

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 12th August, 1911.

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

QUESTION—DROUGHT RELIEF.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Have instructions been issued by the head office, Agricultural Bank, to branch managers—(a) That wheat certificates for season 1940-41 held by Agricultural Bank clients who have received assistance from drought relief funds must be surrendered to the bank regardless of whether the client has paid its statutory claims or not, and that the proceeds of such wheat dividends will be used to repay drought relief advances? (b) That in the case of Agricultural Bank clients, the proceeds of wheat crops for the 1941-42 season are to be paid to the Agricultural Bank where the money required for carrying-on purposes for the following season will be made available to the client, and any surplus money used in repayment of drought relief moneys? (c) That in the case of Associated Bank clients the whole proceeds of 1941-42 wheat crops are to be paid to the Agricultural Bank to be used to liquidate drought relief advances? (d) That moneys earned by Agricultural Bank clients, assisted from drought relief funds, from such outside work as shearing, etc., are to be paid to the Agricultural Bank and not retained by the client? 2, If such instructions have been issued, will the Minister state under what authority such action has been taken seeing that, under the terms attaching to the granting of the drought relief funds by the Commonwealth Government, no repayment of principal or interest is due during the first year? 3, If question No. 1 is answered in the negative, what instructions relative to the matters mentioned in that question have been issued by head office of the Agricultural Bank?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, (a) No. (b) No. Each case will be reviewed on its merits. If, after paying statutory claim, there are insufficient funds to

carry on for the following year, advances will be made from drought relief to supplement the balance of requirements. (c) No. Associated Banks considered it impossible to formulate a programme on farmers' operations for more than one year in advance and insisted that each case be reviewed after harvest. (d) No. 2, It was left in the hands of the State Government to be responsible for the repayment to the Commonwealth Government of moneys advanced. The State Government, after reviewing the case year by year, will continue to re-advance moneys at the low rate of interest obtained from the Commonwealth Government. 3, No.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the 7th August.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [4.38]: We all agree with what His Excellency said about our men who are in the fighting forces, and particularly those serving oversea. Since we met last week the war position, so far as Australia is concerned, has become more serious and is causing all of us the gravest concern. I feel sure we all regret that, owing to the present situation, the Prime Minister was prevented from making his trip to Western Australia. We do not often have the opportunity to hear our Prime Minister, and I know there are many people inside and outside of Perth who were disappointed that he was unable to continue his journey to this State.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: A War Council member evidently considered that he could have continued on to Perth.

Mr. McLARTY: I know there are certain authorities who think he should never leave Melbourne or Sydney, but most of us would like to welcome him here.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There was evidently no need for him to stop.

Mr. Thorn: Who are you to say that?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McLARTY: In regard to our war effort I wish we could even things up a bit more. I feel that most people are doing their best to help in that effort. But there are some who could do more. While we adhere to the present system of raising money by loan and by patriotic effort, there will always be some people who

will not pull their weight. Therefore the suggestion of Professor Keynes to introduce a system of compulsory saving has much to commend it. The men who are serving in the forces overseas have deferred pay to collect when the war is over, and I cannot see why they should be treated differently from people who remain at home. The British Government has adopted Professor Keynes's suggestion, and all sections of the people, irrespective of party, have accepted it.

We are all pleased that large quantities of war requirements are being manufactured in this State. According to Senator Collett, greater quantities will be turned out in future. I agree with the member who said that we should receive a larger share of the production of armaments, and I hope that that increased share will soon be given us. An interesting passage in the Speech stated that great care was being taken to ensure that factories at present engaged in munition work would be capable of adaptation to peace-time requirements. That is a sound policy, and I hope the Minister for Labour will be able to tell us more about it. Another item of interest to members representing country constituencies was the statement that every effort was being made to produce sulphur and phosphatic rock requirements in the State. I am sure the Government will do everything possible to encourage those enterprises. If they can supply our needs, the State will reap great advantage. Another item referred to was post-war planning, but the Speech gave very little indication of what is proposed—

Mr. Warner: No, or who is to do it.

Mr. McLARTY:—or of absorbing our soldiers when they return from the war. Mention has been made of secondary industries; efforts are being exerted to establish secondary industries here, and I give the Government and the Minister credit for what has been done. A considerable amount of energy has been shown by the department. Still, we have to remember that in manufacturing secondary commodities, some only will be absorbed in the State, while others will have to be exported and compete with the products of other countries. I suggest to the Minister controlling the department that he make more use of members of Parliament for investigating ways and means of encouraging secondary industries in the State. The Leader of the Opposition told us that we were the second highest taxed State in Aus-

tralia. Unfortunately that is true, and it is a considerable handicap to us when we seek to establish secondary industries. I believe that anomalies in the Workers' Compensation Act also tend to retard the development of secondary industries. I do not advocate that the workers should be deprived of the compensation to which they are entitled when they are injured in industry, but there are undoubtedly abuses of the Act that increase the burden on industry. Steps should be taken to eliminate them. If the Minister accepted my suggestion and appointed a parliamentary committee to investigate the matter, I believe that useful results would follow.

I am afraid that secondary industries are not being developed quickly enough to absorb large numbers of our men when they return from the war, but I hope that impression is wrong. However, other means will have to be found to provide work for those men. After the 1914-18 war a big land settlement scheme was adopted, but seemingly we shall not be able to absorb large numbers of returned men in land settlement on this occasion. On the return of our soldiers in 1919, many of them went into the wheatbelt and into the pastoral areas, but judging by present indications, it would not be advisable to settle returned men in the wheatbelt or send them into the pastoral areas. I assume that a certain amount of land settlement will take place, but I suggest that an active policy of public works be prepared. Doubtless the Deputy Premier will tell us that he is willing to prepare anything provided the finance is available. I think the requisite finance will be available. I cannot believe that money will tighten after this war to the extent it did after the other war, and I do not think the people would submit to such a tightening of money again. They know that millions of money are being provided daily for carrying on the war, and grave danger might arise if, when peace is declared, money were not made available to employ our men and carry on the development of the country.

I have some constructive suggestions to offer. One of the first things we should do is to carry out a vigorous housing scheme. I favour the taking of a census of the people requiring homes. I do not know of any safer way in which to invest money than in the building of a house. I

agree with the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) in what he told us last session, that not only should decent housing be provided for people in the towns and cities, but that those engaged in primary pursuits should also be considered when such a scheme is being put into operation. We have our own timber, our own bricks, and I know of no better or safer scheme in which to invest money than in this direction. Another public work I would advocate is a vigorous policy of road construction. When peace is restored, the supplies of petrol will be resumed and the full tax will be paid. No additional burden will be placed upon the taxpayers of the State. The more roads we have, the better will it be for us. The indications are that transport costs will be greatly changed when peace comes. When one meets a man who has a gas producer and declares that he can run his vehicle a considerable distance for only a few pence, one begins to wonder what the future of transport will be. It seems to me that transport will be cheapened to such an extent in the future that it will not be necessary for us to engage in further railway construction, but that it will be better for us to provide good roads and cheap motor transport. I was glad to notice that the east-west road has been commenced, and do not know why it was not started many years ago.

The Minister for Mines: Because there was no war then.

Mr. McLARTY: The Minister is probably right. The work is a sound one, and no doubt is justified. Credit ought to be given to the newspapers which advocated this work very vigorously over an extended period.

Mr. Sampson: The "Daily News."

Mr. McLARTY: The "Daily News" in particular. It is strange that the road was not started until that paper had done the spade work. I also suggest that money be spent on deep sewerage in certain towns. That would not mean an added burden to the taxpayer. It has been suggested in the House that we should have the broader railway gauge between Perth and Kalgoorlie. That is a work of national importance, and should be undertaken. The extension of electricity to rural areas is another work that will pay for itself. Re-

cently the Minister for Labour and the Minister for Commerce, of the Federal Government, were considering a scheme for the extension of electricity to rural areas, and I understand were prepared to find the necessary money. Such a work commends itself to me, and I hope something can be done about it. When I saw the report in the "West Australian," I wrote to the Minister for Railways and asked him to get into touch with the Federal authorities, with a view to ascertaining whether something in that direction could be done in this State, particularly in my electorate.

Mr. Thorn: Why are you so parochial?

Mr. McLARTY: Although I am advancing these proposals and I feel they are perhaps not original, as no doubt the Deputy Premier has heard them all before, I think they are well worthy of attention. As it is our duty to prepare for peace, I hope the House will give these matters some consideration.

Another suggestion is that with the help of the Federal Government something more might be done for the development of the northern parts of the State. That is too big a problem for the State Government to tackle, but with the help of the Federal authorities it should be possible to do something there. As is generally known, the farmers are in difficulties to-day. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) last week referred to the new order about which we have been hearing so much, and about which there are so many divergent views. If that new order is to achieve its object, one thing it must do is to see that our primary producers are placed on a sound footing. Farmers are suffering from many disabilities to-day. The shortage of labour is one of their most acute problems. I feel that in that respect they are not receiving justice, and Parliament should give them some special consideration. Apart from that question, farmers have recently had to face increased costs. Taxation has gone up, there has been a great increase in the price of superphosphate, and transport charges have risen materially. Against these things, the price of farm products has not risen. Unfortunately a farmer has no Arbitration Court to give him an increase in the price of his products when the costs of production have risen. In the last war, butterfat rose to 2s.

per pound, and milk to 1s 8d. per gallon. I do not know that costs in this war are any greater than they were on the last occasion.

Mr. Thorn: They are less.

Mr. McLARTY: There is a drift of young men from the land. Those who represent country constituencies can vouch for that. It is more difficult for farmers to keep their sons on the land to-day. The time is coming when we shall have to do something to assist them, even if we have to subsidise them. It would be a much sounder proposition to subsidise the farmer and help him to keep his men on the land, producing something, than it would be to leave him to drift to the cities which are already overcrowded.

A great deal can be said on the question of petrol rationing. Western Australia uses only 8 per cent. of the total amount of petrol consumed within the Commonwealth, notwithstanding which supplies have been seriously cut, and in many respects we are being harshly treated. All will agree upon the necessity for making every possible sacrifice in our effort to win the war. This State, however, is in a position different from that occupied by the other States. The chairman of the Liquid Fuel Control Board (Mr. Millen) said recently that in Victoria no farmer was further than nine miles from a railway. In Western Australia many farmers are much further removed from a railway than that, and yet we are suffering the same cuts as have been administered in the other States. We are told in the Speech that there are more gas producers in Western Australia than there are in all the other States put together. It does appear that we in this State are playing our part so far as petrol conservation is concerned. The farmers in my district are having a difficult time, although I am aware that their plight is not different from that of farmers in other areas. They are finding it difficult to obtain sufficient petrol supplies to keep their milking plants operating and to get cream and milk to the factories. They are asked to produce more milk for condensing purposes and more cheese. To do so, particularly in view of the labour shortage, they must have petrol to work their machines and transport their produce to the factories, and they are not getting enough for those purposes. It seems to be wrong that the city man, who enjoys many conveniences of transport, is still able to obtain in many

cases all the petrol he requires.

Technical education was mentioned in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. I am glad that this facility is to be extended to country areas. If we are to expand our secondary industries, technical education should go hand in hand with that expansion. Speaking of education generally, now that child endowment has been introduced, the time is opportune to raise the school-leaving age. That has been advocated in this House on numerous occasions, and I hope that this session we will be told that the leaving age is to be raised.

Mr. Needham: Do you think the endowment sufficient for the basic wage earner?

Mr. McLARTY: I thought child endowment was introduced to assist the basic wage earner.

Mr. J. Hegney: Five shillings a week is not much for a boy of 14.

Mr. McLARTY: It will help. The proposal to raise the school-leaving age was brought forward long before child endowment was mentioned.

I hope the Minister for Lands will this session introduce legislation to control potato growing. We who are interested in the industry desire growers to be licensed and registered, as we feel that this would help the industry. The Minister no doubt is aware that the foreign element is entering very largely into the industry. The standard of living of these foreigners is below that of our own producers, and unless something is done to enable our own producers to organise themselves I feel that their task even to earn enough to live on will be exceedingly difficult.

Mr. Thorn: It is not altogether the standard of living; the foreigners get financial assistance more easily than our people do.

The Minister for Mines: Do not make a silly statement like that. It is wrong.

Mr. Thorn: The hon. member should not make silly statements.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The Minister for Mines: Why does not the hon. member speak like a man?

Mr. Thorn: I am as good a man as is the Minister.

The Minister for Mines: Never in his life. Who told the hon. member that story?

Mr. Thorn: The Minister for Mines is always booming himself.

Mr. McLARTY: I now wish to deal with a pernicious matter. Meetings have been held throughout the metropolitan area lately with respect to law enforcement. I have not attended those meetings, but we must deal with starting-price betting from the right aspect. This session the Government ought to introduce legislation providing definitely for a minimum fine for that offence. A minimum fine is fixed for a breach of the Fisheries Act.

Mr. Sampson: And with respect to bread-baking!

Mr. McLARTY: If it is just to fix a minimum fine in certain cases, it is certainly just to do so for the offence of starting-price betting.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Why not legalise it and so control it?

Mr. McLARTY: We read of a man at Fremantle being fined £5 or £10 for this offence, while a man in Perth was fined £75 for it. Such action brings the law into contempt. At this time particularly we cannot afford to allow the law to be brought into contempt, and therefore I suggest to the Government that it introduces legislation to fix a minimum fine so that our magistrates may be consistent and inflict the same punishment for the same crime.

When speaking to the Address-in-reply, the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) expressed the hope that Sir William Eggleston should not be allowed to proceed to China as Australia's representative. I know of no man in Australia better qualified to occupy the position. Sir William is an eminent lawyer.

Mr. Tonkin: That is a remarkable statement in view of what he said.

Mr. McLARTY: He is an eminent lawyer and an ex-Minister of the Crown. He has written some valuable books and is an authority on Pacific affairs.

Mr. Tonkin: But he is going as a diplomat! That is his prime occupation.

Mr. McLARTY: He, being an authority on Pacific affairs, has every qualification for the post. I agree with the hon. member that what Sir William said was indiscreet.

Mr. Tonkin: It was. You are very mild indeed.

Mr. McLARTY: Perhaps when he said it he did not expect that it would be published to the world.

Mr. Raphael: He might have been two sheets in the wind!

Mr. McLARTY: He is not that type of man. I myself thought the Minister for Labour was indiscreet the other day when he, a Minister holding a responsible position, described Sir William as a Fascist.

The Minister for Labour: So he is.

Mr. McLARTY: The Commonwealth Government would not send a Fascist to represent us in the democracy of China.

The Minister for Labour: I say he is a Fascist type.

Mr. McLARTY: There is not much difference in the Minister's statements.

The Deputy Premier: You would not agree with his statement?

Mr. McLARTY: No. I think it was indiscreet of Sir William to make the statement.

The Deputy Premier: It was worse than indiscreet.

Mr. Doney: Yes. It was stupid.

The Deputy Premier: That is so.

Mr. McLARTY: Many people in Australia are to-day condemning certain politicians for their attitude towards the war, and I think with some justification.

The Deputy Premier: I think it was an insult to the Prime Minister.

Mr. McLARTY: I do not think for one moment that Sir William included the Prime Minister.

Mr. Doney: He did not specifically exclude him.

The Minister for Labour: Why apologise for Sir William?

Mr. McLARTY: I am not.

Mr. Raphael: You are making a pretence.

Mr. McLARTY: No. Sir William is well able to take care of himself. I am glad that we are not to have extra taxation imposed on us this session.

Mr. Withers: As far as the hon. member knows!

Mr. McLARTY: I have read the Premier's statement. Of course, things have happened since the Premier left the State. At all events, if no extra taxation is imposed this session, this will be the only session since I have been a member of Parliament when additional taxation has not been imposed on the people. At this time it is right that the Commonwealth Government should have the field of taxation, notwithstanding that more is being taken from the people at present than has ever been taken from them before. The Premier in my opinion has done well at the Loan Council, because we shall receive

sufficient money to keep the State going. If we secure more defence expenditure, as we have been promised, the outlook for our State will be fairly bright so far as concerns employment in the future.

MR. RODOREDA (Roebourne) [5.12]: Some three or four years have elapsed since I asked members to listen to me on the Address-in-reply debate. I almost feel like apologising to them now, but there are some matters concerning my electorate that I desire to advertise as much as possible. I therefore take this opportunity to advise the House and the public of them. The Lieut.-Governor's Speech gives no indication at all that the Government intends to bring down legislation to put into effect the recommendations of the Royal Commissioner who was appointed to inquire into the pastoral industry. I hope that is an indication that the Minister for Lands, in his lengthy negotiations with the financial firms concerned, has come to some agreement whereby the desperate position into which the industry has deteriorated will be improved. I cannot emphasise too strongly that the industry is in a most precarious state. Never since its inception have conditions been so bad, and if something is not done shortly the whole structure of the industry will collapse, owing to the burden of interest. Drought conditions have prevailed for the past six or seven years and have so depleted the flocks that the entire production of the stations is now insufficient to meet even the interest bill. Most of the pastoralists are now acting as poorly paid shepherds for the financial firms. Whatever comes or goes, the first charge upon their produce is interest. Something must be done, either by legislation or by co-operation with the financial firms who now own the industry, or the industry will cease to exist.

I have been touring my electorate for two and a half or three months and it is heart-breaking to see the conditions that prevail. Luckily, some winter rains fell—the first normal winter rains for seven or eight years—and these saved the pastoralists from absolute ruin. At present the flocks would average, I suppose, only about 20 per cent. of the normal number. If the drought should continue, as it has in many portions of the pastoral areas, goodness knows what will happen to the industry. I know the Minister for Lands is hopeful that the financial institutions will listen to reason

and not force the Government to introduce legislation to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Even if the capital values of the properties are written down to a certain extent, that will not be enough. Either the State Government or the Federal Government will have to make arrangements for loans for restocking purposes. The individual pastoralist cannot possibly make that provision unaided. The interest rates charged for any such loans must be merely nominal. In my electorate many of the station owners have starving stock, yet less than a hundred miles away ample feed is available. In the Port Hedland district the property owners urgently need more sheep, but the financial institutions say, "No, we cannot afford to buy more sheep for you." Therefore the sheep in the Roebourne area must starve while an ample food supply for them exists less than a hundred miles away, and the only consideration that prevents starving sheep from being saved is—finance. How much longer the Government will permit such conditions to obtain, I am at a loss to understand.

A reappraisal of pastoral rents is due next year. I urge the Minister for Lands to send out appraisers to make personal inspections of the properties. The last appraisal was effected in 1922, and the anomalies created by that reappraisal, caused by inspectors who did not know their business, have constituted a source of annoyance, worry and expense to all the pastoral lessees ever since. I trust that the Minister will appoint appraisal inspectors who know their jobs and will thoroughly investigate the position of properties about which complaints have been made.

The Minister for Lands: That will be a very big job.

Mr. RODOREDA: It will be a big job, and if not done properly will not be worth doing at all. The Roebourne district possesses another asset that is entirely unexploited, and is quite unknown in most parts of Australia. I refer to huge deposits of blue asbestos. I have it on the authority of one of the most cautious of the Government geologists, that there is, on the most conservative estimate, 100,000,000 tons of blue asbestos available. That asbestos is of the finest quality of any such deposits in the world. Those figures are astronomical, but as I have pointed out, are con-

servative. Most of the deposit is visible and there is no possible chance of any mistake being made regarding the quantity available. For two or three years the deposits were worked intermittently and at one stage it appeared as though the industry would be placed on a permanent basis. Then the war broke out and nothing further was done.

The only markets available for blue asbestos are in Great Britain and America. With the outbreak of hostilities, the shipping position precluded the utilisation of those markets, so the industry had to close down. The Federal Government has been advised of the quantity of asbestos available in the Roebourne district. A reasonably extensive demand for asbestos exists in Australia for manufacturing purposes, yet not one ton from the Roebourne deposit has been sold in Australia. Within the last 12 months the Federal Government entered into a trade agreement with South Africa, and of the only two items accorded preference one was blue asbestos. Let members realise the position! We have in the Hamersley Ranges a sufficiently large deposit of blue asbestos to cope with the requirements of the whole world for the next hundred years, and yet we are importing blue asbestos from South Africa! The article is used in the manufacture of asbestos sheets and other such goods. Surely the time has arrived when someone should demand that the Federal Government cancel the trade agreement with South Africa. It is time the State or the Federal Government insisted upon local asbestos being used by our manufacturers.

Mr. Berry: Some is used locally.

Mr. RODOREDA: Practically nothing at all.

Mr. J. H. Smith: What is the Minister for Industrial Development doing?

Mr. RODOREDA: I do not know. Perhaps this is a matter for the Federal Government, and certainly an embargo should be placed upon the importation of asbestos into Australia. It is scandalous that we should have an enormous deposit undeveloped and that we should import asbestos from South Africa.

The Minister for Mines: And our deposit is easily mined.

Mr. RODOREDA: Yes, and that the asbestos is the best quality available in the world has been proved by investigations carried out in London and New York. Tak-

ing the value of asbestos as £40 a ton, members will appreciate that the blue asbestos deposit in the Roebourne district is worth more than all the gold produced in Western Australia to date, yet the deposits are lying absolutely undeveloped.

Mr. Withers: Is the deposit far from the coast?

Mr. RODOREDA: Between 100 and 150 miles, but that distance is a mere bagatelle when other considerations are borne in mind. There is a plant on the spot that turns out a wonderfully good product, equal to any imported from elsewhere in the world. Then there is the copper position. A dump at Whim Creek is lying at grass and could easily be used. It contains about £160,000 worth of copper. It would probably cost £60,000 to modernise the plant and put it in working order, which could be done within two months. The Federal Government has stressed the need for copper, yet what has been done regarding the Whim Creek proposition? Nothing at all. Enough profit should be derived from the dump at Whim Creek to enable the mine to be unwatered, the plant to be modernised and huge profits effected.

Mr. Sampson: Would the proposition appeal to private enterprise?

Mr. RODOREDA: The deposit has remained idle for 20 odd years.

Mr. Cross: Private enterprise neglected the proposition.

Mr. RODOREDA: Copper prices that have obtained since the last war have not been such as to induce private enterprise to exploit the proposition.

Mr. Sampson: We are starving for copper.

Mr. RODOREDA: The Federal Government is aware of the deposit.

Mr. Doney: Has anyone made representations to the Federal Government?

Mr. RODOREDA: Of course! The Mines Department has placed all the facts and figures before the Federal authorities. Probably next week there will be an inquiry by the Federal authorities to know if there is any copper in this State. Such inquiries seem to be made once a month.

The Minister for Mines: We keep copies in the office so as to be ready for the next inquiry.

Mr. RODOREDA: Apart altogether from the Whim Creek show, there are 20 or 30 copper mines, all half-developed, within a

radius of 20 miles of Roebourne. Apparently no one in the Federal sphere takes any interest in Western Australia, and so these concerns will remain undeveloped. Certainly that will be the position if it is left to the Federal Government. In the Roebourne district there are deposits of various minerals of practically illimitable wealth that could not be exploited in times of peace. In these days when there is a scarcity of supplies, the mines could be put on a competitive basis so that when peace returns they could be worked in competition with shows elsewhere.

I discussed another matter with the Premier and the Minister for Works last year. I refer to an irrigation project for stud stock in the Roebourne district, and also for the creation of an inland seaplane base. I have been informed that a surveyor has made an investigation of the scheme. There is a gorge along the course of the Fortescue River below Millstream, and at that point a wall about 70 yards long and about 100 feet high would create a lake of fresh water that would extend back for about 20 miles. The whole position has recently investigated, and a proposition has been submitted to the defence authorities by the owner of the station. One favourable aspect of the scheme is that even in drought years about 150,000,000 gallons of fresh water flow through Millstream every day. That water could be led into the gorge along the course of the Fortescue River and would provide an adequate supply even during a protracted drought. It would provide ample water for irrigating the plain below the dam seeing that the reservoir would be at least 1,000 feet above the plain, enabling reticulation to be effectively utilised. The flats below Millstream are as rich as any elsewhere in the world and hundreds of square miles could be irrigated from the dam. An ample water supply would be available for the personnel associated with a seaplane base. The outstanding problem all along the North-West coast is to secure an adequate water supply. It would be difficult to name one place where an adequate supply would be available to the extent required for defence purposes associated with an aeroplane base. I ask the Premier or the Deputy Premier to detail a small survey party thoroughly to investigate this proposition. The expense involved

would be quite worth while and the claims for it could be proved or disproved at little cost to the State. Such an investigation would enable the Government to secure the necessary data before officially asking the Federal Government to undertake the proposition. In my opinion, the engineers and surveyors associated with the Department of the North-West could make the contour survey and ascertain all the relevant facts. I hope the Minister for Works is listening to my remarks, because I shall ask him to do something regarding a water supply for Onslow. Last year the people at that centre had to cart water 20 odd miles, for drinking purposes alone. In such a climate the prime essential is an adequate water supply. Therefore I hope that now we have a highly capable engineer, Mr. Dumas, in charge of water supplies, he and his officers will thoroughly investigate the position, and decide once and for all what can be done in that regard. The town will be there for all time. The sooner the position is faced the better everyone will be pleased and the more satisfactory will be the result to the Government.

I commend the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Berry) for his advocacy of a move for the building of ships in this State. I know very well that the Western Australian Government has been urging this proposal on the Federal Government for some considerable time. Undoubtedly a number of wooden ships could have been built here since the war began. The building of them should have been going on continuously ever since the outbreak of hostilities. The wooden ship "King Bay" was built at Fremantle, and has proved perfectly serviceable. The naval authorities selected this very vessel as the only ship in the port of Fremantle sufficiently solid to act as a tender ship for craft entering that port. She remains outside the harbour standing all the buffeting and knocking-about ships get when they have to bring tenders alongside steel vessels.

Mr. North: What is her tonnage?

Mr. RODOREDA: I do not know exactly, but she carries about 150 tons of wool. She was built in seven or eight months, and not by experts. Experts are not required for building wooden ships. If the Federal Government called for the supply of seven or eight such vessels, it could obtain them here. Anyone with an adze and a hammer can build

a wooden ship. The Federal Government has taken the "Kybra" and the "King Bay" away from our North-West coast. For a wooden ship, all the advance preparation required is a blue print, and a man who knows how to read it. To build a wooden ship is not more difficult than to build a house. A wooden ship can be built by carpenters.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: By ship's carpenters!

Mr. RODOREDA: I observed the men who built the "King Bay"; and if they can build a ship, any men can.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is much easier to talk about than to do.

Mr. Sampson: Are there any spare carpenters about?

Mr. RODOREDA: There were no shipwrights about when the "King Bay" was under construction, but she was built. The only thing that went wrong with the undertaking was that a Minister of the Crown would not give the company a license to carry the special cargo for which she was designed, and so it went practically bankrupt. Now the Navy has taken on the "King Bay." If we can build one ship in Western Australia, why can we not build half a dozen?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Ships cannot be built without skilled men.

Mr. Berry: Nonsense!

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I know what I am talking about.

Mr. RODOREDA: I know the men who built the "King Bay." They included a couple of shipwrights.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Well, there you are!

Mr. RODOREDA: We have shipwrights in Western Australia, have we not?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Yes; but you suggested that tradesmen were not needed, and I resent that.

Mr. RODOREDA: I did not say, "tradesmen." I said carpenters could build wooden ships. The hon. member interjecting may have misunderstood me.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They have been on the "Pollyanna," you know, for the last five months, and have not got her seaworthy yet.

Mr. RODOREDA: Wooden ships are being built continuously in Western Australia; for instance, the luggers for Broome, which stand the roughest of weather. This job of shipbuilding can be done in Western Aus-

tralia, and should be done here. Why cannot the Navy get a dozen wooden ships built and release the "King Bay," or else the "Kybra," which is tied up nearly half her time in Sydney? There is no need for the Committee to go into the question of man power and service and all that unutterable nonsense, in spite of which we do not get any ships. The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) mentioned petrol rationing, and the Leader of the Opposition chided the mover of the Address-in-reply for daring to say a word against the Federal Government.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I did nothing of the sort; you have no right to say that.

Mr. RODOREDA: The Leader of the Opposition had no right to do that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But you can still do the wrong thing!

Mr. RODOREDA: I consider that the handling of the petrol question by the Federal Government has been almost criminally incompetent.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Did not you say that the people in the North-West were deprived of petrol? There are no licenses up there, you know.

Mr. RODOREDA: I would not be so senseless as to say a thing like that. I know the position in the North reasonably well.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I do not doubt it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. RODOREDA: It is almost incredible that the Federal Government could be so stupid as to allow the petrol position to degenerate into the state in which it is now. It took the Federal Government some 18 months to realise that the problem had to be solved by that Government, instead of by the petrol companies. Not half the supply stores in Australia are full, after 18 months of Federal management. The Federal Government should have insisted on those people keeping their supplies reasonably full, but because they would probably sacrifice some profit by paying higher freights for tankers—

Hon. C. G. Latham: I hope our friends up North will not accept the hon. member as an authority on this subject.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the Leader of the Opposition will keep order.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I would not advertise the deficiency to the Japanese.

Mr. RODOREDA: It was stated in this morning's paper by Senator McLeay that the stocks were not half full. I am merely pointing out the position which has arisen through the Federal Government's handling of the petrol question. Three boats have been running down our coast from Singapore to Fremantle ever since the war began, and running practically empty. In each of those three boats 1,090 tons of storage is available. They could have brought about 5,000,000 gallons of petrol in drums and cases per year to this State. The "Koolinda" has come down from up there within the last seven or eight months empty, whereas she could have brought 500,000 gallons of petrol. If that is a sample of the manner in which the war is being conducted by the Federal Government, it is no wonder we are in a bad way. The position has now become so bad that something must be done. To allow the petrol companies to work their own sweet will was very bad business indeed. The Federal Government has requested most of the people in outlying centres to lay down about three months' food supply. On investigating the North-West position I discovered that most of the stations are not in immediate danger of petrol shortage; but the towns have to be looked after, and the only people who can do that are the individual storekeepers in the towns. But most of these men are so hard up that they cannot finance an extra three months' supply.

I took this matter up with the Minister for Industrial Development about three months ago, and was informed that the usual committee was sitting. I do not know what has happened in connection with the matter, but there are no supplies in the towns of the North-West. Indeed, there is a difficulty in those towns getting current supplies with the limited amount of shipping available. Therefore I ask the Minister, if he speaks on the Address-in-reply, to advise the House of the position. The storekeepers in the North, I wish to emphasise, cannot possibly finance an extra three months' supply; and that fact leaves the whole of the North-West absolutely unprovided for in the event of a crisis occurring. I myself sat on a committee to deal with the shipping question. We sat as a committee usually sits, and

made all sorts of recommendations. We had a 100 per cent. perfect plan on paper. And the whole solution hinged on petrol supplies being laid down before shipping was restricted. This committee's recommendation was sent on to the Federal Government months and months ago. Somebody had to finance the three months' supply. But nothing was done. As soon as a practical step has to be taken in order to implement a recommendation of any committee the whole thing breaks down.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Then there is a definite shortage of petrol in the North-West? The Leader of the Opposition has stated that there is.

Mr. RODOREDA: The Leader of the Opposition does not know what he is talking about on that question. There has not been a tanker on the North-West coast for over nine months from Sumatra, and all the petrol has had to go to the North-West by State vessels making seven or eight trips. When I was at Roebourne three months ago, there were only seven or eight cases of petrol in the town.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I said there was no rationing in the North-West. That is all.

Mr. RODOREDA: The rationing in the North-West is a price rationing. When one pays 4s. 6d. and 5s. for petrol, one does not use it needlessly. No joy-riding is done in the North-West. The whole of the pastoral industry there is now dependent upon petrol for working the stations. The old days of the outcamp are gone. All the fences are attended to from the head station by men on motor bicycles, and all the transport is done by trucks. Thus petrol is the sole means of transport in the North-West. True, the stations are gradually fitting gas producers. In fact, some of the stations have had them for five or six years. I can, however, assure the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) that the price of petrol in the North-West is in itself an effective means of rationing.

The Leader of the Opposition had something to say about the abolition of the financial emergency tax. He was rather critical of the Government, and I was surprised that a man who has occupied the honourable position he has held for so many years should try to mislead the public in the way he did. He said that the tax had not been abolished.

Mr. Thorn: It is the same tax under another name.

Hon. C. G. Latham: So long as you are satisfied, I shall be satisfied.

Mr. RODOREDA: I want the public to be satisfied.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They won't be!

Mr. RODOREDA: It is not sufficient for me that the Leader of the Opposition should be satisfied. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to inquire from the man on £300 a year and with two children whether the financial emergency tax has been abolished.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Auburn, Smith and—

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

Mr. RODOREDA: I am asking the Leader of the Opposition a rhetorical question. I do not want any answer to it. The hon. member can understand that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Roebourne must address the Chair.

Mr. RODOREDA: May I not ask a rhetorical question through the Chair, Mr. Speaker? I wish to ask the Leader of the Opposition to interview the man on £300 with two children and ask him whether the financial emergency tax has been abolished, both in name and in fact. Let him ask the man on £400 a year with three children the same question, and see what reply he receives.

Mr. Hughes: The man will say no. That is the answer.

Mr. RODOREDA: I can tell him that the tax has been abolished because he does not now pay any tax at all.

Mr. Hughes: You should not contradict a witness.

Mr. RODOREDA: Men on those salaries do not pay any tax. Previously they were paying quite a considerable amount in financial emergency tax, just the same as the single man does, so it is quite untrue for the Leader of the Opposition to state that the financial emergency tax has not been abolished. To make such a remark was deliberately to mislead the people. Thousands of men in the categories I have mentioned know whether or not the tax has been abolished.

A few years ago I tried very hard, through the Minister for Industrial Development, to interest the Government in an industrial enterprise, the capital for which would have been provided from the Eastern States. The man who was endeavouring to

have that industry established here has sent me the following cutting from the Melbourne "Herald," dated the 2nd August:—

Money for New Industries: Surprise proposal by South Australian Government: Great interest was shown today by State Treasury officers at the announcement by the Premier of South Australia (Mr. Playford) that he would introduce legislation to enable the Government to give financial aid to private manufacturing interests.

Stating that the decision was a departure from very many important principles of government, Mr. Playford explained that where introduction of an industry was considered "essential and of community value," financial assistance would be given, subject to approval by an authority consisting of two Government members of Parliament, and Leaders of the Opposition in the Assembly, and the Legislative Council.

Mr. Sampson: Our Minister for Industrial Development is considering the question.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is too late now, is it not?

Mr. RODOREDA: No. The time is never too late to consider such a proposition, because that industry is not likely to be discontinued this year or next year. This State is going to progress but it will never progress satisfactorily while we have a Government that will not assist or which legislation prevents from assisting private enterprise.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Government has powers.

Mr. RODOREDA: Then I am surprised it has not used them to greater effect than has been the case up to date. The proposition I submitted three or four years ago, with which the member for Forrest (Mr. Holman) has had something to do since then, is the establishment of a papermill in our South-West forest areas. This was no fly-by-night scheme but a scheme worked out to the veriest detail. For years it was the subject of a close examination, and only a very small amount of help was required from the Government. However, the Premier and the Government did not see eye to eye with the man submitting the proposition, and unfortunately for this State South Australia has now taken the matter up.

The Minister for Labour: South Australia did not take up that fellow's scheme.

Mr. RODOREDA: No, of course it did not. I am surprised this Government did not conduct more investigations into that

proposal. Now the chance has gone and a mill has been established in Tasmania. It does not require much imagination to understand what effect the establishment of such a mill in this State would have had on Western Australia. We have heard quite a lot about the new order and post-war reconstruction. Demands have been made on every side for us to investigate and make arrangements now for the new order which, it is said, will exist after the war. The matter is a difficult one to solve. I do not know how we can be expected to solve any problem when we do not know what the problem is.

Mr. Hughes: You will not get a new order with the old mentality.

Mr. RODOREDA: Only a madman would dare to prophesy what conditions after the war will be like. But this much is apparent to me: that whatever the conditions may be at the termination of this war, all problems associated with it can be solved by one thing and that is, as the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) said, an ample supply of money. Money, if you have enough of it, will solve all problems.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Under the people's control.

Mr. RODOREDA: Yes. If there is as much money available after the war as during it, we shall have no troubles to worry about. I suggest that people should give a good deal of thought to that aspect rather than try to make plans and appoint committees to solve a problem of the nature of which we are not aware.

MR. TRIAT (Mt. Magnet) [5.53]: I listened with close attention to His Excellency's Speech and I also read it very carefully. I further listened with interest to previous speakers on the Address-in-reply. After hearing the Lieut.-Governor's Speech and what members have had to say, I am of opinion that Western Australia is in a bad position. The Speech referred to the future of this State, but the position is that unless we can obtain definite assistance to establish new industries and bring about reforms, or new orders, or whatever they might be called, there is no possibility of the State's progressing. I do not propose to take up members' time to any great extent, but I wish to deal with one or two items in

the Speech. On the first page of the document appears the following:—

Consistent with their high reputation for practical patriotism, the people of Western Australia have responded magnificently to the demand for men for the fighting forces and for money with which to feed, clothe, equip and pay them.

That portion of the Speech particularly appeals to me. Western Australia certainly has responded magnificently to the call for men, and fairly well to the call for money to feed, equip and clothe those men. However, the soldiers have been equipped not from Western Australia but from the Eastern States. How have the men been fed? With the exception of a few items, most of the food supplied to the main camps has been imported from the Eastern States.

Mr. McDonald: I think not.

Mr. TRIAT: The hon member may think not, but I am going to prove what I say. That food was imported from the Eastern States until quite recently, at all events. If there has been an alteration in the policy, the fact has not been made public. The feeding, clothing and equipment of these men in Western Australia has not been done from this State, and it is therefore not to the advantage of the State to have soldiers stationed here, except for the fact that they themselves spend a certain amount of money. The Commonwealth Government is not prepared to spend anything here; it is prepared to take but not to give. The Speech continued—

The pledge given by Ministers on the outbreak of war to assist the Commonwealth Government to the fullest possible extent has been honoured in every way. Constant and close co-operation is the keynote of this State's relation to the war effort.

Definitely that pledge has been honoured in every way. In my opinion it has been honoured too well. The Western Australian Government should have been insistent in its demands that the Commonwealth Government give consideration to the building of munition factories in this State in the early stages, as well as to the construction of ships, as has already been mentioned by the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Berry) and other speakers, for the transport of foodstuffs to the Middle East, or wherever they are required. This State is in the best geographical position to supply those commodities. We are six days closer to the Middle East than are any of the Eastern

States, and if ships are so scarce—as we have been told they are—obviously this is the only place from which goods should be exported. But what do we find? There are no such shipments from Western Australia. Foodstuffs are going bad. Wheat is rotting on the ground, or, if it is not, is kept in bins. Our vegetables, fruit and meat are not wanted by anybody; at least, they are wanted, but are not available to the people requiring them. Western Australia should have been more insistent in demanding from the Federal Government the right to provide a fair share of the requirements of the men oversea. It should have seen that munition factories were erected here in the early stages. Last year I expressed my anxiety in this connection, and the Premier told me that I was pessimistic. He said a man was coming over here to control munitions manufacture, and that he had an open cheque. That was 12 months ago. The cheque-book is still open and has never been soiled. Small orders may have been received, but nothing has been done on a large scale. Now, however, a factory is to be erected at a cost of £250,000, and that is to be built in nine months' time, when the war will be over.

The Minister for Mines: I hope you are right!

Mr. TRIAT: I am right, and hon. members will soon know it. If we do not win the war in nine months, we are not going to win it at all. I do not profess to be a prophet. I know nothing about war, but I have read that unless we can win this war in nine months' time, we shall not win it at all.

Several members interjected.

Mr. TRIAT: Last year I read an extract from a book entitled "Japan Must Fight Britain." Members laughed then; they are not laughing today. I am sorry to have to say that. We all realise that Japan may fight Britain. Trouble is very close to us to-day. The Prime Minister has had to hasten back to Melbourne because the situation in the Far East has assumed a dangerous aspect. Yet what have we done in 12 months? Nothing!

Mr. Cross: The Federal Government has not done too much, either.

Mr. TRIAT: I am speaking of the Federal Government. This State is not Australia. This Parliament is but a glorified

road board. What power have we to set in motion any defence measures? None! What money have we got? We have nothing. We are like paupers, dependent on the Commonwealth Government for everything. Yet people are saying, "Why do you not do more than you are doing?" Members know that unless we can get finance we can do nothing. Instead of obtaining more finance, what have we received? When our representative went to the Eastern States to obtain our quota of financial assistance, he was told that we would have to accept a reduction. That may be all right. Perhaps it suits the people, since they do not vote. The people of Western Australia should vote. We require a certain amount of money, and if we cannot get it, why does not the Commonwealth Government make provision to protect the country? We read of the protection that is being provided. Where is it? I have travelled a lot and have seen nothing of it. There are a few guns at isolated points, but the whole of the North is open to an invader, with the exception of Darwin. As the member for Roebourne (Mr. Rodoreda) said, an enemy would not be able to get enough water to drink. If that does not stop an invasion, nothing will. But the Commonwealth cannot take the credit for a scarcity of drinking water. Nature is responsible for that. I feel disgusted when I see the inactivity in a State like Western Australia in its contribution to the defence of this country.

The Speech announces that following persistent representations by the State Government the Commonwealth Government decided to establish a small arms factory at a cost of £250,000. Whilst visiting Canberra recently I heard the Minister for Defence state in reply to one of the Western Australian members—and I have since read the reply in the Commonwealth "Hansard"—that nine months would elapse before this factory was built. For the information of members, I should like to relate what occurred in another part of the Commonwealth when the building of munition works was contemplated. I quote Queensland. Recently I visited that State, and here let me say that I wish every member of this Parliament could make that trip in order to see for himself exactly what is happening in the other States. I venture to say that anyone would be dumbfounded, dismayed and disgusted at

the manner in which we are being treated. When munition works were about to be built in Queensland, the Commonwealth proposed what is being done here. It said, "We will give you the money, but it will take nine months to build the factory." The Queensland Government replied, "It will not take you nine months. Give us the cheque and we will show you how to build it." I made a trip one evening with the Queensland Minister for Works and the Engineer for Public Works. We travelled five miles out of Brisbane and there saw 15 acres of land floodlit until it was bright as day. There were 75 trucks working day and night shifting hills and filling in depressions. There were several bulldozers at work, the largest of them shifting 14 cubic yards of spoil every four or five minutes. There were two grabs, each of 110 horse power, picking up 9 cubic yards of dirt at every grab. This work was going on through three shifts a day and on seven days a week.

Mr. Cross: That was done by a Labour Government.

Mr. TRIAT: Yes. That is how the job was tackled in Queensland. The authorities there did not say it would take nine months to build the factory. As a matter of fact it will take 90 days from the time the first shovel was put in before the first implement of warfare is turned out. Here our factory is to take nine months to build; and we accept this sort of thing without protest. Why should it take nine months? Why not kick up a row about it?

Mr. Thorn: Keep going, you are stirring things up!

Mr. TRIAT: I wish to emphasise how bad is the treatment being meted out to Western Australia. I want to drive that point home. This factory is to take nine months to build, and in my opinion the war will be over by the time it has been erected. Why bother about building munition works now? Why not build factories so that we may create secondary industries? If it is going to take nine months to build the factory, we had better forget all about it. By the expiration of that period, it will not be wanted for the manufacture of munitions. In Queensland 90 days were to elapse from the time operations were begun on shifting the hills until the concrete foundations and structural steel work were constructed and the machinery installed. Yet the Commonwealth says it will take nine months to build a factory here.

Consider the defence work that is being undertaken in South Australia. There we have a State with a population roughly equal to that of Western Australia and most of the people, as here, are congregated in the southern part of the State. South Australia is fairly well off for munition works. Let me quote an extract from the "South Australian Observer" of the 5th July last, as follows:—

Munition Orders in South Australia.

Board Handles Programme Totalling £4,000,000: Over £4,000,000 worth of munition production orders had been placed by the Board of Area Management in South Australia since its inception a year ago, the secretary (Mr. S. Lillywhite) stated in his first annual report to the board, which was presented at a special meeting last night. Orders amounting to about £200,000 for clothing, boots and so on for overseas Governments of the Eastern Group had also been placed recently.

So orders to the value of £4,200,000 have been placed in South Australia in the last 12 months. The report continued:—

In a review of the employment caused through the activities of the board, Mr. Lillywhite said that arrangements for production had been made with 62 contractors or sub-contractors, and 262 orders had been placed leading to the employment of 9,609 males and 755 females by contractors, and 1,622 males and 102 females in annexes, a total of 12,088 persons.

An important point to be borne in mind is that this large sum of money has been expended in South Australia. Where does Western Australia come in? Perhaps the political coat of the Government is South Australia is different.

Mr. Thorn: A more active Government perhaps.

Mr. TRIAT: The report continues:—

The disbursements of the board to date exceeded £2,000,000, of which £1,967,457 was for manufactured munitions. An interesting item was £56,926 for the tradesmen training classes.

A sum of nearly £57,000 was given to South Australia by the Commonwealth for the purpose of imparting additional training to skilled or semi-skilled men. Is not that an advantage to the State? No such sum has been given to Western Australia to create a better class of artisan here. Western Australia is in a deplorable position compared with the Eastern States. In the adjoining State in 12 months £4,200,000 has been provided for the manufacture of munitions, boots and clothing, and another £57,000 for the additional training of tradesmen. South Australia would be in an enviable position if the war finished to-morrow or even in the next nine months,

as I believe it will, because it would have mechanical facilities and skilled tradesmen for operating secondary industries to the value of £4,000,000.

Mr. North: And South Australia receives a larger disabilities grant from the Commonwealth than we do.

Mr. TRIAT: Yes; the Commonwealth seems to favour that State. Why it should do so, I cannot say. I believe that Western Australia is quite as capable of manufacturing munitions as is the sister State. However, I say, "Good luck to South Australia." I should have liked to see it get £8,000,000 worth of defence orders, but if it is entitled to £4,000,000 worth of defence orders, surely Western Australia is entitled to similar consideration. We should strive to get greater consideration from the Commonwealth. In the paper I have already quoted appears a statement by the Premier of South Australia as follows:—

Unemployed down to 1,745. A decrease of 21 per cent. in the number of unemployed men in South Australia during June reduced the number of registrations to 1,745, the lowest figure reached in the State in 14 years.

We are now reaping the benefit in direct employment in new munitions works established in this State. The total registrations for munitions works up to date are:—Females, 8,566; males, 14,705. Already 1,564 females and 1,208 males have been given employment on active munition production in two of the large new establishments in the metropolitan area. These figures do not include those employed on construction work or in private establishments, nor do they include the large number employed on munition work in South Australian Government departments.

The number required for munition work would continue to increase very rapidly, and it was obvious that in a very short time every man in South Australia who was physically fit must be prepared to play his part in meeting the increased demands.

South Australia is in a flourishing condition. The Premier has said that everybody who is physically fit must be prepared to play his part in the manufacture of munitions. Only 1,745 persons were registered on the books as unemployed. Four million pounds has been expended there on defence orders in 12 months. The Commonwealth Government is definitely doing something detrimental to the interests of a State like Western Australia when it does so much for an adjoining State and practically nothing for us. I felt it my duty to direct the attention of the House to the rotten conditions

that exist here as compared with the conditions in the Eastern States.

The Speech contains a reference to secondary industries, quite a number of which are suggested. I am growing sceptical as to whether our secondary industries will ever come to anything. I believe there is not much hope for secondary industries here because the Commonwealth Government will not assist us to make headway by granting sufficient money to enable us to carry on. We cannot get the money within the State; it has to be obtained elsewhere. The Speech tells us about the industries that are being established, but no mention is made about the manufacture of explosives. No State of the Commonwealth uses the quantity of explosives required in this State. Our mining industry makes this State the largest consumer of that commodity. But where are the explosives manufactured? In Western Australia? No, in Melbourne! Why are they not manufactured in Western Australia? Why manufacture them elsewhere and have to cart them at increased cost to the State where they are required? Could not they be manufactured here just as well as in another State? Of course they could. But it does not suit the Commonwealth or big business people in the Eastern States to allow us to manufacture explosives here. The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) said that probably workers' compensation had something to do with the lack of secondary industries in this State. I was surprised to hear that statement. Anomalies might exist, but if they do, I am not aware of them. I am of opinion that the compensation provided under the Act is too small to recompense a worker for the loss he suffers by accident sustained in industry. I have been associated with workers for a long time and I know something about the compensation provisions under the Act.

Mr. Thorn: There might be other factors.

Mr. TRIAT: Yes. Perhaps the member for Murray-Wellington will explain at some other time exactly what he had in mind. During the two years the war has been raging, not a single day's work has been lost in this State through a stoppage. Is such a record as that of no consequence to manufacturers? We read in the Press of stoppages in the Eastern States totalling 1,200,000 hours, but that does not prevent manufacturers there from carrying on, and the assumption is that they are carrying on

satisfactorily because they are not prepared to come to Western Australia and engage in industry here. Seeing that the industrial conditions in Western Australia are so easy and so advantageous to manufacturers, I cannot understand why they have not been prepared to come here and start their industries. In this respect Western Australia has a record unequalled in any other part of the world.

Mr. North: Do you think that the cost of electric power is too high?

Mr. TRIAT: I do not know how our cost compares with the charges in the Eastern States, but seeing that we have coal deposits at Collie, our costs should be reasonable. In North Queensland power is generated very cheaply from the hydro-electric works at Barron Falls, but we do not find manufacturers going to Queensland to start their industries. I wonder whether they keep away from Queensland because the Labour Party is in power there. It seems strange that there should be such a disinclination to establish big factories in Queensland where electric power is cheap. Should we conclude that because South Australia has received large defence orders from the Commonwealth, electric power is cheap in that State? I cannot believe that the price of electric current here has anything to do with our lack of secondary industries.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TRIAT: Continuing on the subject of secondary industries I find the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech contains the following paragraph—

Extensive investigations and tests have been carried out regarding the possible production of potash and alumina from alunite deposits at Lake Campion. There is every reason to believe that potash can now be commercially produced in a quantity sufficient to supply the whole of Australia's requirements for many years.

The House has recognised that position for some time. Last year I drew attention to the fact that there were 15,000,000 tons of alunite 20 ft. below the surface at Campion, and only seven miles from a railway. I was told that tests were being made at the University to ascertain whether it was possible to extract aluminium from those deposits. I was then told that out of a total of 15,000,000 tons of alunite there

were 7½ million tons of aluminium, and sufficient potash to pay for the extraction. If such a deposit were found in any other State of the Commonwealth it would immediately be exploited. Aluminium is of immense importance to the Commonwealth in the manufacture of aeroplanes. For the fuselage and wings of an aeroplane aluminium is essential. I read the other day that people in the Eastern States had decided to import bauxite from the Netherlands so that aluminium might be extracted from it, notwithstanding that 7½ million tons of the mineral are awaiting exploitation in this State. It is scandalous that an industry of so much value should be allowed to remain idle, and that bauxite should be imported from the Netherlands. It does not say much for the sincerity of the war effort that is being put forward in Australia.

Mr. Doney: What excuse has the Commonwealth Government to offer?

Mr. TRIAT: No excuse whatsoever, and there can be no excuse for allowing all that wealth to lie in the ground. Why should it not be taken out of the ground? Is it because the mineral happens to be within the boundaries of Western Australia that it is left untouched, and that no one seems to concern himself in the matter? It is scandalous, and high time we made a demand upon the authorities to have these industries developed and the necessary production embarked upon. Everybody knows that potash is required in Australia, and we know where it can be obtained. Let us make that demand, and notify the Commonwealth Government that we are going to exploit this particular industry. Never mind about getting bauxite from the Netherlands; let it be obtained in our own State! Let our people be given a chance to live, so that they may be in a position to buy the foodstuffs our farmers are growing, and that they in turn may be able to put more men to work. But nothing is done, and no one bothers about doing it. I intend to bother, and will keep on voicing my opinion whether the authorities like it or not. I hope other members will voice their disgust at the manner in which this State is treated.

Agriculture is an important item, and occupies a page and a half of the Speech.

We know what is prejudicing the agricultural industry to-day, namely, the scarcity of shipping and the fact that the foodstuffs produced in Western Australia cannot be disposed of in the markets that could be found for them. What is wrong with Western Australia getting rid of its surplus in the Near East? I do not know much about geography, but I do know that we in Western Australia are closer to the Near East than is any other State in Australia. Malaya is our natural trading port if only we could get our produce shipped to that part of the world. The Dutch East Indies are also close to us. We have no vessels trading with those ports. The only vessel we had trading from this State was the "Kangaroo," and she only carried a few tons of cargo. Whatever trading has been done since she was taken off the route has amounted to very little. The member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Berry) put forward a wonderful suggestion. In the old days wooden ships, whose motive power lay only in their sails, used to traverse the high seas of the world, north, south, east and west. They took produce from the shores of Australia to the United Kingdom and various other parts of the Empire. To-day we have wooden ships that are propelled by mechanical means, and yet we are not able to make use of them in shipping away our produce.

Mr. Thorn: What happened to the vessels that were built during the last war?

Mr. TRIAT: I do not know, but I understand they were burnt. Whether or not that is the case makes no difference. We should have been building our own wooden ships for the conveyance of our own foodstuffs to where the markets are awaiting them. Millions of people are only too anxious to purchase Australian goods. We should put it to the authorities to see that our produce is shipped to those parts of the world where it can be consumed, and we should not permit it to rot within our own shores. The producer must be given a chance to make a living. We are told that the producer cannot sell that which he has grown. I hope members opposite will take the matter up and make the necessary representations to the Commonwealth Government, so that our supplies may be taken to the markets awaiting them, at a price that will represent a profit to the growers, and to the comfort of those

consumers who are able to purchase that which we produce. Imagine paying 8d. for a single apple, and yet we cannot sell apples in Australia at a profit! I agree that the Apple and Pear Board could well be put on board on one of our wooden vessels, which might be allowed to spring a leak when out at sea.

When I was in the Eastern States the only bright spot so far as Western Australia was concerned was our mining industry. Over there people cannot touch us in that regard, as to the amount of ore handled, the cost of handling it, the quantity of ore brought to the surface per man, the hygienic conditions under which our miners work, and the general conditions that appertain to our industry as a whole. In all respects our mining industry is superior to the kindred industry in the other States. That is at all events one direction in which we can hold up our heads compared with the other States, and say, "We are not second to you people there." That is the bright spot in Western Australia.

Technical education was referred to by me before the tea adjournment. I was dealing with the amount of money expended in South Australia, namely, £57,000, on higher technical education for those who had a certain amount of skill in their trades. I trust the Government will do everything possible to see that our youths on leaving school have an opportunity to acquire some skill at a trade, or partial skill at a trade before going out into the world. It has taken the war to awaken the consciences of people as to the necessity for this technical training. Without technicians we cannot make much headway. I told the House about 12 months ago that the Germans, the Swedes and the Danes, who had come to Western Australia and engaged in mining, had risen to be the masters of Australians. I am not suggesting that the foreigners were better workers, but I do suggest that they were better trained in their trade or calling on leaving school, and were therefore able to take positions on the mines as the bosses rather than as ordinary workers. Thus it was that the Australian became the labourer and the foreigner became the master. Such a state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. It would not be permitted in any foreign country, where the authorities would see to it that the visitors remained the servants. I have no objection to foreigners taking these

positions, but I do object to our Australians working under foreigners. We should train our men to occupy the positions of boss, to be the supervisors, the engineers, and so forth. We should discontinue the policy of giving our men the pick and shovel and saying to them, "We have now done our job for you." We have not done our job for them. We shall not have done our job until we have built up our educational system and enabled our youths to become at least as good as the imported individual.

The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) referred to post-war questions. He did so in an eminently sensible manner. He said it was essential we should prepare for post-war conditions, and he gave the House some idea of the manner in which we should make preparations. I agree with him. He was quite correct in many of his statements. War time is the only time in which to make ready for post-war conditions. While the war is being fought every one is anxious to do something in connection with it. When, however, we wait until the war is over and peace has come again we find that nine out of every ten persons forget that there is such a thing as post-war rehabilitation. Those men who fought for us and have returned are soon forgotten, and no one seems to care what becomes of them. That sort of thing occurred in the last war and will occur again after the present war. While the war is in progress people are only too anxious to assist to their utmost, but when it is over they are ready to allow everything to go by the board.

Mr. McLarty: You know there is a good Returned Soldiers' League in existence.

Mr. TRIAT: I know that. Now is the time to make the necessary preparations. After the war it will be difficult to obtain money for everything. Everybody will be anxious to get all the interest that is forthcoming on capital. Money will not be flowing in peace time as it does in war time, and the millions that are being employed to-day will not be available. I trust that every effort will be made to arrange for post-war reconstruction during war time and that such a move will not be left until the war is over.

There is another matter concerning the preparations that are necessary for post-war reconstruction. Presumably everyone has read the comments that have been made by

foreign writers concerning the future possibilities of various countries when the war is over. They point out that the first essential in any country is not foodstuffs or money but the establishment and development of heavy industries. If a country can produce so many million tons of iron and steel for heavy industries, therein lies its wealth. In Western Australia we have iron ore as good as can be found in any part of the world. At Yampi Sound the iron ore is of very high grade, but from the point of view of exploitation has never yet been touched. The Commonwealth Government sabotaged every effort of Western Australian investors to open up that deposit.

The Minister for Mines: Possibly that was just as well in the light of present circumstances.

Mr. TRIAT: I thought so at the time, but do not think so to-day. I know that the Broken Hill Proprietary has been selling hundreds of thousands of tons of pig iron to Japan. I also understand that zinc was sent to Japan as late as two months ago. Some 8,000 tons of lead and 2,000 tons of steel were shipped on a Japanese vessel within the last six weeks.

Mr. Thorn: We ought to have been able to build our ships out of that.

Mr. TRIAT: No obstacle was placed in the way of exporting our pig iron from Australia to Japan in huge quantities until such time as the lumpers in New South Wales said, "We will not load it."

Mr. Mann: Very patriotic of them.

The Minister for Mines: They were penalised for so doing.

Mr. TRIAT: Their action did not, however, altogether prevent the export of that commodity. If it was good enough for the Commonwealth authorities to prevent the export of Yampi iron to Japan it was good enough for them to say to the Broken Hill Proprietary, "You are not going to send any more pig iron to Japan." Such action would have shown that they were sincere when they put a stop to the exploitation of the Yampi Sound iron deposits. But the Commonwealth Government was not sincere. It stopped the potential competitor at Yampi Sound and put that scheme out of action. That is why I am so bitterly opposed to the Commonwealth Government. As the member for Hannans (Mr. Leahy) said, that Government had colossal cheek in

imposing the gold tax on us. The Leader of the Opposition took up that statement and said it was wrong. I do not say it is colossal cheek: I say the Commonwealth Government is intentionally and deliberately attempting to sabotage the industrial expansion of Western Australia.

Mr. Doney: Are you sure on those points?

Mr. TRIAT: Yes. I shall prove it to the hon. member by a report of an interview with Mr. H. L. Brisbane, the President of the W.A. Chamber of Manufactures, who spoke upon the activities of the Commonwealth Government. His statement, in my opinion, definitely damns the Commonwealth Government so far as concerns its treatment of Western Australian industries. I personally do not know Mr. Brisbane, but he is a man of authority and must be thoroughly acquainted with figures dealing with Western Australian industries. The article I quote from appears in the "Daily News" of the 19th March, 1941, and is as follows:—

Western Australia overlooked in War Orders. During the last eighteen months of war my Chamber, being wholeheartedly behind the war effort, has done nothing to hinder the Federal Government in its huge task.

Such requests for consideration as we have made have been quiet and dignified; but these seem totally ineffective.

We thought that this State would receive equitable treatment, but even now when the first rush and excitement are over and there has been ample time for a balanced view of the position this is not the case.

During 1940 the number of hands employed in Australian factories increased by 9 per cent.

South Australia headed the list, employing 18 per cent. more people in industry, and Western Australia was last with a small decrease.

War industries during the last twelve months have made work for 48,000 extra hands, but 38,300 (approximately 4-5ths) of these have found jobs in Victoria or New South Wales.

Up to June, 1940, defence expenditure in Victoria had amounted to £10.18 per head of population and in Western Australia only to £3.71 per head.

That is interesting, as the statement compares the expenditure on work by the Commonwealth in Victoria with that in the other States. The expenditure in Victoria was £10.18 per head and in Western Australia £3.71 per head. Let us examine the figures a little more closely. The population of Victoria, according to the Year Book of December, 1940,—three months before this article was written—was 1,887,278. Multiplied by 10, that gives the expenditure as £18,872,780. The population of Western

Australia, according to the same Year Book, was 465,916. So that the war expenditure in this State at a little over £3 10s. per head, amounted to £1,723,809. That is what Western Australia received in comparison with the huge amount expended in Victoria. The Commonwealth Government took in taxation from Western Australia more than it expended in war industries in this State during that period. As the member for Hannans (Mr. Leahy) said, the Commonwealth Government took from this State £1,000,000 alone in gold taxation. What did we get in return? The sum of £1,700,000! I say that is ridiculous, and it is time we woke up and took notice. That, however, is the position. Mr. Brisbane proceeded—

Allocations for the current period would make the figures £27.74 per head for Victoria and £14.72 per head here.

Those were the latest figures he could obtain. He continued—

Western Australians are contributing on a similar basis to people in the east in all taxes. Perhaps they are showing greater generosity in enlistments, war savings, war loans, troop entertainment, Red Cross, etc.

That is definitely proved by our enlistments, which are higher than are the enlistments in any other State. If one takes up an Eastern States newspaper, one cannot even find in it a Western Australian casualty list. During the six weeks I was in the Eastern States I saw no mention of Western Australia in the Press. Apparently it is unknown. Later, some dignified statesman or renowned explorer will discover Western Australia and then it will be put on the map; that is, if the Japanese do not discover it first. Mr. Brisbane remarked upon another matter to which I would draw the attention of members. He remarked upon how free Western Australia had been of strikes. This is what he said—

Employees here have been all out in support of the war effort, doing their jobs thoroughly and speedily, without industrial unrest of any kind.

This is a statement by a man who in politics is opposed to the Government, yet is truthful enough to give the facts. I believe Mr. Brisbane was proud when he made that statement and I am proud to repeat it. There has not been since the outbreak of war one stoppage of work in Western Australia. Mr. Brisbane proceeds—

Surely this fine record should be taken into account. We have caused less anxiety to the

Federal Government than any other State, our reward is least.

Strong words from a man who does not believe in the Labour Party! He represents the business interests of Western Australia, and said that Western Australia had done more for and got least from the Commonwealth Government. He continued—

My Chamber agrees that in some instances it is essential for work to be carried out close to the source of raw materials and where suitable industries are already highly organised. Now, however, we find that Queensland is to have a munitions factory, basic materials for which must be sent from New South Wales and then returned over the same ground on the way to theatres of war as finished products. Surely it would be more economical and sensible to establish a plant here, thousands of miles closer to where its products would be needed. As things are, even many of the every-day requirements of military camps in W.A. are imported.

The President of the W.A. Chamber of Manufactures stated exactly what I have told the House, that many of the goods consumed at the military camps were imported from the Eastern States. I will go further and say that many of those goods could have been manufactured in Western Australia. However, Western Australian goods are not wanted. Why? They are equal to any that can be obtained elsewhere, but the financial interests of the Eastern States will not permit the Commonwealth Government to allow them to lose this market and let Western Australia take over the feeding of the troops here. I shall quote further from this reliable authority, who went on to say:—

This is wrong in principle and from an economic point of view. Our manufacturers should at least be given the quotas required for local consumption.

Of course they should be, but the Commonwealth Government denied them the opportunity. Mr. Brisbane proceeded:—

There were 21,000 more factory workers in Victoria at the end of 1940, than there were at its beginning. In N.S.W. the increase was 17,000; in South Australia, 7,800; in Queensland, 1,600; in Tasmania, 800. In Western Australia 100 people had to go to other States, or find work outside secondary industry. Victoria gained 12,000 in population, of whom 2,000, mostly skilled workers, were from Western Australia.

I did not know that that was a fact, but Mr. Brisbane has delved deeper into the figures than I have, and he says that 2,000 men left Western Australia to find work in Victoria. Does that make Western Australia richer?

Does it fortify this State and equip us for our efforts when the war is over? Of course it does not. This State has been put in a rotten position; we are dependent upon goods manufactured in the Eastern States which we might be able to produce here. What are we to do with our returned men if we cannot find them work? We cannot train our young men to do the work in time. It is scandalous to think that the Commonwealth Government has permitted this state of affairs to arise here. Mr. Brisbane proceeded:—

My Chamber is reluctant to worry the Federal Government in its effort to make Australia's contribution to the Empire's war effort a really worthy one. But such facts and figures speak for themselves. If we sit idly by we will see the efforts made over so many years to expand Western Australian industry rendered useless, and the State reduced to poverty.

That is Mr. Brisbane's concluding remark. I regret that I have had to bring these matters to the notice of members. I also regret that we have permitted ourselves to get into such a state, but we did so because we were too honourable to run counter to the Commonwealth Government in war time. That Government has taken advantage of us and put us in a position where we cannot hold up our head. We cannot now undertake manufactures unless we import labour to do the work. That position should not be tolerated, and I hope the House will take every step possible to prevent a repetition of such treatment and ensure that we shall receive recognition by the Commonwealth Government. We should make certain that the proposed munition works will not take nine months to complete. We should ensure that our deposits of minerals and metals are worked. I was never a secessionist; I do not believe in secession. We are better tied up to the Commonwealth Government, but I regret that our many years' experience of Federation is such that my views on Federation are undergoing a change. Unless we get a better deal from the Commonwealth, we will have to do something drastic, even to the extent of breaking away from Federation. However, we would not do any good if we seceded. We have every known mineral and metal required in the manufacture of high-grade steel. We have tantalite, wolfram and manganese.

We have all the necessary requirements to build up heavy industries in Western Australia and we should start to found them now in order to prepare for our post-war efforts. People say we have not got the right coal. I do not know how much coal we have at Collie, but is coal the only method by which iron can be obtained from ore? In many countries coal is not used for that purpose. The iron is obtained by hydro-electric and other means; coal is an unknown quantity in some countries in that respect. The modern way of obtaining iron from ore to-day is by electric furnaces. Surely, if iron ore can be exported from Iron Knob to Newcastle hundreds of miles by sea, it ought to be possible for us to transport coal from Collie to where it is required. If we build up heavy industries, we shall be able to produce sufficient wealth in this State to take our place with the other States in solving our post-war problems.

I said a few minutes ago that I went to the Eastern States for two reasons. One was to visit Queensland, where I was born, and the other to inspect the big industries in the Eastern States. After travelling through North Queensland I went to Brisbane and inspected the industries about which I spoke a few moments ago. I then spent four days in Newcastle and inspected the heavy industries there, making several inquiries. I was agreeably surprised to find Newcastle so busy; it certainly is a boom town. There was no one out of work; the men were working seven days a week, three shifts a day, as many hours as they could possibly put in. On the payroll of the Newcastle Steelworks were 7,543 men, and that concern and many other undertakings were willing to absorb all the men available. Employees were asked to work seven days a week, and overtime was paid everywhere. Ships were being launched at various places. In Queensland three 2,000-ton iron steamers were launched in the river and at Cockatoo Island in New South Wales, two large boats had already been built and launched, and an even larger one was on the stocks. Throughout the Eastern States there was intense activity. When I went further south, I found it impossible to inspect the munition works unless I was furnished with a permit. When I tried to visit some, I was confronted by

men in military uniform who prohibited persons from going on to the properties unless they were armed with the necessary order. Hundreds of thousands of people were working in these undertakings and I saw rows and rows of bicycles hanging up. Three shifts were the order of the day. In South Australia I was more fortunate and was able to inspect Holden's and other munition works. Progress and prosperity were evident in the Eastern States. What I saw made one thing clear to me, and that was the truth of the old saying, "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." Certainly all the indications go to prove the truth of that quotation. In fact, it is hardly possible to compare conditions there with those that obtain here; they will not bear comparison. It is necessary to see what is going on to appreciate how prosperity can reign with poverty almost alongside.

The Commonwealth Government is seeking copper supplies. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Rodoreda) has dealt with that phase, and spoke about the Whim Creek proposition. That centre is in the North-West, and right through from there to Ravensthorpe copper occurs in dozens of places. It is present at Whim Creek, Bald Hill, down to Northampton and on to Ravensthorpe, with many small shows between those points. Notwithstanding that fact, we have not a single copper mine operating in Western Australia to-day.

Mr. Raphael: You can get copper at Gingin.

Mr. TRIAT: I do not know about that, but apparently the Commonwealth Government considers there is a copper shortage in Australia. In this House we have stressed the copper deposits that can be worked in this State alone. The member for Roebourne also dealt with the asbestos position. That mineral occurs in various parts of the North-West, and is to be found in Marble Bar as well as in the Hamersley Ranges. That it occurs there and elsewhere has been known for many years. Western Australian asbestos is of a higher grade than that obtainable anywhere else in the world, notwithstanding which not a ton of it can be sold in the Commonwealth. The explanation advanced is that the asbestos is of too high a grade and is too expensive. In consequence, manufacturers import their requirements from over-

seas. The Commonwealth Government has permitted imports from South Africa to take the place of supplies that should be obtained from this State. The actual quantity available in the Hamersley Ranges alone is unknown, although it has been quoted at millions of tons. At any rate, the deposits are there for anyone to view. Asbestos is worth up to £70 a ton. Despite all this, the deposits are lying idle. Certainly one or two prospectors are out, but nothing substantial is being done; yet the Commonwealth Government permit South African asbestos to be imported, to the detriment of Western Australian.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do you suggest that private enterprise is unable to undertake the development of the deposits?

Mr. TRIAT: I suggest that the Commonwealth Government should place an embargo upon the importation of overseas asbestos. Private enterprise has not embarked upon the undertaking.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is terrible to think that we cannot use our own deposits.

Mr. TRIAT: One explanation is that the competition from other countries is too keen, and manufacturers are prepared to purchase the cheaper line in preference to the high-grade asbestos procurable in Western Australia. I shall not say any more on this question at this stage. I feel I have expressed my opinions strongly enough already, and I shall not weary members. There is much more that I could say, but I have contented myself with stating the known facts. From time to time we hear it said that the Government is at fault.

Hon. C. G. Latham: If you were sitting on this side of the House you would say so.

Mr. TRIAT: I could not say so truthfully; and I do not wish to depart from the truth. If the Western Australian Government had at its disposal money that the Commonwealth Government could enable it to spend, I could understand the criticism. On the other hand, our Premier has gone to the Eastern States and has found that he could not get all the money he required. The Commonwealth Government explained that additional funds were required to prosecute the war effort. I have no objection to that, but seeing that we have supplies necessary for the war effort in this State, why cannot the Commonwealth Government spend more money here in prosecuting war work? The Commonwealth requires copper, asbestos, alu-

minium and foodstuffs, and yet it procures its supplies in the Eastern States and not in Western Australia. The Commonwealth is prepared to take our men, but it gives us nothing in return. I trust that every member of this Chamber will voice resentment against the attitude of the Commonwealth Government so long as it persists in neglecting the resources of this State. I have read a statement made recently by the president of the Chamber of Manufactures, and I certainly support his expression of opinion. If we endeavour to foster our local industries, then when post-war problems arise we shall be in a better position to meet the demands made upon us. Those demands will come not only from those who return from overseas but from those already within Australia. The people will require employment. When the war ceases, all war activities will terminate, and there will be a surplus on our markets requiring employment. If we make provision now, Western Australia will not be in the doldrums. Should we fail to do so, we shall be confronted with the effects of a depression much worse than that experienced in recent years.

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [8.7]: I was sorry to note inadequate references in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech to post-war reconstruction. In common with the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Triat), I have had the educational experience of some weeks spent in visiting the munition industries in the Eastern States. The problem of winning the war is only secondary to that of winning the peace, especially in Australia. In my opinion, Australia—this applies to members of this House as well—should be busy in the formation of committees to deal with various problems that will arise, and in furtherance of that we should forget all party differences. It can be said that in this Parliament members have some expert or intimate knowledge of most of the State's industries. Our problem, as a Parliament, should be that of preparing for post-war reconstruction. Obviously, the duty falls upon the Commonwealth Government to carry on the war, but it also entails attending to the safety of the people of Australia and of the Commonwealth itself. It remains for State Parliaments and State Governments to pay attention to the problem of reconstructing the social fabric when the war drums beat no longer. In that respect,

I do not find myself quite in agreement with the member for Mt. Magnet respecting his prophesy that the war will be concluded in nine months. I wish I could agree with him. When we find in America that great man, President Roosevelt, is dinning into the people of that nation that they must be prepared for war extending into the future as far as 1945, and bearing in mind that the British Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, has repeatedly warned us that the war effort is just beginning, I am afraid that the optimism indicated by the hon. member must be described as wishful thinking. We all hope he is correct in his estimate.

The past financial year ended with a surplus of £11,111. That result is not altogether creditable to the Government. When one remembers the enormous amount received by the Government from direct taxation, it is really a financial miracle that the surplus was not scores of times as much as it was. In the course of a statement commenting upon the June surplus, the Premier admitted that £137,000 more had been received during that month as direct taxation compared with the return for June of the previous financial year.

The Minister for Mines: There is always a hang-over at the end of the financial year.

Mr. BOYLE: In view of the enormous increase in direct taxation, the problem that strikes me is: "Where has the money gone?" This increased direct taxation has not by any means abolished deficits in this State. Since 1933-34 we have had a succession of tremendous deficits.

The Minister for Mines: You can go further back than that.

Mr. BOYLE: Yes, but I am dealing with the period from 1933 onwards, because my complaint against the Government is that notwithstanding the immense sums received by it through direct taxation the State ledger cannot yet be balanced. During the depression years, when the previous Government was in power, the deficit reached as much as £1,584,000.

The Deputy Premier: It would have been over £2,000,000 under a proper system of accounting.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We utilised the same system as you have.

The Deputy Premier: Not at all.

Mr. BOYLE: I am dealing with the record of the present Government. Details of past history may be interesting as between those sitting on the Treasury and front Opposition benches, but they do not interest me.

The Deputy Premier: I assure you that requests to the Treasurer to spend money are still very persistent, and you are among those who persist.

Mr. BOYLE: I would be sadly lacking in my duty to my constituents were I not foremost in that respect. I admit I have received fair treatment from the Government—not unduly fair, but only so to the extent that my constituents deserve. I represent a district whose products are mostly wheat and wool. The Deputy Premier will admit that those are the two products upon which the State Government depends for its revenue.

The Minister for Lands: No, the State gets its income from them.

Mr. BOYLE: Yes, and it derives prerequisites, too, in the way of charges for transport, handling and so forth. I need not apologise to the Government in those circumstances for occasionally asking for a water supply or some other requirement to enable the constituency I represent to carry on its work. I am speaking on a broader issue than that. In direct taxation during 1933-34, the first year this Government was in office—there was collected £1,193,912.

Mr. Cross: We had to pay a lot of the Mitchell Government's debts.

Opposition Members: Oh!

Mr. BOYLE: In 1934-35 the amount of £1,193,912 rose to £1,704,309, an increase during one year of £510,397. I am quoting from the report of the Commissioner of Taxation. During 1935-36 direct taxation produced £1,947,883, showing an increase on the previous year of £243,576. In 1936-37 the Government had got another £259,361 in direct taxation, because the figure now reads £2,207,244. In 1937-38 it got a further £162,992, bringing that year's income of the State from direct taxation to £2,370,236. The further increase in direct taxation for 1938-39 was £267,966, raising the total to £2,638,202. Yet a further increase of £153,761 brought the amount of revenue from direct taxation in 1939-40 to £2,791,963.

Mr. Withers: Does the hon. member believe that the electors are going to read all those figures?

Mr. BOYLE: No; I am trying to enlighten the hon. member interjecting. What I am coming at by degrees is the fact that at the last election the Government's cry was the abolition of the financial emergency tax. "Labour will abolish the financial emergency tax!" After listening to the Deputy Premier's explanation that Labour did not mean anything of the sort, but that Labour simply meant to abolish the term "financial emergency tax"—

The Deputy Premier: Tell your own story. Never mind what I said. I did not say anything of the sort.

Mr. BOYLE: The hon. gentleman has attempted to correct me in this Chamber before over the same statement. In my electorate, and in other electorates contested by Labour candidates, banner lines appeared across the papers "Labour will abolish the financial emergency tax. (Signed) P. J. Trainer, Campaign Director, Beaufort-street, Perth." After listening to the member for Roebourne (Mr. Rodoreda) and the Deputy Premier I am of opinion that we misjudged the Government. I think the electors and the members concerned were quite wrong. I do not believe the Government meant to do anything like abolishing the financial emergency tax. I think it was Mr. Trainer made that statement. I cannot now, in view of the fact that taxation has increased to such an extent, and that the Government is now talking about an equitable incidence of taxation under which children are allowed for, doubt that the Government thought otherwise. I quite agree with the Government. I consider that is a proper point.

Mr. Cross: Are you opposed to what has been done?

Hon. C. G. Latham: Take no notice of him!

Mr. BOYLE: But when the member for Roebourne (Mr. Rodoreda) to-night, in the course of a very fine speech, challenged the House to refuse to accept his statement that people in receipt of incomes of £300 a year with two or three children were better off now, he was only stating a half-taxation truth, because the fact remains that the man in receipt of £300 a year is more heavily taxed now than he was before.

The Minister for Mines: That man does not pay anything.

Mr. BOYLE: In 1939 the tax on an income of £300 was £9 13s. In 1940 that tax had increased by £5 7s., to £15. In 1939

the tax payable on an income of £600 was £33 10s. In 1940 there was an increase of only £4 on it, a total of £37 10s.

Mr. Withers: What about the financial emergency tax?

Mr. BOYLE: Let the hon. member interjecting read the report of the Commissioner of Taxation, and he will learn. Where is the money coming from?

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BOYLE: I ask the Minister where is the increased amount of taxation coming from? From the pockets of the people?

Mr. Rodoreda: It comes from the totalisator.

Mr. BOYLE: The Deputy Premier of course realises that this chicken will come home to roost very shortly, and I quite understand his perturbation when it is mentioned. The member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Triat) has referred to the fact that it is impossible to commence secondary industries in Western Australia. From observation, and although I say for the Minister for Industrial Development that he is doing his job very well indeed, if within a very limited compass, I am bound to say that few results have been achieved. The Minister finds, as we found before the hon. gentlemen came to grace Western Australia with his presence, what the position is regarding the establishment of secondary industries. We could then have explained all that business to him. It is my fixed opinion, and the opinion of all those who fought for the secession of Western Australia, that while the relationship between this State and the Eastern States remains as it is, we shall never establish secondary industries here. I regret to find, after hearing the finest speech I have heard delivered in this House by the member for Mt. Magnet, that he still remains in and supports the party which favours unification, favours handing over the whole of the Australian States to a unified Government in Canberra, which will be controlled by Sydney and Melbourne, as is the case to-day.

The Deputy Premier: Are you still in favour of secession?

Mr. BOYLE: Certainly I am

The Deputy Premier: What would it result in now?

Mr. BOYLE: It is all very well for the Deputy Premier to make that interjection.

I, with others, dropped secession when the war broke out.

Mr. Needham: You are supporting the party of unification of the purse.

Mr. BOYLE: No.

Mr. Needham: Yes, you are.

Mr. BOYLE: Whence does the hon. member derive the idea that I support all those things? There is no member more critical than myself of many of the things that are happening now. We must reconstruct our primary industries. We can do that. What has this Government done towards the reconstruction of our primary industries? We have nothing left to us but our primary industries—our great primary industries, true. Those are the industries which to-day keep Western Australia going.

Mr. Cross: They are very costly, too.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I must ask the member for Canning to keep order.

Mr. BOYLE: They are costly to those engaged in them. They have cost many of those men many years of their lives, and frequently all they have put into them. But the Government of Western Australia could to-day be actively engaged in reconstructing the primary industries of Western Australia. In the East I found that reconstruction was proceeding apace. New South Wales passed a Rural Reconstruction Act in 1939, and is busy on the work of reconstruction now. Within the past two days I was in Southern Cross, the place where I organised the farmers ten years ago, a place that I know well; and the member for Hannans (Mr. Leahy) also knows it well, and is aware that I organised the farmers in the whole of that area. To-day there are no farmers there to organise. Out of about 280 farmers, there are only 86 left. I do not think the old ideas of farming there should be continued, but there is any amount of scope for retaining at least 40 or 50 per cent. of that area. At a siding called Wheatley, where there were 40 farmers ten years ago, there are none at all to-day. There is talk of a policy of the "Scorched Earth." It is there, due to mal-administration and want of foresight. From day to day we have these perplexities, and we shall have them as long as we have land settlement. But why sit down under them? Why let 220 old farmers vacate their lands without an effort on our part to keep them there?

The Deputy Premier: Did your Government discourage them from going there?

Mr. BOYLE: Did the Deputy Premier's Government?

The Deputy Premier: The manager of the Agricultural Bank did.

Mr. BOYLE: It is no use talking about what officials did. It is Governments that are at fault, not officials. It is Ministers we look to, and the party supporting them that we look to; and I never thought that I would see in Western Australia an exemplification of "Scorched Earth."

Mr. Rodoreda: The Government cannot make it rain there.

Mr. BOYLE: The Government is not asked to do that. In today's "West Australian" it is reported that a deputation of farmers from those districts intends shortly to put up a proposal to the Minister for Lands. Our reconstruction efforts, what are they? We are told that a marginal area scheme is to be brought in. Now I wish to read a copy of a letter which the Minister for Lands has received. It is typical of many letters that have reached me. Apparently the main argument put up against them is that we are the agitators, we members on these benches; and the Minister generally concludes by saying that things are working smoothly. Near Southern Cross 228 men will not make any more complaints; those men are gone. The letter to the Minister for Lands explains the position pretty well. In fact, it is a shocking indictment of the Government's policy to-day. The writer is a man named Angus Brenton, and his letter is dated the 7th August:—

Drought relief: I wish to draw your attention to the above in connection with an application that was lodged by me. I beg that you direct that further favourable consideration be given to same as a bona fide Wheat Grower's right under Commonwealth law enacted for drought-affected settlers, and on the facts herein stated that such reconsideration is not an act of grace, and the position is contrary to reply received from the district office, that it was refused as it was not considered a business proposition.

First: I hold Locations Avon 19120-21 and 25140 containing about 1,500 acres and on which I have permanently resided and worked over a period of 14 years. This property is mortgaged to Mrs. Francis first mortgage, and the Bank of New South Wales as second mortgage, i.e. £500 and £400 respectively, and is owing exclusive of overdue interests.

A wire-netting debt for five miles netting exists, approximately £250 on this property.

The following improvements exist:—

Cleared 650 acres first-class wheat lands at 30s., all cultivated ..	£925
Five miles rabbit netting and other fences	550
Wells	75
Dam, 2,000 yards	150
House	25
Sheds	150
Bores on which no wells yet sunk	250
Part clearing	50
	<hr/>
	£2,175

Plant:—

Oil tractor, Case tractor, all full plant of machinery	750
Tanks, tools, etc.	25
	<hr/>
	£2,950

Second: Avon Location 25177 containing 2,505 acres, has 300 acres of first-class heavy land cleared, costing £450. Wholly unencumbered.

Third: Location 19113 containing 971 acres, has 300 acres first-class wheat land cleared and fallowed, costing £350. Lease wholly unencumbered, this location had the fallow on, consequently was all signed over in every particular as required by district office for security of any advance to me.

This land is entirely a marginal area proposition and should be classed as such, and if Agricultural Bank money had been sunk in the place, as those not many miles away to the east, these lands would in all possibility be designated as such.

As a security value the place has carried every year till the drought, 600 sheep and in past good years for wheat-grown crops averaging 5-6 bags.

I am one of the only two not known as official Agricultural Bank clients (in this district) and I am sure that as the Hon. Minister controlling such, it is not your wish that any relief given to Agricultural Bank or Associated Bank clients be debarrd from me receiving such (who is not one of the either referred to). The original settlers on some of the adjacent locations have cleared out, their places being reduced on mortgage, and again selected, and now they are receiving further Commonwealth money at reduced rate; some of the blocks are still vacant at reduced mortgage. I think I was the only person who paid the Agricultural Bank dues last year and asked for no refund, while others have received sustenance from the Government monthly, yet I am refused my just right.

Summarised on above figures the position is:

Lot No. 1: Assets	£2,950
Lot No. 2: Assets	450
Lot No. 3: Assets	350
	<hr/>
	£3,650

which leave a margin of equity over £2,500.

All plant and equipment are clear of stock and station mortgage or other lien, exclusive of F.D.A. advance.

I think I have put forward enough informa-

tion to prove that if I had been granted the relief required to crop the area intended as nearly enough super was on the ground, my position would, without any crop, be sounder than a number now receiving their assistance. I might state unless I get some assistance I will have to get work in town but intend to still persevere with the place, and ask from you a reconsideration and claim the same right as any drought-affected wheat grower throughout Australia.

I know Mr. Brenton. He is a good farmer and has been there for 14 years. Yet three unencumbered blocks in his farm were not considered good enough by the Government for drought relief advances. Those blocks are south of Merredin and are in a good position, but something should be done as regards the marginal area. Today Mr. Brenton is walking round Perth; his farm is abandoned. All his work has been in vain, and close upon £4,000 has been sunk and has gone for ever. The Government must be bankrupt in initiative or lack control of its department to allow that sort of thing. One wonders whether the trouble was that Mr. Brenton did not owe enough money. The fact that he had unencumbered land should have been some inducement for the Government to help him.

Let us examine the position as regards drought relief in this State in the past year. When the calamitous drought hit Western Australia we were facing the worst year since 1914. The Commonwealth Government, against which so much has been said tonight, found for wheatgrowers of Australia as a free gift somewhere in the vicinity of £1,000,000. Our share was about £200,000. Loan moneys to the extent of £570,000 were advanced to the State, making a total of £770,000, or over three-quarters of a million pounds. We on this side of the House suggested to the Government that a new Act should be passed to deal with the position. We were told by the Premier that there would be no differentiation between Agricultural Bank and Associated Bank clients. We were informed that the arrangements for the money would be helpful to the farmer. For the first year no interest would be charged, and thereafter interest would be charged at a decreasing rate over definite periods. The free money would be distributed. Now in Mr. Brenton we have an instance in which no relief money was made available. I understand that in May he received a sum

of money to deal with agricultural requirements when the seeding season was over. I saw an article in the "Worker" of the 29th July in which the Minister stated:—

It was impossible to ignore financial obligations and necessary, therefore, to obtain reasonable security for repayment of drought relief advances; otherwise much of the money so advanced would become irrecoverable and the mortgagees in each case (private banks and financial institutions) would have benefited at the expense of the taxpayers of the State who would have to finally "foot the bill."

Further, after referring to the Government's refusal to introduce moratorium legislation which we had asked for, the Minister added:—

The Government therefore dealt with the position as they found it and the gigantic task of dealing with several thousands of drought-affected cases has proceeded smoothly and with few complaints.

An analysis of the Minister's statement may not be out of place. We importuned the Government. We waited on it by deputation and asked that moratorium relief should be given. Not only was that refused but the Government also engaged in a first-class argument with the banks and the financial institutions in Perth. In certain circumstances I would not mind that. I would rather commend the Government for indulging in an argument with the financial institutions if it were in a good cause. In those circumstances the Government would not find a greater supporter than I. But when the Government is in a competitive relationship to the banks the position is entirely different. Was the argument for the good of the farmer? Was it to ensure that the farmer might carry on? It was nothing of the sort. It was competition as to who was to have the first mortgage.

The Minister for Lands: That is a lie.

Mr. BOYLE: It is not a lie.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, it is.

Mr. BOYLE: I do not know whether such a statement is allowed. I take it that I am being charged with telling an untruth, but I am doing nothing of the sort, because the Government demanded instead of a crop lien as security a mortgage security on the land prior to any other mortgage. The banks refused to give it. After an interminable wrangle during which Country Party members were deluged with complaints and men walked off their land, the Government compromised with the bank and receded from the first mortgage position. The Government of Western Australia was the

only Government in the Commonwealth which demanded from the farmer a first land mortgage proposition. I will read from the South Australian Act, which is a typical Eastern States Act. Section 6 of the South Australian Drought Relief Act, 1940, assented to on the 24th October, states:—

For the purpose of giving security for any loan made under this Act a farmer may, by bill of sale, assign to the Treasurer any crops to be grown by him within the State for a period not exceeding five years.

Section 7 sets out that no stamp duty, and no fee shall be payable by the farmer for the registration of any document. That is what we asked the Government to do. We asked the Government to accept a crop lien instead of demanding a first mortgage prior to existing mortgages for a minor debt. We will assume a bank was owed £5,000 by a farmer and the Government's loan to him was £500. The bank was asked to place that £500 in a prior order to its £5,000. That is not the worst feature because the Government amended the Industries Assistance Act which made it obligatory, where advances are made, for the Government to control and receive all the proceeds of the farm in satisfaction of a particular claim. That was a position that could not be sustained. Had the Government fought the banks over a reduction of secured debts or something of that sort, it would have found me willingly behind it. None of these demands were imposed upon wheatgrowers in any other part of Australia.

A good deal of pessimistic talk has been indulged in, with which I do not agree regarding the future of the agricultural industry of Western Australia. At a conference of primary producers held here, a suggestion was made to put three acres out of four out of wheat cultivation, and to pay so much per acre compensation. That is a policy of despair, and as farming is a continuous operation it will be a policy of chaos as well. I agree that certain areas should be put out of wheat production altogether—those in Southern Cross to which I have referred and others in the eastern areas—but to suggest the non-cultivation of land because we are engaged in a war which has damaged our shipping, is a policy of despair. To talk calmly of laying aside about 50 per cent. of our wheat lands is folly. We are now cultivating about 2,700,000 acres a year, and it is calmly

proposed to reduce that amount by nearly a million acres. There is no occasion for it as is obvious to those who read as they run. After the war is over—and I hope it will be in nine months as the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Triat) suggested—there will be a tremendous demand in Europe for our food-stuffs and for reconstruction materials. Mr. Anthony Eden recently pointed out that—

Germany and the other European nations must never be permitted to starve and thus become poison spots in the European and economic system. Food and commodity credits will be found for them.

That is the only sane and statesmanlike way to attack that problem. The living standards of the farmer are not what we would like them to be. No attempt has been made to make them comparable with other living standards in the community. We have the spectacle of a farmer and his wife being paid by the Agricultural Bank 4s. 1d. a day sustenance. That is 28s. 6d. a week or £6 a month. A man and his wife are expected to be respectable, clothe themselves and send their children to school all for 4s. 1d. a day! Yet when I stand here to place these facts before members, the Minister for Lands says I am still harping on the same tune and that I should change the tuning fork. I assure him I will do nothing of the kind so long as some of the people I represent are living at the rate of 4s. 1d. a day for a man and his wife. There have been four basic wage increases since then which have automatically reduced that 4s. 1d. a day by four stages. If the increase in the basic wage does not extend to all sections of the community, it becomes an automatic reduction of the living standard of others. Therefore the 4s. 1d. a day that the Government gives in sustenance has suffered four decreases—one with every rise of the basic wage. Yet the Minister tells me that I should change my tune. I am afraid I have been through too much and seen too much misery and squalor and desolation in the farming areas to harp on any other tune, and I will continue to bring before the House the fact that a Labour Government in Western Australia is allowing only £6 a month for a man and his wife and 10s. a month for each child under 16 but with a limit on the number. Fancy any Government in Australia imposing a limit on the number in a family! Three pounds ten shillings a month! Four-

pence halfpenny per day! In the country this is known as "weeties money." To the people in the wheat belt who are trying to bring up a family, a man and wife struggling under the adverse conditions that prevail there, 4s. 1d. per day is seemingly good enough. Even this is no gift. It is repayable under the Industries Assistance Act plus 5 per cent. interest. Thus it is merely a loan.

If a man leaves his farm and seeks refuge and solace elsewhere the debt pursues him. I know of a man who was driven off his farm and went to the goldfields and made good there. He was farming north of Southern Cross. He had not borrowed from the Agricultural Bank, but he had taken over a debt of £1,500, as many other people have done. In despair he left his farm and found conditions on the goldfields good. He became interested in a payable mining show, but the Government pursued him with a Supreme Court writ and he had to consent to judgment for £1,500 and costs. Although the Government had the farm and the machinery, it relentlessly pursued him and secured judgment for the recovery of the £1,500. I am ashamed to have to relate these things, but they are true. The Minister for Lands said I was not telling the truth. Well, the Minister will now have an opportunity to give the facts.

The proposal for the building of ships in Western Australia will have my hearty support. I do not think that any other member of the House knows more of the early days of the shipbuilding industry in this State than I do. I am a native of Fremantle and my brother, who was a shipwright, served his time in the trade at Fremantle. I know it is possible to build ships there; small vessels have been built. I do not know whether the Western Australian War Industries Committee, which is commendably doing its best, is aware that those ships were built exclusively of kauri pine from New Zealand. The frames were constructed of jarrah, but I do not know whether jarrah is suitable for planking. I have seen shed after shed, probably 10 or 12, on the South Beach at Fremantle with boat slips.

Mr. Berry: Ships can be built of jarrah.

Mr. BOYLE: I hope that is so.

Mr. Berry: It is so.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I understand that some kauri must be used.

Mr. BOYLE: Kauri is not available nowadays. The point I wish to make for the information of those supporting the ship-building project is that the fine ships that came out of Fremantle in the early days were built of New Zealand kauri pine. The "King Bay," I understand, has been built of jarrah. Another point in favour of the building of small ships locally is that internal combustion engines are now available to propel them and they no longer have to depend upon sails and wind. Much of our produce, sandalwood, etc., has been forwarded to China and Hong Kong in schooners built in Western Australia. I remember some of those vessels distinctly. Similar vessels could be built to-day. If I can help the committee to further this project, I shall be only too willing to do so.

Much has been said by the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Triat) of the difficulty of securing money from the Eastern States to spend in Western Australia for the manufacture of munitions. I feel rather venturesome in offering a word of praise of a Minister in the present Commonwealth Cabinet, but I must say that the Minister for Munitions, Senator McBride, made my investigations very easy for me, so much so that in my district I was able to establish, at Merredin, a war annex that will be turning out, within six or eight weeks, between 300 and 400 Bren gun carrier wheels a month.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You helped to work up that industry. These other fellows only talk.

Mr. BOYLE: I am looking at the Minister for Industrial Development and I must say that I have yet to find any lack of sympathy in that quarter. I feel sorry for the Minister, who has an almost impossible job. Whoever holds that office will find himself confronted with difficulties owing to the attitude of the Eastern States. Thanks to the Munitions Area Engineer Controller in this State, Mr. Hallam, we have had Kellerberrin and Merredin declared as war annexes. Merredin will be employing between 25 and 30 men in turning out Bren gun carrier wheels and will be distributing about £200 in wages weekly. I thank the Commonwealth Government for

that. The question of producing power alcohol from wheat is not so simple as it looks, but one thing we can do is to mobilise every machine and every lathe we have to undertake war work. Our excellent promotional engineer, Mr. Fernie, is a tower of strength to his Minister, and I am pleased to pay this tribute to him. I have known him since he was a boy and have always found him ready to give sympathetic consideration to any project. With his assistance it is possible to get somewhere.

I hope the Government will take into immediate consideration the need for reconstruction of the agricultural industry. The wheatgrowing side is in a state of chaos. We should not overlook the value of wheat to Australia. For years it was worth £25,000,000 annually to the Commonwealth for the payment of oversea interest and services. I hope that our almost total reliance on the gold mining industry will not be misplaced. We all trust that the gold mining industry will continue for many years; it has saved the State on two occasions to my knowledge. Still, my ideas have been combated by the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith), but who knows that after the war gold may not lose its value? In my opinion the values after the war will be commodity values—manufactured goods and agricultural products that may be exchanged between the various Governments of the world. I would like to see the Government take active steps to put the industry on a proper footing. A humanitarian Government—and every Government claims to be that—would see to the welfare of the people in the industry.

The Minister for Mines: That is being done.

Mr. BOYLE: How can the Minister say that in view of the figures I have mentioned?

The Minister for Mines: I thought you were speaking about gold mining.

Mr. BOYLE: Not now. In the gold mining industry the standard of living is high, as it should be. I impress on the Government that farmers and their wives will not remain in the agricultural industry on the present basis. It is time the Government lifted them off the dole. Now is the opportunity to do so. We have a guarantee of 3s. 11d. per bushel for 140,000,000 bushels of wheat. The storing of wheat, whatever the difficulty, must be persisted in. During

the 1914-18 war we stored millions of bushels of wheat and lost millions of bushels, but it was not altogether an economic loss. I urge upon the Government the need for bringing the agriculturists of the State to a reasonable standard of living and profitable expectation for the future.

On motion by Mr. J. H. Smith, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.57 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 13th August, 1941.

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. V. PIESSE (South-East) [4.33]: At the outset, I desire to congratulate Acting Wing Commander H. J. Edwards, D.F.C., upon his winning the Victoria Cross. That is a great honour to the Forces from Western Australia. I desire also to commend our worthy Mr. Fraser for the attitude he is adopting towards the war. We shall all be proud of the work that he will do, and we hope he will return at an early date. We cannot help but be proud of the Prime Minister of Australia, who lately has travelled the length and breadth of the Empire and placed Australia's case before the people. It seems unfortunate that he should be continually attacked by people who really are in a position to know better and ought not to be interfering with Australia's war effort. The Prime Minister's appointment of Parliamentary committees will be of great assistance to the war effort.

I regret that our own Government did not take steps to co-opt members of Parliament on similar committees here, as I feel they would be able to do much good work in that capacity, particularly country members who are connected with patriotic efforts and with bodies endeavouring to establish munition works here. The assistance of country members is being directed to the retention of our primary producers on the land during the war. We can have nothing but admiration and praise for the way in which Britishers are taking the war; but I have often studied people in this State whose sons have gone oversea and are missing. The parents do not know whether the sons are prisoners, whether they are casualties or whether they have paid the supreme sacrifice. The strain upon the parents must be very great indeed, and my heart goes out to them. I know of many who two or three months ago had news that their loved ones were missing and so far have not had further word of them.

Referring to the Lieut.-Governor's Speech, I desire to touch upon the wheat position. I was interested to hear Mr. Wood speak on this subject and also to hear Mr. Bolton's references to the Railway Department. I am not one of those who consider that Mr. Bolton is no friend of the farmer. On many occasions both he and Mr. Dimmitt have in this House done their best to assist the farmer.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Mr. Bolton is a farmer.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Of course. Legislation introduced into this Chamber to benefit the farming community has not always received the support of Mr. Bolton, but he has given his reasons for not supporting it. He has, however, always given the farmer a fair deal. I have been a member of this Chamber for the past eight years and have always expected to hear severe criticism of the Government by my friend, but on this occasion everything in the garden appears to be lovely. It may be, if one takes a metropolitan viewpoint; but I cannot speak with personal knowledge of the metropolitan area. I can, however, speak with knowledge of the country districts and many things there are not, in my opinion, right. I shall touch upon them later. A few days ago I received a letter from Senator Johnston in which he said that the question of the selection of a site for a building to manufacture power alcohol would