. Angelo: This is not unlike a game of tennis.

Mr. HUGHES: It is time the Government did something for the metropolitan area. There is urgent need for tramway extension so that the people may live in the suburbs. In these days of excessive railway fares and restricted train service, the tendency is to crowd into the city, for living in the suburbs makes the cost of transport prohibitive. I suggest that the Government bring down a Fair Rents Bill, and extend the tramways. The Workers' Homes Act has been the means of providing homes for men who otherwise could not have obtained them. That is something of which members on this side might

well feel proud. Workers' homes which, in 1914, were built for £550, are worth £1,000 to-day. Those fortunate enough to secure workers' home at from 12s. 6d. to 15s. per week have houses which they could not rent at less than 25s. weekly; in addition to which they are steadily paying off the principal and acquiring an equity in the property. Notwithstanding the enormous benefits conferred upon those people, the workers' homes scheme, as at June, 1921, showed an accumulated profit of £6,800 besides providing the statutory sinking fund of £8,000. Surely there is sufficient virtue in such a scheme to induce the Government to again make it available to workers in the metropolitan area. In consequence of the closing down of that scheme nothing has been done to supply the increasing shortage of houses. There is plenty of land available for the purpose. If the Government were to resume Cemetery Hill, at East Perth, and throw it open under the Workers' Homes Act, they would be astounded at the number of applicants for homes. Thus they would at once relieve the homeless and help to bring down rents in other parts of the city.

Mr. Marshall: Could you guarantee the foundations on Cemetery Hill?

Mr. HUGHES: For years Perth and other cities have been obliged to rate on the improved value, and as a result people have been able to hold vacant land for speculative purposes. Even in East Perth some 25 per cent. of the land is unoccupied. Down in the centre, where we have terraces of cottages with only 15 feet frontages to each, there are vast tracts of unoccupied land which has been held for the past 60 or 70 years. That has been possible because the owners have not been obliged to pay their full share of the municipal revenue. In consequence the municipal council has been forced into an extravagant borrowing policy, not having sufficient revenue from legitimate sources. Last year, out of the loan money raised, they had to pay 2s. in the £ to meet the interest bill.

The Minister for Agriculture: Was that the City Council?

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. When the ratepayers of Perth subscribe £1 towards the revenue of the municipality they get only 12s. worth of work. When a municipality is compelled to finance on these loans, it is no wonder that members who own motor cars have such a lot to say about the bad state of the roads in the city of Perth. This is all due to the refusal of the present and previous Governments to bring down a small amendment of the Municipal Corporations Act to give the necessary relief. One striking feature in connection with the system of rating is worth mentioning. Walcott-street is the boundary between the city of Perth and the Perth Road Board. On the north side the people are rated on the unimproved system, while on the opposite side they are rated on the improved value. A house of a certain value on the north side pays less than one half of the rates annually

that is charged on a house of like value on the south side. Surely, if the unimproved system of rating is good enough for the heights of Mt. Lawley, where the aristocracy live—among the residents are the Minister for Railways, the Leader of the Opposition and other notables in this House—it should be good enough for other parts of the City. A small amendment to the Municipal Corporations Act would remedy this inconsistency, but the councils themselves are largely to blame for its not having been passed. Instead of confining their attention to this one amendment, they generally suggest about 300 other more or less important amendments, with the result that none of them are passed.

Mr. Mann: Would you make it mandatory or optional?

Mr. HUGHES: I would make it mandatory, but I would not oppose the passage of the Bill if it were made optional. I understand a meeting was held in the Town Hall the other night to consider the housing question. I received an invitation which informed me that, while I was invited to attend, it was not a political matter and politics were to be strictly barred.

Mr. Mann: You were more fortunate than I was; I did not receive an invitation at all.

Mr. HUGHES: I regarded the invitation as one to stay away. There is another matter I wish to mention in connection with what I consider is an evasion of income tax payments by large companies. Under the Companies Act any five people can float themselves into a limited liability company. As I have mentioned in the case of the Brennans, it does not matter whether the five comprise the father, mother and children; they may still take advantage of limited liability. That provision of the law has much to commend it, but at present it is being abused for the purpose of evading the payment of income tax. I do not wish to feature Mr. Brennan unnecessarily, but, having mentioned him, I may as well use his case for the purpose of illustration. I cannot ascertain exactly what he earns, but on his capital of £58,500, taking an arbitrary assessment to illustrate what these companies are doing, I shall assume that he makes 10 per cent. on capital—a very reasonable estimate for a business of the kind. If Mr. Brennan made 10 per cent. on £58,500 trading as James Brennan, a private individual, he would be liable under our State income taxation to be assessed on £5,850. Under the graduated scale he would pay 2d. on the first £100, adding .007d. for every pound above that. This would amount to 3s. 6d. in the pound. On those figures, his State income tax would amount to £1,030. By floating the business into a company and distributing the shares amongst his wife and children, it would be possible for him to save a large amount in income tax. Holding 33,500 shares, he would be liable to 1s. 3d. dividend duty. If he had any other income, when his income rate exceeded 1s. 3d. in the pound, the amount taken from the shares would have to be added to it, and the whole

lot would be assessed at the new rate. That rate, taking his portion of the profits as £3,350, would be 2s. 0¼d. in the pound, so that he would be obliged to pay as income tax on his share and as a private individual the sum of £345. Mrs. Brennan, who has nothing at all to do with the business, would have an income of £625. This would be well within the bounds of the 1s. 3d. rate and she would pay £39. The eight children would all be below the 1s. 3d. mark and their total income tax would be £118. Thus, the total income tax payable by the family would be £502, whereas James Brennan, trading as an individual, on the same figures would be obliged to pay £1,030.

Mr. Clydesdale: You are educating hon. members opposite.

Hon. M. F. Troy: There is no need to fear that. They do the same thing.

Mr. HUGHES: The total saving would be about £528 per annum. As there is a super tax of 15 per cent., it means that the total loss to the revenue per annum would be £607. What is the use of our passing taxation legislation, together with a graduated scale, to make people earning large sums pay a fair share of income tax, if we provide them with a Companies Act which permits them to nullify our efforts? This Act is being abused and the time has arrived when it should be reconsidered. All the good work done in the past is being nullified by the present abuses. The Solicitor General should be asked to frame amendments to the Companies Act to prevent an individual from trading as a company and thus evading the payment of such a large sum as £600 per annum. Mr. Brennan is not the only one who is doing this sort of thing. I could mention the names of five or six other people who are trading in the same way. It is very unfair that people in receipt of small incomes should be obliged to pay heavy income taxation, while men in receipt of large incomes should be permitted to evade their responsibilities by recourse to other legislation.

Mr. Marshall: He is not to blame.

Mr. HUGHES: Of course not; the Government are to blame.

Mr. A. Thomson: Blame the Government for everything!

Mr. HUGHES: I wish to refer to one of the staple industries of this country that is badly controlled and is controlled for the benefit of a few; I refer to racing.

Mr. Angelo: Is that a staple industry?

Mr. HUGHES: If the control of racing were vested in the member for Canning (Mr. Clydesdale) there would be no need to voice a complaint of this kind. A good deal of dissatisfaction exists amongst the racing fraternity—

The Minister for Agriculture: About the third class plates!

Mr. HUGHES: No, owing to the arbitrary administration of the W.A. Turf Club. The Turf Club have complete control of racing, and although I do not frequent the races

now—I have learned the lesson that punters never win—

Mr. Clydesdale: It took you a long time to learn it.

Mr. HUGHES: That is so. There are many people whose livelihood is bound up in racing. There are the trainers; then there are the jockeys, whose growth has been stunted from infancy in order to make light weights for riding. These people are entirely in the hands of the W.A. Turf Club. My grievance against the Club is the star chamber methods they employ. Quite recently, the Club told a number of prominent men that they were warned off the course. They simply said, "You are warned off; you cannot come on the racecourse." These men have no redress whatever.

Capt. Carter: Why were they warned off?

Mr. HUGHES: That is the unfortunate part; when a man is warned off the course, he naturally wants to know the reason. However, there is no inquiry; no charge is furnished; the man is simply told he is warned off. He cannot get an appeal.

Mr. Marshall: He cannot get a trial, much less an appeal.

Mr. HUGHES: That is so. A criminal is entitled to hear the charge against him, is given an open trial and permitted to defend himself. No matter how bad a criminal is considered to be, the law holds that, until he is proved guilty after an open trial where he has ample opportunity to defend himself, he must be regarded as innocent. Not so the W.A. Turf Club. To be suspected is to be guilty. There is no trial. Quite recently several prominent men were ordered off the course.

Mr. Angelo: Which course?

Mr. Clydesdale: If you are warned off one course, you are warned off the lot, so be careful.

Mr. HUGHES: The Turf Club would not state the charges against these men. They were given no indication of the reason why they were warned off. They were not allowed to appear before the committee. There was no public trial. Members will agree that if a rumour is circulated against a citizen and he is warned off a racecourse, the assumption is that he has done something discreditable; it is defamatory to his character. The W.A. Turf Club, under a threat of exposure, subsequently lifted the embargo and re-admitted to the course some of the men concerned. They have been acting in such a high-handed way that it is time the control of racing was taken out of their hands and placed in those of an independent board. A report may be sent in to the W.A.T.C. by the club detective, and the person concerned is dealt with by the committee without any public inquiry, or without his being given a chance of facing his accuser. The accused person cannot cross-examine upon the matter contained in the detective's report.

Capt. Carter: Much good might result by certain people being kept off the course.

Mr. HUGHES: I agree that the controlling body should be allowed to keep certain people away, but before a man is deemed to be undesirable the charge against him should be set out in black and white and he should be given a full and complete trial.

Capt. Carter: Are not the courses private property?

Mr. HUGHES: The headquarters course is public property, and the control of racing is vested in the W.A.T.C. by legislative enactment. Jockey boys begin their training at the age of 14 or 15.

Capt. Carter: I think the courses are private property.

Hon. P. Collier: The W.A.T.C. course is not.

Mr. Clydesdale: It does not make any difference. They are under control just the same.

Mr. HUGHES: Jockey boys are purposely stunted in growth in order that they may ride at light weights. When they are precluded from riding their livelihood is gone. When a boy is disqualified he cannot readily take on other work. He is physically unfit for hard work, and the knowledge he gains in horseracing is of little use to him elsewhere.

Capt. Carter: Are the boys disqualified without a trial?

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. Quite recently three or four boys went up for their licenses, but they were told these would not be renewed. They had no chance of defending themselves. If they did wrong the charges should have been set out, and the lads should have been given a chance to defend themselves. Let us have public inquiry into these matters. If boys are guilty of malpractice on the course, let them be disqualified from attending there. I have no sympathy with the wrongdoer, with the boy who commits malpractices, or the trainer who assists, but every individual is entitled to a fair and open trial.

Capt. Carter: Have you sought legal opinion on the matter?

Mr. HUGHES: One can always get two opinions on any legal matter. Very often the boys have no money with which to go to law. The control of racing should be vested in a board, on which the jockey boys, trainers and owners as well as the public and the Government might be represented. The worst scandals connected with the course are due to the actions of those who are well in the play.

Mr. Clydesdale: There are no scandals in racing.

Mr. HUGHES: There should be more democratic control of racing. Every person charged should be given a fair trial and an opportunity to defend himself. If the right that is given to an ordinary criminal is given to one of these racing people, he should be satisfied with the result. As things are, a man is brought before the committee, one member of which may have a personal dislike towards him, and be the means of ruining the man's reputation. It is injurious to one's character to be warned off a racecourse, the assumption being that if a man has not done something wrong he would not be penal-

ised. Parliament should take more interest in the control now being exercised by the W.A.T.C., and demand that every person dealt with should be properly heard and properly tried.

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

House adjourned at 9.22 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 8th August, 1923.

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

QUESTION—STATE ENTERPRISES.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Minister for Education: 1, What was the Dr. or Cr. state of the profit and loss accounts for the year ending 30th June last of the following undertakings: Boya Quarry, State Brickworks, State Implement Works, State Steamships, State Sawmills, Goldfields Water Supply, Brookton Water Supply, Collie Water Supply, Cue Water Supply, Bridgetown Water Supply, Danzin Water Supply, Derby Water Supply, Geraldton Water Supply, Harvey Water Supply, Leonora Water Supply, Meekatharra Water Supply, Menzies Water Supply, Ora Banda Water Supply, Pingelly Water Supply, Torbay Drainage, other minor works, as shown on page 83 of Parliamentary Paper No. 26 of 1922? 2, Have interest, sinking fund, and depreciation been taken into account in each instance? 3, If not, in what instances are there omissions?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The information asked for will be supplied by way of a return as soon as possible.

QUESTION—RAILWAY ROLLING STOCK.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Minister for Education: 1, How many railway trucks, carriages, and locomotives have been placed