

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 27th July, 1933.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.45 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—FINANCE, OVERSEA INTEREST.

Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier: If he has not already done so, will he take steps to instruct the Agent General to use his best efforts to secure a substantial reduction in the oversea interest bill of this State?

The PREMIER replied: The whole question of overseas interest rates was fully discussed at the recent meeting of the Loan Council, and the Commonwealth Government, with the concurrence of the States, is doing its utmost to secure as much relief as possible in this direction.

QUESTIONS (2)—RAILWAYS.

Refreshment Rooms and Cars.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Are the State railway refreshment rooms and cars held under lease? 2, If so, are tenders invited by public advertisement, and what period do the leases cover? 3, If tenders were called, who were the successful tenderers, and what refreshment rooms and cars are concerned? 4, What leases are held by each lessee? 5, Was the highest tender in each case accepted, and if not, why not? 6, Is there any supervision in respect to the quality, range, and quantity of food supplied to the public? 7, Do the leases carry a condition providing for departmental supervision? 8, If so, is this observed, and who is the officer or officers responsible for this work? 9, Is he aware that the refreshments provided by the State railway cars are generally regarded as being of exceedingly poor quality and that the State suffers in reputation accordingly? 10, Will he take steps to ensure that the food supplies are in accordance with the reason-

able needs of travellers and equivalent to those of other States?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. Tenders were called in 1928 for leases of all refreshment rooms and cars for five years from 1st July, 1928. At the end of that period the then lessees were offered extensions terminable at three months' notice which were accepted, except by the lessees of the rooms at Cunderdin, Menzies, Merredin, and Pinjarra. 3, Tenders returnable on the 19th April, 1933, were invited in March last for the lease of the refreshment rooms at Cunderdin, Menzies, Merredin, and Pinjarra. The successful tenderers were:—Cunderdin, A. N. Weir; Menzies, W. Collier; Merredin, T. Gorman; Pinjarra, F. P. Carr. 4, From 1st July, 1933, to 30th June, 1935. 5, Yes. 6, Yes. 7, Yes. 8, Yes. Chief Traffic Manager. 9, No. 10, Yes, as is the practice.

Timber Freight Concession.

Mr. PIESE asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it a fact that the department have made a reduction in rail freight on all timber that is exported? 2, If so, what is the amount per load? 3, To whom is the concession granted?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied. 1, Yes, for a period of 12 months ending 30th June, 1934. 2, Shipments to Eastern States, 12½ per cent. rail freight rebate; shipments to overseas, 16 2/3rds per cent. rail freight rebate. 3, All exporters.

FEDERAL SENATE VACANCY.

Mr. SPEAKER: In order to allow members to assemble in the Legislative Council Chamber for the purpose of a joint sitting to elect a Senator, I will suspend the sitting until such time as the bells are rung for re-assembling.

Sitting suspended from 2.50 to 3.32 p.m.

Result of Election.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report that a joint meeting of both Houses has been held, as required by the Joint Standing Orders, and that Colonel Herbert Brayley Collett was duly elected as a Senator of the Federal Parliament in the place of Sir Hal Colebatch, resigned.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.*Sixth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. BROCKMAN (Sussex) [3.33]: I wish to convey my congratulations to you, Sir, on your elevation to the high office of Speaker, and to congratulate the Government upon their return to power, and the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Nationalist Party on their respective appointments. I give the Government credit for having had Sir James Mitchell appointed as Lieut.-Governor of this State. That appointment has been eulogised throughout the State, with the exception perhaps of very few who hold extreme views regarding that gentleman. Sir James Mitchell has rendered statesmanlike service to this country. To him we must credit the development both of our wheat industry and of our South-West. I wish to say a few words in regard to the Governor's Speech and the Address-in-reply debate. There is not a very great deal of constructive thought in either, but I am pleased to see in the Speech that the dairying and other industries in the South-West have been playing their part in the development of the State. I was sorry to hear the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Wise) speak in the way he did regarding the money that has been spent down South. I feel sure he did not really mean to convey that he thought too much money had been spent in developing industries in the South-West, and not enough in the North-West. Personally I, as a member of the House, intend to extend my support, not only to the development of industry in the South-West, but also to the development of industry throughout the State. I hope the Government will be actuated by a similar view, for I feel that the only way we can get over the great difficulty confronting us in respect of unemployment will be by the development of our primary industries. Undoubtedly those industries are having a very hard time. I know that those engaged in developing the dairying industry in my own electorate are in a deplorable position. Unemployment is everywhere rampant, and I wish the best of luck to the new Minister for Employment, for I know the difficult task he has before him. I represent a district where there has been an enormous amount of unemployment owing to the closing-down of the timber industry, to which I will allude again later. I

was pleased to hear the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) refer to the schools, but I am sorry he did not emphasise the position of the schools in country districts. If he were living in the South-West and could see the difficulties from which the children there are suffering, he would know that they have to travel very great distances to school, and that in many instances there is not at the schools any accommodation where the children could have their meals in comfort. At many of the schools there are no shelter sheds, and it would be a merciful improvement if the department could remedy this omission. I should like to refer to the timber industry in this way: first of all in regard to the revenue it has produced for the State and the effect its revival would have on unemployment in the South-West. In normal times no fewer than 5,000 men are employed in that industry, representing the livelihood of over 16,000 people. I congratulate the Premier on having reduced the railway freight and the royalty, but I think it would be wise to go even farther in bringing down the many costs of production in the industry. If the industry were revived there would be no further unemployment in the South-West, and that would be a great factor, since it would not only reinstate 5,000 men in employment, but would also create employment in shipping and in the Railway Department. Moreover it would bring a great deal of revenue to the State. I refer particularly to the timber industry because it has cost the Government nothing to develop. It is natural wealth that has been handed to us by Nature. For the last five years, with the exception of last year, the industry has produced £2,370,000 per annum, but last year, unfortunately, the return fell to £600,000. In my electorate many timber mills have been closed down and the employees placed on sustenance. I do not like that word "sustenance," for I think that a State like Western Australia, with all its undeveloped industries, should not have people unemployed. Undoubtedly there is work for everybody in the State, but the difficulty is that we have not the money with which to pay them. The timber industry, if reinstated, would bring in no less than £2,000,000 a year to be used in employment. The total wealth returned by this industry to the State has been £45,000,000, out of which £29,700,000 represents timber shipped overseas. I should like briefly to refer to the effect the high tariff of the Federal

Government has had on this industry. Many years ago I worked in the timber industry, and know a good deal about it. In those days we paid from 4s. 6d. to 5s. 6d. for the best axe obtainable, but to-day we pay no less than 15s. 6d. to 16s. 6d. for a similar article. That is only a small item, but one can imagine what effect increases like that must have upon this industry where so much imported machinery is used. I am confident the Government will do all they can to reduce the tariffs, though the only way out that I can see is through the secession movement, so ably dealt with by the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan). I wish now to refer to group settlement. Last year I had a good deal of experience on this question. I do not intend to-day to touch fully upon it, though if I did I think I should make many members blush. The scheme was inaugurated by the ex-Premier, Sir James Mitchell. I consider it was a good one. It was brought into being for the specific purpose of developing our dairying industry, and keeping within the State large sums of money that were being sent to the Eastern States for various products. The scheme has met its obligations though it has cost a great deal of money. I am not going to pick out any particular Government for abuse, but I do think that no Government in the last 12 years has advanced any definite and sound policy for group settlement. Last year I was a member of the Royal Commission that inquired into the scheme, and I remember that the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) said I had no right to be on it as I was milking only three goats. For the information of the House I would say that last year I milked 120 cows. I have two dairy farms, one with 80 cows upon it and another with 40, and this year I hope to milk 140 cows. If all goes well, and prices revive, I shall put in another machine and milk an additional number of cows next year. Those who have read the report of the Royal Commission will know that the high capitalisation of the holdings rendered it impossible for the unfortunate struggling settlers to meet their liabilities. I do not believe in the present method of weeding out settlers who may not be suitable for the development of that country but would be useful in other walks of life. It is wrong to harass a man so that he is actually turned off his

holding through being unable to do the impossible, that is, pay interest with commodities at their present price. The report recommended that an independent board should be appointed, and I hope the Government will carry out that recommendation. The board should not consist of paid members. I am confident that there are enough patriotic citizens in the South-West to deal with these cases individually without any other cost than their out-of-pocket expenses. Those settlers who are not suited to the life of a farmer would then be weeded out, and others put in their place. I have been amongst group settlements since their inception, and I declare that among the settlers there are some of the finest men in the State. Many of these men have not only carved out a home for themselves but spent their all and given 12 years of the best of their lives to building up a competence for their wife and family. To-day those men are pestered for interest to such an extent that they are walking off their holdings and leaving their life savings behind them. That is not right, and the Government should take steps to remedy it. During my election I assured the people that if I could not induce the Government to afford some relief, I would at least express my opinions in the House. I am doing so now in the interests of these people. I am a practical South-West farmer. I started there with nothing and though I have not much to-day, I have an asset. I want these people to have the same chance, and will fight for their rights.

The Minister for Lands: Many who started with nothing have nothing to-day.

Mr. BROCKMAN: I hope the Minister will see that some relief is afforded. A large amount of capital is involved and the future of good men is at stake. It would be a great pity to see these settlers walking off their holdings. A point to remember is that many of these people are really good settlers, and they are leaving because they have been unduly harassed. I do not think any of them are wholly unsatisfactory, but a lot of them are quite unsuited for land settlement. These may be good men if put into other walks of life. I am not going to cry down anyone, whether he is a waiter or a farmer. In my political career I intend to do the best I can for everyone in the community. I believe in fairness and justice to all, and I am specially going to fight for fairness and justice on behalf of

the group settlers, and the returned soldiers, who have perhaps sacrificed more than anyone else.

The Minister for Lands: Consistent with fairness and justice to the taxpayers, who have to shoulder the whole burden.

Mr. BROCKMAN: As a taxpayer, I am prepared to bear my share to help these people on to prosperity. I believe the taxpayers, if they saw the conditions under which the settlers are living to-day, would think along the same lines as I do. I shall not dwell upon the question of unemployment. Those who are out of work are at least being provided with a reasonable living, and have been so provided since the inception of the trouble. The late Government did their utmost for the working man under the conditions that existed, and with the amount of money they had at their disposal. I congratulate them upon their achievements. I hope the Minister for Employment will be able to do as well as they did. I read his proposals in the paper this morning. I do not know how they will operate, but I can assure him I will render him every assistance I can to carry out his programme in a successful manner in the interests of those concerned. Everyone feels sorry for a man who is out of employment through no fault of his own. That is the position with most of them. I was sorry to hear the Minister say that farmers were better off than sustenance workers. That is not my view at all. The Minister said a farmer had a roof over his head. But of what use is a roof to him if he has nothing inside him, and he has no clothing or bedding with which to cover himself? That is the case with group settlers. During my electioneering campaign I visited a number of group homes. On one occasion I saw a lady whom I did not know run into her house, and heard her call out that she could not see me as she had no dress to wear. That was a very terrible position. If the Premier had seen such a thing, I am sure he would at once have made money available for the assistance of these people.

The Premier: I would not furnish money to alter a circumstance like that!

Mr. BROCKMAN: To-day there are many deplorable and needy cases on the groups. There are many small matters affecting my constituency which I intend

to bring before the Minister for Employment, but I shall do so privately.

Mr. Latham: That will be much more effective.

Mr. BROCKMAN: I observe that the board appointed in connection with unemployment have devoted a considerable amount of money to the supply of rugs and so forth to Perth unemployed. I trust that that beneficial system will be extended to unemployed in country districts. Doubtless an opportunity will be afforded to members to deal more fully with various matters upon which I have touched slightly, and particularly the subject of land settlement, a phase on which I could speak for an hour or two. As a new member, however, I consider it would be out of place for me to take up more of the time of the House. I assure the Government that I intend to do all I can to assist them in the difficult task confronting them. If they do the right thing from the aspect of the country's interests, I shall not be merely critical but shall try to assist them constructively in every way to overcome the obstacles in the path of Western Australia's further progress, particularly in regard to group and soldier settlers.

MR. FERGUSON (Irwin-Moore) [3.55]: I desire to associate myself with the congratulations of other members to you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment to your present position. From close association with you during the life of the last two Parliaments, I feel perfectly confident that the members of this Chamber may safely leave their interests in your hands, knowing that you will conserve those interests and also the dignity of the position which you occupy. Further, I wish to offer my congratulations to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, Sir James Mitchell, on his appointment to that high and honourable position. Notwithstanding some small measure of criticism which has been levelled at the appointment, I think no appointment of recent years in Western Australia has met with more universal approval than that of Sir James Mitchell. The hon. gentleman deserves well of Western Australia, and it is fitting that as the crown of a long and honourable career he should be placed in the highest position that the people of Western Australia can accord to him. The result of the recent general election was rather in the nature of a

boil-over. The present Government have been returned to power with a large majority—I think one of the largest which has ever supported any Western Australian Government in recent years.

Ministerial Members: No.

Mr. FERGUSON: At any rate, the majority is sufficient to make the Premier and his Ministers feel quite comfortable regarding the work of this House. Many and varied reasons have been assigned for the defeat of the late Government. Some people have said it was due to the unpopularity of the policy propounded by the former Premier.

Mr. Sleeman: The lack of policy.

Mr. FERGUSON: Others have said that it was due to some utterance of the present Leader of the Opposition. Others again have said that it was due to promises made by the present Premier. For my part I am inclined to think it was due wholly and solely to the natural swing of the political pendulum, which occurs periodically, and which is invariably against the Government in power during times of financial stress such as we have passed through during the last few years. I believe I am safe in saying that the late Ministry is the only one in Australia, in either the Federal or the State sphere, to have outlived the ordinary three-years life of a Parliament. The Federal Ministry, and I believe every State Ministry except that of Western Australia, either crumbled to pieces or reconstructed itself since the beginning of the financial trouble. Whilst the Collier Government have a large majority, and whilst their policy has been endorsed generally by the Western Australian people, it is a fact that residents of rural districts whole-heartedly endorsed the policy enunciated by the present Leader of the Country Party in his policy speech. I have taken the figures of 14 country electorates that might accurately be described as primary-producing. They are outside the North-West, and I have excluded such electorates as have large towns such as Northam, Geraldton and Bunbury, although each of them has a producing section within its boundaries. On examination of the figures I find that the primary votes cast in those 14 electorates were—

Country Party	..	..	24,521
Labour	..	..	11,531
Independent	..	..	8,860
Nationalist	..	..	6,026

Seeing that Western Australia is a country mainly of primary production, it is gratifying to members of the Country Party to know that their policy has been so whole-heartedly endorsed by the majority of the primary producers of the State. Being a primary producing country it seems to me quite natural that the electorate as a whole should be divided into two sections—those who represent the primary producers, and those who represent the industrial or wage-earning section of the community. Right down the years the Labour Party have always represented in the Parliaments of Australia the trade union section of the electorate. The Country Party to-day is representing the primary producing section mainly, and seeing that Western Australia is chiefly a primary producing country, I cannot see that there is much room in the Parliament for any parties other than the two I have mentioned. It has been said that another party will become strong again some day, but I am inclined to the opinion that, no matter what the party may be called, whether Nationalist, United Australia, Communist, Independent, Facist, Nazi or Hitlerite, any party other than the Labour Party or Country Party that expects to be a dominant factor in Western Australia in future is fore-doomed to failure.

Mr. Sleeman interjected.

Mr. FERGUSON: The Country Party, which I have had the honour to represent in the last two Parliaments have not been carried by any other party. They have always stood on their own ground and have stood very well, too. I wish to refer to the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. Like all other Governors' Speeches, it does not contain very much. I have never yet seen a Governor's Speech that did contain much. Still there are some portions of the Lieut.-Governor's Speech to which it would be quite fair to make brief reference. The most interesting portion was the reference to the production generally of the primary industries. The Leader of the Opposition, in the course of his speech, considered it was a testimonial to the late Government. I am inclined to think that, in addition, it was a very fine testimonial to those engaged in the primary producing industries of the State. It indicated clearly what those people had done under very trying conditions, and what they had been able to achieve in the way of producing wealth upon which

the whole State absolutely depends for existence, though knowing full well that that production would not be very profitable to themselves. The State has reaped the profit but the men and woman who produced the wealth are the poorer for having produced it. Reference was made in the Speech to the Government's intention to have a survey made of a route for a railway from Yuna to Balla and Dartmoor. I am very pleased indeed to note the intention of the Government to proceed with that work. I know that country well, and I do not know of any part of our wheat-growing areas that is more entitled to railway communication than is the Dartmoor area. It is magnificent country, well settled by a type of settler of which we have every reason to be proud. If there is going to be any future at all for the wheat industry, and I believe there is, then there is every justification for the State proceeding with the development of the industry in those northern areas. I was disappointed that, side by side with the mention of that railway, reference was not made to the extension of the line from Kalannie northward. That railway is not in my electorate; it is in the district of the member for Mt. Marshall, but settlers in the north-eastern corner of my electorate would use the line, and they are keenly interested in its construction. The previous Government, being desirous of assisting those settlers, asked the Railway Advisory Board to make an inspection of the two proposed routes, and their reports are in the hands of the Government now. Those reports are very favourable, and I hope that at an early date the Premier will announce his intention to introduce a Bill for the construction of a line from Kalannie northwards as well. Another railway proposition in which I am keenly interested is in my electorate. There is quite a little history at the back of this railway proposal and I should like the House to know something of it. When the Collier Government were previously in office, a communication was received by them from the Midland Railway Company seeking the permission of the Government to construct spur lines from the Midland railway. The communication stated that whilst the company would be prepared to build spur lines generally—not particularising any one spur—they would not be prepared to incur any initial expenditure under the proposal unless they had word from the

Government that they would be reasonably favourable towards such a proposal. The company realised that the matter would have to be referred to Parliament and that, unless they had the backing of the Government, it would be futile to go any further with the proposal. The Premier of the day advised the company that it was not the policy of his Government to allow the construction of any further private railways in this State, and that the railways that were constructed should be State-owned. With the change of Government three years ago the position was altered somewhat. I took a keen interest in the question, because I desired to see one of those spur lines constructed in my electorate. With a view to proving to members of the Government with which I was associated that the country west of the Midland railway was worthy of development by the provision of railway facilities, I made arrangements for different members of the Ministry to visit the country. On one occasion the Premier made a visit, on another occasion the then Minister for Lands, later the then Minister for Works, and again later the then Attorney General. Those gentlemen were so impressed with what they saw of the country to the west of Moora that I had no trouble in getting the Government to agree that the district was entitled to railway communication. Considerable delay occurred. The Midland Railway Company considered that, having placed their proposal before the Government, they had done all that could be expected of them. I pointed out to the company that their proposal had been submitted to a previous Government and that they should renew their application, but the manager of the company refused to accept that viewpoint. He said, "We do not recognise any particular Government. We regard the Government of the State as the Government we have to approach, and all we know is that they do not approve of railways other than State railways being constructed." A petition was received and placed before the Government through me. It was signed by every resident of the Moora and Dandarragan Road Board districts, urging the Government to agree to the proposal of the Midland Railway Company to construct a line from Moora to Dandarragan. The petition was forwarded by the Government to the manager of the Midland Railway Company for comment. The Government felt that if the

company wished to proceed with the construction of the line, they should make application for permission to do so. The Government would have placed the matter before Parliament had they been returned to power. While many of us may not agree to the construction of spur lines from the Midland railway to the east of that line—spurs that might conceivably interfere with some of the traffic that at present comes over the Government lines—no such argument can be used against the development of the country west of the Midland railway. There is a stretch of splendid country west of Moora that to-day is in need of railway communication. Those who have seen the country agree that it is second to none in the State. I have seen most of the dairying belt of Western Australia, and I do not know of any better dairying or stock-raising country than that in the Dandarragan district. My experience and the advice tendered to the Government by expert officers of the Department of Agriculture indicate that there is no better dairying country in the State than that at Dandarragan. There does not seem to be much prospect of the State ever being able to construct that railway. I emphasise that its construction by the Midland Railway Company would not interfere with any existing Government line. Under those conditions, surely the State should not adopt a dog-in-the-manger policy by saying to the people in that big tract of first-class country, "You will not get railway communication because we cannot provide it for you." Again, in the present difficult financial times, when we are trying to find money for investment in Western Australia, and are trying to find work for the unemployed, surely it will be well to have a railway line when the State can get it for nothing. It would employ a lot of labour; it would be the means of bringing a lot of capital into the State, and when it can do no harm to any existing Government line, surely all possible encouragement should be given to the Midland Railway Company to proceed with the work. I hope the Premier and his Ministers will reconsider the decision arrived at five or six years ago. A lot of people in the State agreed with the attitude of the Government at that time, but in view of the fact that the proposal would mean the construction of a railway between the Midland line and the coast where no Government line exists, surely we should encourage the Midland Railway Company in every possible way to carry out this work.

I wish to express my agreement with the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Latham) and the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) that the future of Western Australia depends mainly upon an appreciation of the values of wheat, wool and other primary commodities. There has been a slight improvement in prices during recent weeks, but still the value of those commodities on the overseas markets is barely equal to the cost of production.

Mr. Griffiths: How long are those prices likely to last?

Mr. FERGUSON: My fervent hope is that they will be permanent. It looks as if there is likely to be some permanency for the enhanced price of wool. The wheat market, of course, is in a more or less hectic condition, and we do not know whether the improved price will hold. If we are going to overcome our difficulties, the only way I can see is from a world appreciation of the values of the commodities we are producing, and we can only hope that those prices will hold. The question of the tariff has been mentioned. While that subject does not concern members of this House very intimately, and while we may be told it is no business of ours, I feel that expressions of opinion in a State legislature might eventually have some influence on the minds of Federal politicians. Whilst the primary producers, in common with the other taxpayers and consumers of the State, have been paying towards the high tariff which the Federal Parliament imposed in the interests of secondary industries, we have the right to expect, in view of the low prices we are receiving for our commodities, that those who have had the benefit of our assistance in the establishment of secondary industries should come to our assistance when the price of our commodities is so low that we cannot make a living by their production. If the people of this country want it to remain solvent, they must come to the assistance of the primary producers in some way, and see that they get a payable price for their commodities, particularly for that portion that is consumed within Australia. The operations of the Arbitration Court and tariffs and the other man-made bars to world trade, have all been beneficial to the establishment of secondary industries within our shores. Right through the piece they have been detrimental to the primary industries of West-

ern Australia. One of the greatest pests we have to combat in this State is the rabbit. It is a real menace to our farmers and pastoralists. The best way I know of to keep it down is to net in the farms and pastoral properties. Until our properties are netted in, we are not going to get control of the pest. To indicate how the tariff affects the price of wire netting, I should like to give some figures. We are told in the Press there is no duty on rabbit netting. Last week I saw a quotation from a wire netting manufacturer in Great Britain. The firm was quoting a price for the usual farm netting 42 inches by 1½ inches, 17 gauge. The prices quoted were f.o.b. Australia and South Africa. The price f.o.b. for Australia was £28 5s. 6d. per ton, and the price to South Africa, for exactly the same netting, was £22 13s. 6d., nearly £6 lower. The explanation for the difference in the price was that if the firm quoted the South African price to the Australian importer, in all probability they would be slugged for a dumping duty, and they thought they might as well have it rather than that the Commonwealth Government should collect it. This is a definite quote which can be verified at any time. If the Commonwealth Parliament are not prepared to take some notice of these things, it is time this House entered a protest, because more notice is taken of us than of the individual who uses the netting. I was pleased to note the intention of the Government to appoint a commission to inquire into the administration of the Agricultural Bank. I was pleased for three reasons: first of all, in the interests of the bank clients, secondly in the interests of the institution itself, and thirdly in the interests of the taxpayers. The bank has done wonderful work in developing the agricultural industry. Those who have been charged with its administration deserve every commendation at the hands of Parliament. The trustees, the managing trustee and the manager have done a wonderful job. They must have been supermen to do so well. There are, however, many matters that should be cleaned up in the interests of the officials themselves, as well as in the interests of the bank and the bank's clients. I hope that after the report of the commission has been received, the

Government will be able to adopt it more readily than has been possible with the reports of most other commissions which have been presented to them. I believe considerable improvement can be effected in the affairs of the bank in the interests of all concerned. Bulk handling looms largely in the minds of our wheatgrowers. This matter was before the House during the life of the last Parliament, but nothing very satisfactory was accomplished. A committee was appointed by the then Minister for Works to collect information on the subject, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it collected all the information that was available at the time. A friend of mine who returned from Victoria the other day had been discussing this question with the chief engineer of the Victorian railways, who had been charged by the Victorian Government with the collection of similar information prior to the establishment of the system in that State. The engineer told him that we in Western Australia had more information concerning the merits and demerits of the system than any other place in the world. On top of this, the Government have appointed another committee to make further investigations, but it is difficult to understand their reason for so doing. If we have all the information available, why do they want another investigation? I regret to say it, but there is a fast-growing apprehension in the minds of the wheat growers that the Government have appointed this committee with a view to squealing bulk handling. If that is so, the Government might as well put the responsibility on Parliament of saying whether we shall have bulk handling or not, instead of referring the matter to a committee and placing the responsibility upon it. It is well known that the heads of the Railway Department are not enamoured of the system. A representative of the Railway Department has been appointed to this committee, and another of the officers of that department fills the position of secretary. On the surface, it looks as if we can anticipate a not very favourable report from this committee upon the subject. I hope, in view of the fact that so far as we can gather, there is nothing else possible for us that would be the means of reducing costs to the grower to a greater extent than bulk handling, it

will be possible shortly to inaugurate a reasonable installation throughout the State. I hope this House will give every encouragement to those who desire to establish an efficient system. Without it I am sure the wheatgrowers are going to be further handicapped than they are at present. Those who will be responsible for preventing the inauguration of bulk handling will also be responsible for restricting the quantity of wheat that will be produced in the State during the next few years. It is unfortunate that the world-wide depression should have hit us at an inopportune time. That remark may apply to most other countries as well, but we in this State are feeling it very badly. Anything that can be done to relieve the situation it is the duty of the Government and of Parliament to do. To indicate how tremendously big and wide-spread this depression is, I should like to read a few of the remarks of the British Prime Minister when opening the World Economic Conference which has been sitting in London. Mr. MacDonald said—

The general crisis, accentuated by restrictions, by tariffs, by quotas, and by exchange control, has reduced international trade between 1929 and 1932 to less than three-quarters in volume, exchanging at about half price.

That indicates the magnitude of the world-wide depression. It is remarkable to think that the world's production and trade have been reduced in value during the five years by 50 per cent. I wish to say a word regarding the work of the late Government. Reference was made in the House quite recently to the fact that that Government had spent nearly all their revenue in the country districts. I rejoice in that fact, and am proud of it. It was their duty to do so. They had the interests of the producers of the State generally at heart. They believed that the expenditure should be incurred in those areas where the wealth was being produced. It would have been criminal to spend the money outside the districts where the wealth of the State was being produced. The late Government put up a record of achievement in the interests of primary producers that has not been excelled, and I doubt if it has been equalled, by any State Government in Australia since the depression overtook us. Notwithstanding what may be said concerning the little the

Government did for the primary producers, I venture to say that in time to come the wonderful work they did on behalf of those people will be realised, and I hope it will be appreciated. Recently the Minister for Lands gave some information to the Press regarding the operation of the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act, one of the legislative enactments the late Government were responsible for. That legislation conferred a tremendous benefit upon a section of the farming community which was unable to carry on without some help. Without the assistance of that Act, a great majority of the farmers who were operating under it would not have been in a position to conduct any operations, and surely that was worth while. I believe that that type of legislation, experimental though it be in Western Australia, will have to be carried still further. In the interests of the whole community something needs to be done to reduce the enormous load of liability being carried by the farmers at present. One of the proposals in the policy speech of the Leader of the Country Party was that a board for this purpose should be appointed by the Government, a board comprising practical farmers and business men, who would recommend to the Government, and through the Government to Parliament, the steps necessary for conditioning our farmers' debts. Undoubtedly the 30 odd million pounds owed by the producers of Western Australia cannot be repaid with present rates of interest and with existing prices of commodities. I am convinced that a large percentage of the financial institutions and of the commercial community of Perth would be quite willing to have a conditioning of debts brought about, provided it was done on fair and reasonable terms by a competent authority set up by Parliament. It is no use trying to do this in a haphazard, piecemeal fashion; but I believe it is capable of being done economically and scientifically, and with advantage not only to the farmer debtor but to his creditor as well. In my opinion, the farmer's creditor can get no real satisfaction if the client always has his nose to the grindstone. It is my belief that a majority of the creditors would prefer to have a reasonably satisfied debtor, who would use his best endeavours to meet the interest on his indebtedness. A down-and-out client, without the prospect of

paying anything, can be of no benefit to the creditor. I hope this proposal will receive serious consideration from the present Government. Something would come of it, I believe. In these difficult times we are always liable to have numerous proposals placed before the country for getting out of our difficulties. Nearly every man in the street has a method of his own for overcoming them. Two of the proposals put up, however, seem to have attracted a great deal more attention than the rest. I refer to the Douglas credit system and to the liberation policy. Throughout the length and breadth of Western Australia those two ideas have attracted a good deal of attention. Those of us who had the privilege of sitting in the last Parliament had the opportunity of hearing a most interesting address on the Douglas proposal from the member for Claremont (Mr. North), to whom we are indebted for a mass of valuable information placed before the Chamber on that occasion. The hon. member's suggestion was that an investigation into the Douglas proposal should be undertaken by some competent authority. I would like to see that done. I hold no brief for either the Douglas credit system or the liberation policy, not knowing enough about either proposal. All my life I have either worked hard on my farm or tried to do something in the interests of my constituents, and, like many other people, have not had the opportunity of considering the proposals. Indeed, I do not regard myself as competent to judge of them. But the Government should, in my opinion, closely investigate both proposals in order to ascertain whether either or both of them, or features of either or both, can be utilised to assist this State out of its present difficulties. Now as to some of the proposals of the Minister for Works, and chiefly the construction of a new road between Perth and Fremantle, and the reclamation work at the Causeway. I hold that neither of these works is justified at present. The carrying-out of them, to my mind, would represent nothing but gross and wilful extravagance. If the Minister and the Government persist in their intention, they will go down to posterity as the most extravagant Government ever known in Western Australia; and goodness knows we cannot afford any extravagance at present. The previous Government, in an endeavour to cope with the traffic problem

on the Causeway, provided conveniences sufficient for all the traffic of to-day—conveniences which, in my opinion, will be quite serviceable for the next 50 years. While the work is not elaborate, but merely a plain, unadorned traffic bridge, it does cope with the traffic. Then why go to an expense of several hundreds of thousands of pounds in further work at the Causeway, and in connection with the road I have mentioned? The member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) it was, I think, who mentioned that visitors derived a bad impression from coming to Perth over the Causeway. But visitors do not come by that route at all; they come by another route altogether. If we wish to give visitors a good impression, let us take them through King's Park, and avoid the Causeway. The Minister for Works is likely to retort that the money for the new road from Perth to Fremantle will come out of Traffic Trust funds and will not be provided by Western Australian taxpayers. It may be impossible for him to spend any of that money in other parts of the State where the expenditure would be more justified. However, if that is so, rather than expend several hundreds of thousands of pounds on the construction of a new road where there is already a good road, license fees paid to the Traffic Trust might be reduced by 50 per cent. This would be greatly appreciated by those who pay the fees, and possibly some of the relief might be passed on to the consuming public of Western Australia, with benefit all round.

The Minister for Mines: If the traffic fees were reduced, the people concerned would squeal just as loudly for the new road.

Mr. FERGUSON: That road should be constructed when there is justification for its construction, rather than now. Its construction at the present juncture would mean the spoiling of a considerable mileage of valuable roads already existing. A question exercising the minds of people in certain districts is what is to be done with the ever-increasing half-caste population. In my electorate there are numerous half-castes, and the same remark applies to other districts, especially along the Great Southern railway. At one time there was a native settlement at Carrolup on the Great Southern line, and an agitation has begun for the re-opening of that settlement. I urge upon the Government the inadvisableness of spending a large amount of money in resuming an

area at Carrolup, presumably with a view to utilising buildings already there. The better course would be to send indigent half-castes who are unable to earn their living where they are, to the native settlement on the Moore River, which is remote from other settlements, being situated in an area of poor country. The place is ideal for natives, there being ample water—in fact, this was an old camping ground. In the summer the natives could live by the running waters of the Moore River. There the natives would be removed from all sorts of temptations to be found in the towns.

Mr. Doney: But do you realise that the natives would be taken away from their home districts and would never be content at Moore River? They would soon go back to their home districts.

Mr. FERGUSON: As regards half-castes that idea is entirely mythical, though I would agree with the hon. member in regard to full-blooded aborigines. I have had considerable experience of natives, and I know that probably 99 per cent. of the natives taken away from their own country and sent to Mogumber, from as far north as the Kimberleys and as far south as the Great Southern district, would not be content there. But 99 per cent. of the half-castes would not care whether they were placed at Mogumber or at Carrolup. The half-caste rather prides himself on the bit of white blood he has in him, and he does not want to associate with aborigines. In point of fact, some of the happiest half-castes at the Moore River native settlement have come from districts outside the Midland.

Mr. Doney: Would you favour restricting Mogumber to half-castes?

Mr. FERGUSON: The aboriginal question in southern districts is not acute. The aborigines there are fast dying out. The big problem Western Australia has to face is the problem of the half-caste. In my opinion, State expenditure would be justified to enable the aborigine to remain in his own country; and the few aborigines in the southern and south-western districts could be accommodated in those districts, at infinitesimal expense to the State. But the half-caste population is increasing. To me it is a matter of regret to note the absence from the Lieut.-Governor's Speech of any suggestion of legislation for the organisation of the marketing of primary products. Yesterday I asked the Premier a ques-

tion on the subject, and he side-stepped it. I know that the present Minister for Lands introduced into a previous Assembly a measure to deal with the question, so that the hon. gentleman must be interested in it. I know also that the present Minister for Agriculture is keenly interested in the subject, and I wish to urge upon the Government that the present time is opportune for the introduction of such a measure. Never before in the history of Western Australia have our producers taken so marked an interest in the disposal of their commodities as they are taking to-day. They realise that too great a spread occurs between the time the commodity leaves the farm, garden, or orchard, and the time it gets on to the consumer's table. By some kind of organised marketing large savings could certainly be effected. I commend to the Government further consideration of the matter, as they gave consideration to it before I entered the House. At that time, I know, a Bill was introduced by the Minister for Lands.

The Minister for Mines: That was in connection with dried fruits.

Mr. FERGUSON: No. It was a Bill for the general marketing of all types of primary products, provided those engaged in the production of the commodities, or a majority of those producers, desired control of marketing.

The Minister for Agriculture: A Bill for that purpose was rejected in the Legislative Council.

Mr. FERGUSON: Let the Government have another try.

The Minister for Mines: It was rejected by a majority of Country Party members.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes; Country Party members killed the Bill.

Mr. FERGUSON: I hope that during the life of the present Parliament, legislation will be introduced with a view to a reduction in the number of members of both Houses of Parliament. The Federal Government and the Federal Parliament have fleeced most of the important activities of government and there is not so much for the State Parliament to do now as in days gone by. The time is opportune for such a move, and I think it would appeal to the electors as a whole. If this House were to take the initiative, we could reduce the number of members by one-third, and the

same proportionate reduction could be effected in the Legislative Council.

Mr. North: What about the vote on secession?

Mr. Thorn: This proposal would appeal to people who want to wipe us out altogether.

Mr. FERGUSON: Such a move would make for economy, and it would not make for inefficiency if a few of us were not here.

The Minister for Mines: You are making the speech!

Mr. FERGUSON: I am speaking for both sides of the House. The wonderful vote recorded in favour of secession is one that the Government should implement immediately. I am pleased that the Premier has stated it is his intention to do so, and I endorse the suggestion made outside this House, that the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) should be asked to assist the Government in the task. I believe he knows more about this question than most people in Western Australia, and, with his undoubted skill and legal ability, his services should be availed of by the State. It is said that secession will not be achieved in a day, a week or a year. In all probability, it will take a long time to accomplish.

Mr. Mann: Not if we go the right way about it.

Mr. FERGUSON: Members sitting on either side of the House, and in the Legislative Council as well, should do their utmost to carry out the wishes of the people, and the members of the Country Party will certainly assist the Government in any steps they may take along those lines.

Mr. Hawke: Do you suggest that the member for Nedlands should be sent to London?

Mr. FERGUSON: If I had any authority to make such a suggestion, that is exactly what I would recommend.

Mr. Hawke: I would not mind the member for Nedlands going, but what about the Agent-General? He is a Constitutional authority.

Mr. FERGUSON: The Agent-General would be a very suitable man to co-operate with the member for Nedlands in presenting the wishes of the people of Western Australia to the Imperial Government, and through them to the Imperial Parliament.

Mr. Hawke: Well, we may send him.

Mr. Griffiths: The member for Northam speaks with authority!

Mr. FERGUSON: A statement by the Minister for Lands appeared in the Press recently, in which he indicated his intention to remove certain settlers from their holdings in the Denmark district, because of the wasting disease in their cattle. I have no quarrel with the Minister for Lands regarding his decision, but I had hoped that the officers of the Agricultural Department, who have been remarkably successful in connection with other stock diseases, would have been equally successful in dealing with this dread disease that has occurred in the Denmark area. It will be a thousand pities if the settlers have to be removed from their holdings, but if there is no hope of curing or checking the disease, I am afraid there is no alternative. I trust, however, that the investigations will be continued, that the liver treatment that has been experimented with will prove effective and that adequate supplies of liver will be procured in order that the wasting disease may be wiped out. In this State, where we kill so many cattle, sheep and pigs, it should be possible to secure a fairly economical supply of livers. I hope the Minister for Agriculture will consider the possibility of securing liver supplies from the Wyndham Meat Works, because a tremendous quantity must go to waste there. It does not matter whether the liver is quite good for human consumption. In fact, liver slightly affected with pleuro would be suitable, I understand, for the treatment of cattle suffering from the wasting disease. If an adequate supply cannot be obtained locally, we may be able to secure quantities from the Eastern States. If further investigation should prove this method of treatment to be successful, no stone should be left unturned in our endeavours to cope with the disease. Much publicity has been given recently in the Press and elsewhere to matters relating to the development of the North-West. I hope something will be done, but if the North-West is to be developed on sound lines, we had better see to the development ourselves instead of handing over that territory to the Commonwealth Government.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERGUSON: It is possible, with the assistance of chartered companies with sufficient British capital, for something bene-

ficial to be accomplished regarding the development of our North-West territory, and if the Commonwealth are prepared to assist by waiving some of the iniquitous tariff charges to enable the country to be developed profitably, so much the better. I would like that to be done, and if the Commonwealth were to agree, it would be an additional argument in favour of the Commonwealth waiving some of the tariff charges in order that the development of the South-West might be assisted as well. During the course of his speech, the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Wise) said that no Government in the past had ever spent sufficient money in the North-West. Exactly the same statement could be made regarding the South-West, the Great Southern, the Midland and the Eastern districts, or anywhere else. I know of no Government that has spent enough money in any one district.

The Minister for Mines: The Harvey district cannot complain.

Mr. FERGUSON: No Government has ever spent a reasonable amount in the Midland areas, and it was not until the three electorates adjoining the Midland railway—Toodyay, Irwin-Moore and Greenough—returned Country Party members to Parliament, that anything reasonable was accomplished along those lines. Immediately the Country Party members took a hand in the government of the State, the Midland areas received a fair deal.

Mr. Wise: And the North got left.

Mr. FERGUSON: It was not neglected as a result of the activities of the Mitchell-Latham Government.

The Minister for Mines: Where did they spend money in the North-West?

Mr. FERGUSON: The member for Gascoyne said that the Act passed last session to amend the Land Act, with regard to pastoral leases, was a huge political bluff. On the contrary, that legislation was a genuine attempt on the part of the Coalition Government, on the advice of the present Leader of the Opposition, to give relief to the pastoralists of the North-West respecting the all-important question of finance. The action was taken at the request of the pastoralists of the North-West, and the Government were definitely of the opinion that it would assist the industry. The pastoralists themselves thought so, and so did we.

The Minister for Mines: A re-survey would have been much more beneficial for them and for the State.

Mr. FERGUSON: The member for Gascoyne said that the legislation was no good to the people in the North-West, because of some provision that the amending Act of 1932 contained. He said that pastoral lessees would have to surrender their leases and possibly pay off the mortgage, which might involve them in a cost of anything up to £500. The section in the 1932 Act is exactly identical, word for word, with the corresponding section in the Land Act of 1917. I defy the member for Gascoyne to quote a single instance of a pastoralist in the North being called upon to pay up his mortgage and being mulct in a penalty of anything like £500 regarding the extension of his lease.

Mr. Wise: Have leases been extended?

Mr. FERGUSON: Yes, in days gone by. None has been extended under the provisions of the 1932 Act, because the time has not yet expired, but they may be extended yet. No exception has been taken to the provision referred to in the 1917 Act, and why was it not taken exception to, if it represented a "huge political bluff"? The section in the 1932 Act is exactly the same, so how can it be regarded as political bluff? If there is anything wrong with the Act, I will, in common with the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan), do my best to assist the Government to rectify it. The member for Gascoyne also made a sarcastic reference to one of my late colleagues. He referred to the Hon. C. F. Baxter who was Chief Secretary in the Coalition Government. He described Mr. Baxter as an "accidental Minister."

Member: He cut it out of "Hansard."

Mr. FERGUSON: No, the reference is there.

Mr. Wise: I do not know if he was an accidental Minister, but he was a tragic one.

Mr. FERGUSON: There was no accident about his election to Parliament, and his elevation to Ministerial rank. I have particulars regarding his electoral experiences and I think these should prove to the member for Gascoyne that his appearance in the Legislative Council was no accident. Mr. Baxter was elected to Parliament in May, 1914, and was the first Country

Party member elected to Parliament. At that election he defeated two very well-known men, one of whom had been a member of the Legislative Council. Mr. Baxter was elected by a majority of 648 votes. He was an unknown man and was elected against two well-known identities. Thus his entry to Parliament cannot be described as accidental. In 1919 he accepted a portfolio and was returned unopposed. In 1920, six years after his first election, he was returned unopposed, a result also achieved in 1926. In 1930 Mr. Baxter again accepted a portfolio and was returned unopposed. In 1932 he was again elected without opposition. He has been in Parliament for over 20 years, of which period seven years were spent in serving the country in different Administrations. In those circumstances, it will be seen that in the Legislative Council, Mr. Baxter rendered services somewhat similar to those of the Father of the Legislative Assembly, the present Minister for Lands (Hon. M. F. Troy). If he is to be classed as an accidental Minister, I do not know of anyone, who has held a portfolio, who would not come within that category. The sarcastic reference the hon. member made to Mr. Baxter was entirely unjustified and in my opinion was to be regretted.

MR. WELSH (Pilbara) [5.0]: It gives me great pleasure to join other members in congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment to the position you now hold. I realise the Government will have a very anxious and troublous period during the next three years, and it is due to all of us to give them every assistance we can, to overcome the difficulties that may arise. The Minister for Mines is to be commended for launching the prospecting scheme. To my mind that will have a two-fold advantage; the first will be to absorb the unemployed and the second to give a stimulus to the mining industry which is badly needed. After all, it is mainly to the mining industry that we can look to pull us out of our financial troubles. I sincerely hope that the scheme will be extended to my electorate. Mining in the Pilbara electorate is in a more satisfactory condition than it was a few years ago. In the North most of the claims are held by parties of working men who have laboured under adverse circumstances, and some of the claims had to be abandoned because of the low price

of gold. The advancement that has taken place recently has been mainly due to the increased price of gold. The Pilbara field is served by two State batteries, one at Marble Bar and the other at Bamboo Creek. If crushing facilities were provided at Nullagine they would be of great advantage. At the present time ore has to be carted to Marble Bar for treatment. If a small battery were erected at Nullagine it would be a distinct advantage to the industry. A battery manager attends at the Marble Bar battery with his team of men to start operations when stone is there to be crushed. He has a house in which to live but the employees are left to fend for themselves. They take tents and pitch camps. Under the Shearers' Hut Accommodation Act, pastoralists are bound to provide proper accommodation for shearers while they are on the station. There is no reason why there should not be similar provision made for those who are attending State batteries. The climatic conditions are pretty rigid at times, and therefore any consideration that could be shown to these men would be appreciated. Some years ago bores were put down to assist prospectors, but when the industry started to languish the bores were neglected. A little money judiciously spent would now bring them into working order again. If any money can be made available it should be devoted to reconditioning these bores.

The Minister for Mines: Water bores, you mean.

MR. WELSH: Yes. In summer time the conditions are very trying and the distances between available water are considerable. There is a big auriferous area in this part of the State that could be exploited. It shows there have been worked without the assistance of outside capital. All the help that the men have had has been from the local storekeepers from crushing to crushing. By battling along as they have been doing the men have been put where they are to-day. A few days ago I read in the newspaper a statement by the Commissioner of Railways to the effect that the Marble Bar-Port Hedland railway, because of the high capital cost of the line, should no longer be maintained. This railway was originally built to foster the mining and pastoral industries, and I claim that its retention is justified to-day. From a mining point of view it has established itself, and as regards the pastoral industry it has also been successful. It has been responsible for areas being taken up

125 miles south of Marble Bar that would otherwise never have been looked at as sheep propositions. In the Pilbara district there are more and smaller holdings carrying a larger proportion of men and more sheep to a given acreage than are to be found in any other district in Western Australia. There again the railway has justified itself. On the other hand, Port Hedland, which is the only port for the Pilbara field, has no supply of drinking water; the only water available is scheme water, and that is unfit for human consumption. The railway is utilised during the hot dry months to carry water 20 miles and sometimes between 50 and 60 miles into Port Hedland, where it is sold to the residents for 2s. per 100 gallons. This important fact, in itself, justifies the continuance of the line. The capital cost of the line is excessive, largely due to the erection of several large sheds which have never been used. The Commissioner distinctly states that the line pays more than working expenses; therefore is it not futile to declare that it should be closed down? If the line were taken up to-morrow interest on the capital outlay would still have to be met, so I think that is a pretty good argument for leaving the railway there. The pastoral industry utilises the line to carry wool; thousands of bales are conveyed over it. Higher freight rates are charged on that line than are charged on any other railway in the State and probably in Australia. The jetty charges are also abnormally high in comparison with the charges in other parts of the State. The pastoral industry has been in a parlous condition during the last three years, and it has taken those engaged in it all their time to make ends meet. In many cases ends have not met. The lack of funds has been detrimental to security. There will be a day of reckoning for many of us to make good the repair that should have been carried out in the last few years. The last wool sale was a ray of sunshine, and I hope the prices obtained on that occasion will be maintained. The people in the southern areas hardly realise the difficulties under which those in the northern areas live. At times it is absolutely impossible for residents to get necessary fresh food such as vegetables, butter and fruit. During last summer we had practically a monthly steamer service, which meant that only the coastal towns could get what they required. Women

who are bringing up families away from the ports are unable to get the vegetables they need to keep them in decent health. The member for Gascoyne mentioned one instance where potatoes were bought in Perth for £3 a ton and by the time they reached the individual to whom he referred the cost was increased to £20, and in addition there was waste in transit. It is a general feeling in the North-West that there has been a lack of sympathetic treatment on the part of successive Governments. Apparently they have considered the North-West too far away from Perth to give it the treatment it deserved. There has not been anything like the amount put back in the country that has been taken out of it. I hope that in the future we shall receive more sympathetic treatment than has been meted out to us in the past. I am not for a moment contending that the South-West has had all the consideration, but I can say that while a great deal has been done for the northern areas we are entitled to better conditions than have been extended to us. Regarding all the talk we have heard about the North being handed over to the Japanese, I consider it is all balderdash. As far as the chartered company taking over a portion of the territory, that may be all right, but to hand it over to the Commonwealth, I say, certainly not. If we cannot develop the North, the Commonwealth will not be able to do so. They have had their opportunity in the Northern Territory and their failure has been lamentable. I do not intend to detain the House any longer, except to say I hope that from now on the North-West will receive more sympathetic treatment than has been accorded it in the past.

The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.

HON. J. CUNNINGHAM (Kalgoorlie) [5.13]: I am going to ask you, Sir, to convey to the Speaker my congratulations upon his election to the high and honourable position to which he has been elevated. I also desire to extend to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my congratulations. I have known you for quite a number of years, and I am sure the House has made a good choice in appointing you Chairman of Committees. I also desire to congratulate the Ministers who form the Government. The Ministry are faced with a most difficult position, financial as

well as industrial. I particularly extend my congratulations to Mr. Kenneally on his appointment to the portfolio of Minister for Employment. In my opinion he occupies a most unenviable position in the Ministry. His is the hardest task, and although he will have the most loyal support of his colleagues, it will be for him to face the issue of unemployment and do his best to satisfy those that are out of work. I am pleased that the new Minister announced in this morning's newspaper what is proposed by the Government to find work for the unemployed. As he pointed out, it is only the first step in the policy devised by the Government to meet the situation. I desire to congratulate the Minister for Mines on having so very promptly initiated a scheme of assistance to enable unemployed men to go out prospecting on the goldfields. I feel that, as a result of this scheme, much good will accrue not only to the men themselves, but also to the State. Of course there will be a number of failures for, after all, there are failures in every avocation or undertaking put in hand or taken in hand by individual men. Past experience of over 40 years shows that whereas many successes have been achieved by men out prospecting, there have been many failures. Scores of men have put their own money into prospecting without any great financial returns to themselves. Fortunately we have again reached a stage in our gold mining industry when that industry is a very real asset to the State. To-day all gold won is valued in Australian currency at £7 10s. per ounce. Remarkable to relate, we find to-day, as has been experienced all down the ages, that when the price of gold soars in value, other commodity prices decrease. The result is that whereas we have to-day a prosperous gold mining industry, we have depressed prices in almost every other avenue of production. As the representative of a gold mining constituency I am very pleased that gold mining is flourishing and I hope it will continue to do so for many years to come; not to the disadvantage of other industries, but side by side with the prosperity of those industries, so that we can make employment available to those who require work in order that they may be able to live in decency and comfort. I intended to say a few words about the World Economic Conference but, after all, one has read so much in the newspapers about

the deliberations of that body, and of what I might term the half-baked propositions put up from day to day, that it is hard to know exactly where the conference has arrived. Their efforts to stabilise currency for the nations of the world have failed. Perhaps they still have something in hand and know more of what is intended in the future than do we. However, our own position appears to be just about the same, for we do not seem to be making very much headway. As in the past, so in the future we are to continue dependent upon a rise in world prices for our local products, wheat and wool; and, may I add, we are hopeful of an increase in the timber trade that shall be followed by a larger revenue from that source. It is extraordinary that whereas our local economists and University professors declare that the salvation of the State rests almost entirely on an increase in commodity prices, we know that commodity prices soared during the period 1923-29, notwithstanding which the whole world has failed financially. So it seems to me that whether the prices are rising or falling, there is operating throughout the financial world something that does not bring about that stabilisation of prosperity which we desire to see. I wish to say a few words about the wheat industry. The World Economic Conference has been dealing with the question of wheat production, and apparently has given very serious consideration to it. To date it has been unable to agree as to whether a policy of general restriction of the acreage under cultivation should be adopted with a view to forcing up prices. It seems to me that on the experience of the last three years in the wheat industry, that restriction will come about of its own accord. Three years of bad prices have so bankrupted the wheat-growers of this State, that unless something can be done to give them the required financial assistance we shall see at the end of this season quite an exodus from the wheat districts to the metropolitan area. I am aware that the Government must face the issue. The Government are already giving consideration to it, and I am sure that consideration will not be any small measure; these wheatgrowers must be allowed to live on their holdings, and of course they must be afforded the necessary sustenance. The Premier, I believe, made an announcement that the Government would see to it that

the wheatgrower would receive a just measure of consideration by way of a first cut out of the money accruing as the result of his crop in order that he might be able to carry on for another season. I know the Premier, which means I know that when he makes a promise he intends to keep it. A few days ago the Minister for Lands announced that those in a position to pay land rents would be called upon to pay them, and that each case would be dealt with on its merits. If these cases are to be dealt with on their merits, I have a suggestion to make to the Minister. I know the Government have promised a three years' security of tenure to people who are in course of purchasing C.P. areas. The suggestion I have to make is that if, when the three years expire, the settler is in arrears with his land rents, the total amount of arrears should be capitalised over the remaining portion of the C.P. period. Then the settler, knowing of that arrangement, will not be fearful that the department is out to grab from the proceeds of his crop sufficient money to pay the rents due. I hope that suggestion will be considered by the Minister. Now I desire to bring before the Government one or two small matters affecting my constituents. As the result of the application of the provisions of the Financial Emergency Act, the Government employees in my electorate are suffering considerable disabilities. The basic wage for Government employees in that district is £3 18s. per week, but under the Financial Emergency Act those employees are receiving £3 9s. per week, plus 2s. 4d. district allowance. If things were normal, those Government employees would be prepared to carry the burden equally with other members of the community. But things are abnormal, especially in the cost of living. House rents on the goldfields have increased enormously during the past two or three years, increased by anything from 100 per cent. to 200 per cent. And not only house rents, but also the rates on business premises have greatly increased, and the rents chargeable as the result of those increases have served to increase the cost of living. My electors have asked the Government that a fair rents Bill be introduced, to have application to the goldfields areas. I hope the Government will introduce that measure this year, and so confer justice upon the people of the eastern gold-

fields. Also my constituents have asked that the provisions of the Workers' Homes Act be applied to the eastern goldfields. I cannot see any logical reason why that request should not be granted. A few years ago we were told the mining industry was down and out, but that has been proved to be false, and it is now certain that it will be many years before it is down and out. I and my constituents are not asking for an elaborate class of home, but we are asking that the provisions of the Act be applied in such a way as will enable the workers in the district to expend a certain sum of money in getting homes for themselves. I feel sure the Premier, when he has time, will favourably consider this request.

Mr. Hawke: If you succeeded in getting the workers' homes, you would not require a fair rents Bill.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: But it takes time to build a number of homes, and meanwhile it is necessary that we should have the protection of a fair rents measure. While people are entitled to secure large profits if they can, still it is the function of the Government and of the representative of an electorate to see that any request for remedial measures affecting rents should, if possible, be granted. Now, a few words about His Excellency's Speech, and the list of new Bills therein contained. The list is neither large nor formidable, and I am ready to believe there are other Bills to be brought down by the Government. There are a few important Bills I should like to see mentioned. For instance, we might well have a Bill to reduce the number of members of Parliament. Personally I think we could well do without 30 of the existing 80. We have a precedent for that, because Queensland is carrying on its Parliament without the assistance of a Legislative Council. I am hopeful that the Government will introduce a Bill proposing some reform of the Legislative Council franchise, even if it does not go so far as to propose the abolition of that Chamber. A measure that should be introduced is a Bill to legalise State insurance. It is essential that an investigation be made into the operations of insurance companies in this State. Enormous sums of money are paid to insurance companies by agriculturists, not only to secure the farmer and parties interested in the land, but also those who supply superphosphates and sacks. Liens have to be met

out of the proceeds of the farmers' crops, and naturally the lien holders insist upon being protected by insurance. Consequently, no small sum is involved. The premiums charged, I consider, are out of all proportion to the risks involved and to the claims made. No doubt this is a matter that will receive the attention of the Government when a proposition is before them to provide for a full measure of State insurance. Other important measures are necessary that no doubt the Government will introduce in good time. In the list of proposed legislation mention is made of an amendment of the Mine Workers' Relief Act. When that measure comes before us, I shall take the opportunity to speak of the legislation enacted last session and its effect since being applied. The Government may depend upon receiving the utmost help from me. All members on this side of the House, and I believe members generally, will be prepared to assist the Government to tide over the difficult times with which we are faced. It is essential that one and all should render Ministers all possible assistance, particularly the Minister for Employment.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

MR. DONEY (Williams - Narrogin) [5.33]: Although I intend to speak to the question before the House, I need to explain that—in common, I believe, with every other member of my party—having regard to the fact that the Estimates afford an almost identical opportunity for a comprehensive debate, we might with benefit discard entirely the long and discursive debate on the Address-in-reply. That would necessitate bringing down the Estimates much earlier than has been customary, but I am given to understand from inquiries I have made that that would be quite an easy matter. Two or three benefits would result from this. There would be a substantial saving in the cost of Parliament, and, of course, in members' time. Also it would obviate a great deal of the expenditure that now takes place during the early months of the session. I desire to associate myself with other members who have spoken in complimenting you, Mr. Speaker, upon your elevation to the high office you now hold. You follow quite a long line of men whom this House was accustomed to hold in very high esteem, and no doubt

you will be a very worthy successor to them. This much we know from your conduct of affairs as a temporary Chairman of Committees, that you possess tact and impartiality, that you are not easily perturbed, and that you certainly must have made a fairly intensive study of the Standing Orders. I wish to make, with considerable regret, reference to the member for Northam (Mr. Hawke). I approach the matter with diffidence because I listened—as I am sure every member listened—with much pleasure to the hon. member whilst he spoke on the topic of international economy. I feel sure that every member added to his stock of knowledge on that topic. But I do not think we appreciated him quite so much when he made references to his defeated opponent that were rather disparaging. There can be no doubt about that. Then he made mention of some purely domestic affairs of the Country Party. I believe it has been the custom in this House, certainly during the whole time I have been here, to leave severely alone any reference to the personal aspect of party relations. I regret that the hon. member should have seen fit to break new ground in that regard, and I hope no one else will follow the precedent he was so unfortunate as to set. I do not know what his intention was.

The Minister for Agriculture: The ground is not too new.

Mr. Hawke: No, it is well ploughed.

Mr. DONEY: Admitting that for the moment, I do not recall, during the time I have been a member, any reference such as I am accusing the member for Northam of having made. Whether his intentions were good and clean, I cannot say. To me it looked like an attempt at sowing—

Mr. Mann: Wild oats?

Mr. DONEY: That is not a bad suggestion. I was going to say it looked like an attempt at sowing the tares of disunion in the Country Party paddock. I can assure the hon. member that he will not reap a very satisfactory harvest from a sowing of that kind.

Mr. Tonkin: It was good constructive criticism.

Mr. DONEY: I prefer to believe that the hon. gentleman drew his conclusions without having first gone to the trouble of ascertaining the correctness of his facts, or per-

haps he spoke after having heard only one side of the question.

Mr. Wansbrough: Northam was not the only one.

Mr. DONEY: It is the only one I am complaining about. I would have hardly thought it worth while to draw attention to the matter but for the fact that if it were not contradicted, other members might think it was correct, which it certainly was not. The plain fact is that by quite a usual and proper pre-election arrangement, it was decided that a Country Party member should be on Sir James Mitchell's platform when he delivered his policy speech. It was just an ordinary courtesy arrangement. The hon. gentleman appeared there. There was also a similar arrangement under which it was thought that a Nationalist would appear on the platform of the Leader of the Country Party when he delivered his policy speech. Contrary to what the hon. member may say or think, the hon. gentleman, who sits in another place, did not open his mouth at all while he was on Sir James Mitchell's platform. He certainly said nothing and did nothing.

Mr. Hawke: Much more effective by being silent.

Mr. DONEY: It must be plain to the hon. member's intelligence, as to mine, that if he said nothing and did nothing, the member for Northam was wide of the mark in accusing him of doing something detrimental to the chances of the Country Party candidate. I cannot see that it was any business at all of the hon. member. It was a purely domestic arrangement, and he had no right whatever to interfere in it, and certainly not to refer to it in this House.

Miss Holman: You are not making it any better.

Mr. Hawke: You are making heavy weather of it.

Mr. DONEY: The hon. gentleman did not open his mouth, but he offered to assist the candidate who stood in the Country Party interest. I hope the member for Northam, having had this matter brought to his notice, will not continue the habit of doing what I have complained of.

The Minister for Mines: The policy speech was not delivered on election day.

Mr. DONEY: I cannot see that that point arises.

The Minister for Mines: If he was working for a Nationalist, would that make any difference?

Mr. DONEY: It would make a difference.

The Minister for Mines: He was working his hardest for Sir James Mitchell against your candidate.

Mr. DONEY: I can see that members opposite have gone to great trouble to gather false facts.

The Minister for Agriculture: What is a false fact?

The Minister for Mines: It is not false; it is absolutely true.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The Minister for Agriculture: Can you define a false fact?

Mr. DONEY: I agree there is no such thing, but the Minister knows what I mean.

Mr. Latham: Members opposite are very solicitous about our candidates.

Mr. Hawke: A pity you were not.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DONEY: I congratulate the Premier upon his success at the polls.

The Minister for Agriculture: Now you are on safe ground.

Mr. DONEY: Reference to it may make the Minister a little happier. I admit that the Premier fought, as he always fights, a good, clean and fair fight, but that is far from admitting that the result of the election was the fair and considered judgment of the people upon the achievements of the Mitchell-Latham Government. I believe that the record of the late Government entitled them to vastly better treatment. I imagine no one would dispute my statement that during the three very difficult years of the Mitchell-Latham regime, the most difficult, I suppose, that ever this State passed through, we in this State had less direct taxation, less privation, less dislocation of the business routine of the State, better unemployment pay and conditions, a saner outlook of the situation, and a freer and easier flow of spending money than obtained in any other State of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Latham: And increased production almost everywhere.

Mr. DONEY: Yes.

The Minister for Employment: Including the unemployed.

Mr. Latham: We did more than the Eastern States did, and you know it.

Mr. DONEY: When we compute the achievements of the last Government it is

fair to compare them with the work of similar Governments in the Eastern States, carrying on under entirely identical conditions. If we make that contrast the work of the late Government in this State stands out in highly favourable relief. Most elections are made and unmade in the metropolitan area. The previous Government in so far as elections in the metropolitan area were concerned were not tested upon their record, but upon the supposed attitude of certain members of the Government towards the Lotteries Bill and, I suppose, crosswords. Having regard to that I say it is a pretty rotten reflection upon the mentality of a great many city people that they should, in a time of great national stress, forget the main troubles besetting the State, unemployment and other things, and fight the election on crosswords.

Mr. Griffiths: On threepenny crosswords.

Mr. DONEY: This does not apply to every electorate in the metropolitan area, but it does apply to four or five of them. I thought the depression had sunk deeper than that, but apparently it was not so. I admit that many people find temporary affluence through crosswords, but I cannot see any sense in draining the shillings from a thousand or two poor people to enrich one. My reference is mainly to the newspapers. They regarded the election as a Heaven-sent opportunity to get back their beloved crosswords. I know they put up a really frenzied fight to get rid of the particular Minister and his associates, who were considered to be responsible for depriving them of their weekly flutter. Being ably led, they won, but it is no credit to the leaders that they should have so scandalously misused the election, rather than permit it to be the means of registering the judgment of the people upon other and graver matters, of which there certainly was no lack on that occasion.

Mr. Wansbrough: You are not crediting the electors with having much intelligence.

Mr. DONEY: I do not say that crosswords won the day for the Labour Party, although they played their part. Having regard to that mass movement known as the swing of the pendulum, I believe the party would have won in any case.

Mr. Hawke: Do you not think that crosswords did the ex-Minister for Mines as much good as they did harm at the recent elections?

Mr. DONEY: I did not catch the interjection. The elections certainly taught us something of the power of the Press. They showed us plainly that certain newspapers in the metropolitan area were not above exploiting the weaknesses of the people, not for the benefit of the people but for the benefit of that section of the Press to which I refer. I am ready to admit that generally speaking we have a fine Press in Western Australia. Certain newspapers I can think of I regard as almost indispensable, but in respect to certain others I am of opinion that if we are to judge them by the benefits they confer upon the State, they might as well be suppressed altogether.

Mr. Moloney: There is a little Hitlerism there.

Mr. DONEY: I must make reference to the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. As usual, it was a disappointment. I have listened to five of them, and every one has been declared a disappointment. This one was, just as the others were. On this occasion that which we know already we were told once more, and that which we badly wanted to know and listened intently for, we were not permitted to learn.

The Minister for Mines: You will learn it in good time.

Mr. DONEY: I am not complaining. I am sorry the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Wise) is not in his seat. The House certainly could not have failed to be thrilled by the wonderful picture he painted of the future of the banana industry at Carnarvon. I am pleased that the improvement he referred to has actually come about, but while that is all very well so far as it goes, as the star item in what is really a Government manifesto supposedly comprehensive of the hopes and intentions of the Government, I cannot help saying that the banana was boosted far beyond its deserts.

Mr. Latbam: It is a dessert.

Mr. DONEY: I have had a little experience of growing both bananas and pineapples and I am pleased to be able to admit that the Carnarvon product is everything the member for the district claims on its behalf.

Miss Holman: Have you tried them?

Mr. DONEY: I did not catch the interjection.

Mr. Latham: But you caught the banana.

Mr. DONEY: No doubt it was a very entertaining interjection, but I did not hear it. Although these products do, in a sense, tickle our palates, economically speaking, they do not save our lives.

Mr. Wise: It is a necessary article of food.

Mr. DONEY: Economically it plays a very small part in this State.

Mr. Wise: The industry was the means of sending £25,000 to the Federal Treasury in a few years.

Mr. Withers: Instead of the money going to Java.

Mr. DONEY: When the output of the gardens that are being brought into cultivation at Carnarvon grows to the extent indicated by the hon. member, no doubt we shall give the subject a little more time than we can afford to give it to-day.

Mr. Wise: Now is the time.

Mr. DONEY: I am not disparaging the industry, but am indicating that, having regard for graver matters which should have been referred to in the Speech, it seems almost an absurdity that the star piece should have been merely a banana.

Mr. Wise: The North-West is entitled to some attention.

Mr. DONEY: If matters of urgency to the State had been dealt with in the order of importance, we would have read in the Speech first and foremost some reference to the plans of the Government for the rehabilitation of the man on the land. I was surprised and most others must have been also, to read not a single word about it. Even now, I cannot understand why it was not mentioned. I do not accept that omission as implying that the Government have no reconstruction policy of that kind. I prefer to think, and this is probably the truth, that they found that this very complex and difficult question as yet shows no signs of yielding to any acceptable solution. The question is a difficult one, and we all realise it. It was the intention of the Country Party, had it been returned in sufficient numbers, to establish a board to immediately set about reconditioning farmers' debts.

Mr. Withers: How could your party have been returned if they did not contest sufficient seats?

Miss Holman: They intended to have a majority in both Houses.

Mr. DONEY: I am merely pointing out what was the intention of the Country Party had they been returned to power as was quite possible. This was no mere expression of opinion as to what was desirable, but it was the fixed intention of the party to do that, should the opportunity arise. It was the principal plank in their platform. They regarded it as the principal job confronting them, no matter what Government might be returned. The task which would have been set that board would have been to reduce all debts, secured and unsecured, to a point that would have allowed some profit to the farmer. It was the general idea that that task should not be tackled until there was some return to normality. The point is, in view of the reduced value of money, and of the many confused suggestions concerning the stabilisation of currency, who is there to-day that can determine when we are likely to return to normality or to normal prices? It may be five years before that happens, perhaps more, perhaps less. Who can tell? Surely we are not prepared to drift along meanwhile, feeding the farmer on the thought of bonuses from Federal sources, or of a casual grant from the Finance and Development Board, or some promise of alleviation by this, that or the other dubious means. I hope we are not prepared to do that for we know we cannot do so. During the past 12 months there has been an improvement, a barely perceptible one, in the position; a slow and painful drag, as it were, around the corner. At the moment we are facing an uplift in the price of wheat and wool, and of certain other primary products, with prospects also of slack harvests in America, although that feature, unfortunately, is offset to some extent by better harvests in the grain producing countries of Europe. However, the point is that we in Western Australia are by no means assured that our harvest will be such that we shall benefit from the higher price. We are altogether dependent upon rains; and if this year there are no very late rains, possibly we shall finish up with an aggregate return from our wheat lands not one whit higher than that which we secured last year. But even supposing we do get a good harvest and a good price, that will not rule out the need for such a reconstruction

board as that for which I have pleaded. Indeed it would take probably five good harvests at good prices to enable the farmer to pay his present indebtedness and return to the same footing, more or less, as obtained in 1929. We must all realise that the law of averages is not going to be so generous as all that to us. My view is that, for the reasons I have stated, this is the time to act. Certainly we have no stabilised conditions to help us, and we do not know when stabilised conditions will come. In those circumstances it is plainly our duty to assume a basis. This doctrine I have preached before. If we base our idea of the value of farms upon, say, 3s. 6d. per bushel for wheat and 1s. 3d. per pound for wool, we shall not be too far wide of the mark. I admit that those figures may possibly require some amendment, but the point I wish to make is that if we insist on waiting for normality we may have to wait until we find very many more of our farms empty of owners. I think, too, that in considering this question we need to bear in mind, as showing the urgency of the matter, that not only has the farmer to overtake the huge accumulation of debt—which, after all, he can never be expected to liquidate—but that other factors enter into the consideration: that the farmer's horses are old and worn and need replacement, and that his machinery, too, is old and worn and much out of date. From those two causes his workmanship is naturally now below his usual standard. Further, there is the fact that his improvements have depreciated in value, partly because he has had no cash to maintain them, and partly because he has had no incentive to keep them up to date, but chiefly—and this is the most unfortunate fact of all—because the farmer and his wife are a great deal older now than they were three years ago. In one sense it is quite true to say that during the last three years the farmer and his wife have aged ten years; and the only thing which will give them the necessary encouragement is to have what I suggest, a revaluation of farming properties and movable assets and liabilities. I am not suggesting that this reconstruction of the farming position is wholly a responsibility of the Government. I prefer to regard it as a responsibility of this House, and I make no doubt whatever but that every member of the party to which I belong, and also every member of the Nationalist Party,

will be only too ready to co-operate with the Government in any way the Government themselves may suggest to us. Now I wish to make a brief reference to the returned soldier upon the land. I shall not ask for any special treatment for him. The soldier himself has never asked for it. He will be quite content if he gets what others get. Let me mention a few facts which are liable to be forgotten. After that I shall put it to the House that the returned soldier is entitled to the same treatment as his neighbours receive. Hon. members are aware that the most urgent cases in this regard, cases with the heaviest over-capitalisation, are to be found among the comparatively few returned soldiers who still remain on the land. Undoubtedly these few survivors—and this year they are few indeed—together with the less fortunate, or more fortunate, I do not know which term to choose, of their comrades who have fallen by the wayside represent something of a tragedy. I am informed that the position of the returned soldier upon the land in the Eastern States is worse even than the corresponding position in Western Australia. If that is so, it is indeed a great pity. Eastern States returned soldiers on the land must indeed be badly off if their situation is worse than that of their comrades here. For this position—let me make myself plain—I do not blame the present Government. The blame, if it lies on anyone at all, rests upon the whole State, and must be borne by the whole State. The point is that when we settled the returned soldier on the land, we did so with the idea that we were doing him a particularly good turn. Actually we were doing him, though without realising it, a grave disservice indeed. Without realising what we were doing, we spoiled many a good man by putting him upon a farm the productivity of which was such that he had not the slightest chance of ever paying interest on the purchase price. For that matter, on the majority of farms even a couple of years after the start of settlement, even with high prices then ruling for farm products, there was equally no chance for the returned soldier to pay his way. I repeat, I do not blame anyone in particular for the position. We are all of us now a great deal wiser than we were in the years from 1920 to 1925. I bring the matter up only in order to have an opportunity of stressing the fact that there yet remains a chance

to make good the blunder to which I have called attention. We can do that by the simple and fair expedient of letting the returned soldier pay no more for his farm than it is worth. To me it seems only fair-play and decency to recognise that away back in 1920 and up to 1925, during which period the bulk of soldier settlement took place, we were prone to regard the acquisition of liabilities with a stupid complacency at which to-day we stand amazed. Not only was the returned soldier a little to blame in this regard, but Governments, banks, farmers, graziers, pastoralists and home-builders all had the same deadly idea that there was nothing like credit. Money was never so plentiful as at the time when the returned soldier was placed upon the land. In those days there was money to burn, and certainly we did burn it up. Naturally, the man who acquired the greatest relative weight of liability at that time was the returned soldier. During those five years he was practically the only man in the market eager to buy farms. That fact created a keen body of sellers. A few men here and there—not a great many, I hope, in these days—will say, “What is the returned soldier growling about? He was not forced to buy his farm.” Assuredly he was not, I agree. Such men go on to say, bluntly, “Having bought the farm, he must stick to his bargain.” If that view is accepted, if we decide to squeeze the returned soldier on the land, what, after all, shall we succeed in extracting from him? Not very much. As regards the constant references to the bargain into which the returned soldier entered, morally that bargain was no bargain at all. When the soldier came back to his own country, he was in no mood to bargain. In point of fact, he came back full of thankfulness at returning, and his only idea was to carve a little niche for himself and crawl in and so once more become part of the economic life of the State. It was just then that we loaded him up with this impossible proposition. I mention that fact merely as an additional argument tending to show that it is fair and necessary to set about, as soon as possible, the extremely difficult task of creating a board for the re-appraisement of farm values. The duty of the projected board would not by any means be to cut down values. Nowadays there is no question of cutting down the values of farms. As

a matter of fact, everyone will agree that farm values have cut themselves down. Values to-day simply do not exist; they have vanished of their own accord. The board's function will merely be to move around the countryside attaching the due measure of depreciation to this farm and that farm in respect of which application for reduction of liability has been made. I wish to bring before the House, and more especially the Minister for Lands, another phase of land settlement, but a phase of far less prominence.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. DONEY: There is but one other matter to which I desire briefly to draw attention. It has to do with the reduction in the price of poison country, and will mainly affect the districts adjacent to the Great Southern railway, particularly those to the west of the line. It may be recollected by members that in February last the then Minister for Lands, the present Leader of the Opposition, announced through the “Government Gazette” and the Press, that it was the intention of the Lands Department substantially to reduce the price of poison land, according to the quantity of poison on the holdings and the cost of eradication. That was all to the good. The reduction in price was largely availed of and led to the easement of the position of a great many settlers. Recently I tried to have that easement applied to a repurchased estate farm held by a returned soldier. The application was turned down by the department, and quite properly so in the circumstances. The department pointed out that the presence of poison on the holding had been taken into consideration when the price of the land was fixed. I do not dispute that fact, but the point is that all land affected, irrespective of whether it was taken up under conditional purchase or any other method, was similarly dealt with in that the cost of eradicating the poison was taken into consideration before the price was fixed. Therefore, the reason advanced by the Lands Department, when they turned down the returned soldier's application, had no bearing on the subject at all. When the then Minister for Lands made his announcement, he made no mention of any exemptions. I desire to bring this matter under the notice of the Minister for Lands in particular, although

he is not in his place at present, because quite a number of somewhat similar applications will be made, and I know full well that the decision in the instance I have referred to will apply to subsequent applications that will be made. I therefore draw attention to the matter in order that the Minister may decide at an early date upon any adjustments to be made.

MISS HOLMAN (Forrest) [7.35]: In common with other members, I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your elevation to the high position you hold and also the Ministers upon their assumption of office. I am sure the Government will justify all our expectations and that the end of their present term of three years will demonstrate that notable work has been achieved in assisting to remedy the unemployment problem and to promote the prosperity of the State. Many members of the Opposition have complained about the contents of the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. I have read the document and I have found more of interest in it than was contained in the Speech delivered to Parliament at the opening of the 1932 session. The latter was a very short document and left out many important matters that find a place in the Speech that was delivered by the Lieut.-Governor at the opening of the present session. The items contained in the list of legislation in the 1932 Speech referred to trivial matters and the question of unemployment was passed over lightly. On the contrary, the later Speech takes due notice of the North-West, which was practically ignored in the 1932 Speech, and deals more fully with the problem of unemployment. Unfortunately, the latter difficulty has been apparent for some years past but now, with the advent of a Labour Government to power, we can hope for some help and assistance in arriving at a solution. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) claimed that the result of the general election was not an indication of the considered judgment of the people. That was rather a strange statement for him to make, seeing that his party advocated secession and the people voted in favour of that policy. I suppose that, in his belief, the people showed good judgment in voting for secession, thereby disclosing their well-considered and well-balanced opinion. When it comes to a vote in support of the Labour Party, his view of the people's decision is quite differ-

ent. There are many matters that will have to receive attention at the hands of the Government and these will include the provision of educational facilities for the rising generation. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) was quite right in his references to the Education Vote. Opposition members who disapproved of his remarks were wrong in their contentions. We cannot afford to cut down that Vote. I was sorry to hear that the continuation classes had been considerably reduced, if not altogether cut out, and that the teachers' college at Claremont had been closed by the previous Government. I hope the Government will rectify those two matters in the near future. I wish to draw attention to one matter relating to the correspondence classes, although my complaint does not lie against anyone in Western Australia. Prior to October of last year, the teachers associated with the work of the correspondence classes sent short personal notes with the lessons posted to the children in the country. Members will understand what an encouragement to the children those little personal notes represented. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth Government prohibited the sending of the personal notes with the lessons, and I fear this will lead to the diminished usefulness of this work.

Mr. Mann: That is quite true.

Miss HOLMAN: The position of children in the cities, who are in personal touch daily with their teachers, is very different from that of children in the country areas who receive their lessons by post. The latter are entirely dependent upon the notes from the correspondence teachers for the personal touch that means so much. I understand the Government have already moved in this matter, and I trust they will do everything possible to urge the Commonwealth Government to remove the regulation that was framed, I believe, for the special purpose of preventing the postage of these personal notes to which I have referred. The correspondence system has been greatly praised because of the excellent work that has been performed. It has also been commended for the encouragement it has afforded in the development of the ability and capabilities of children residing in the outer areas. I am afraid that if the Commonwealth Government persist in their regulation much harm will be done and the children in the country districts will not have the same benefit as they derived in the past from the

correspondence classes. Further educational facilities are required in the country areas. I want a few new schools in my electorate, requests for which will be placed before the Government in due course. Help is also required for the hospitals in the timber districts. Unfortunately, most of the men in my electorate are timber workers, and the timber industry has been hard hit by the depression. So to speak, the industry was in a flourishing condition one day and the next day almost every mill was closed and the men became dependent upon Government assistance for their daily bread. In former days the hospitals in the timber areas were almost entirely self-supporting, but enjoyed some Government assistance. Formerly also the medical funds were maintained at such a figure as to enable the medical requirements of the people to be met and the necessary subsidies to be paid to the doctors. From a condition of comparative prosperity the funds, with the advent of the depression, became almost depleted. I am afraid we shall have to ask the Government for more assistance because, although the mills are closed, the timber workers and their families are still in the districts referred to. Around Dwellingup there is a large population, although the mills are not working. It is essential that an X-Ray plant be installed in the local hospital. It is more than 12 months ago that I was told my request for such a plant stood high up on the list. In the meanwhile, other hospitals have been provided with X-Ray plants, and the Dwellingup hospital is still without one. For instance, a plant was installed in the Northam Hospital, although it was not since the present member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) became a member of this Chamber.

Mr. Latham: That plant was bought out of their own funds.

Miss HOLMAN: Probably with some Government assistance.

Mr. Latham: I think some bequests were made to the hospital.

Miss HOLMAN: At any rate, the Dwellingup hospital still requires an X-Ray plant.

Mr. Thorn: You ought to get it now.

Miss HOLMAN: Yes. The residents of the timber areas have been noted for the work they have carried out for themselves, but in view of the present-day conditions,

we are forced to apply for Government assistance. If an X-Ray plant were installed at the Dwellingup hospital, it would mean that an injured worker could be adequately treated locally, instead of having to be conveyed by car to Perth, 70 or 80 miles away, often while suffering great pain. There are other disabilities under which the timber milling centres are labouring and these relate to transport, postal and railway facilities. We have not been able to have our requirements met so far. On the Dwarda line there are three mails a week. If a person in that district wishes to send a letter to Perth, there is a mail on Saturday afternoon, another on Tuesday afternoon, and the third on Wednesday afternoon. If the letter should be posted on Wednesday afternoon after the train has gone, it will not reach Perth, although it has but 80 miles to travel, until the following Monday, unless it is carried by the kindness of a man who runs a motor bus from Holyoake to Pinjarra each morning. I am not one who supports the motor bus against our railway facilities, but this is a case where the Government could very well take into consideration the disabilities of that district. The man who runs that motor bus has been running it day in and day out, sometimes at a loss, for about nine years, and the granting of his application for an extension of the right to run that bus to Perth would mean a great boon to the people of the district. They have only three trains a week, but they can get down to Pinjarra by the bus any morning and come on to Perth by the railway, but cannot return by rail the same day. As I say, if the application for the extension of that bus service were granted it would be a great boon to the people of the district, while not coming into direct conflict with the railway service. Many other bus services have been increased without half as much right as this service has. I suggest to the Minister for Employment that when he is considering his plans for reproductive works for the benefit of some of our unemployed, he should consider also the request that has already been made from the Brunswick district for a water supply. At present we have there a small weir which is not in very good condition. I understand the water seeps out, and consequently when the summer is very dry there is not sufficient water in that weir to supply the railways and the people in

the town. I would commend this proposal for a water supply for Brunswick to the Minister, and ask that he give it favourable consideration. The request has been made by large numbers of people in that district, and I feel that the expense involved will be amply repaid by the good that will be effected. The biggest problem before us is that of unemployment. As I previously said, the people in the Forrest electorate have suffered from unemployment as much as any other community in the State. Our timber trade fell off almost to nothing, notwithstanding which the State sawmills continued to work. They did not work consistently on full time, and some of them have not worked on full time at all during the depression. However, not one of the State sawmills was actually closed, and between them they were able to keep about 600 men working. For this, great credit is due to the management of the State sawmills, particularly when it is considered that private mills did not do anything very much to keep their men at work, but simply threw them on the State for sustenance immediately the depression came, and, in one case, at least charged them 2s. a time to ride a little way on their tricycle, although unemployed and in receipt of Government sustenance. The private mills in the majority of cases did not attempt to help those people by giving them work. I feel very keenly on the subject of sawmills and timber concessions, and I should like to see some regulations pertaining to the mining industry put into force in the timber industry, so that if a company will not work its concessions, the Government would take over those concessions and see what could be done with them. We have in the timber districts about 900 forestry workers, men on sustenance working in the Forrest electorate. A large number of them are single men. I am sure their condition will be improved by the proposal of the Minister, as published in this morning's paper, to raise the sustenance rates for those workers. The rates proposed for married people, too, will no doubt improve their position. The worst part that has to be faced in respect of unemployment in the country is that of clothing, bedding and household requirements of the unemployed wear out, and beyond sustenance those people have nothing whatever with which to replace those things. I hope that in the future they will be

able to get some replacements of their household necessities. We have heard a good deal of the block or task system as applied to sustenance workers in the Forrest electorate. That system is not altogether satisfactory; sometimes the blocks are too big and the work too much in comparison with the money a man is allowed to earn. We hope the Minister's proposal for an appellate board will do something to remedy this. Families with children over 14 years of age have constituted a crying need for attention in the past. There are to be found families with three or four children under 14 years, and three or four others over 14 years, and of course the greater the number over 14 years, the greater the total number that have to live on the sustenance given in respect of those under 14 years. I have heard criticism about the appointment of the Economic Council by the Minister for Employment. I sincerely believe that council is going to help, particularly in respect of unemployed youths. I think that council will be able to do something to remedy the position of these boys and girls who cannot get any work at all. We have, perhaps, to go to the country to find unemployment amongst the youths of the community at its very worst. Boys and girls in the timber districts, and also in the South-West, such as Donnybrook, and perhaps around Brunswick, have nothing whatever to look forward to. There are no factories, no places where they can be apprenticed, no places at all where they can be employed. The outlook for the youth of our State is very bad indeed. The children over 14 cannot be sent away from home, because their parents cannot afford to keep them away from home; so we have the spectacle of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of boys and girls throughout the length and breadth of the land who are not able to see anything at all ahead of them and who have, in some instances, been unemployed for years, since leaving school. So I feel that the Economic Council, if it does anything at all, will be able to do some good for the youth of our State. Regarding the land that has been given to timber workers, some of the workers have in consequence been able to supply themselves with vegetables. But that is not all that is required. Some were given the land, but had no means of build-

ing homes for themselves on their blocks. If they could be advanced perhaps £50 to build themselves a couple of rooms, they would save rent and, with a little Government assistance, would be able to occupy themselves on their blocks. There are many industries in the Forrest electorate, such as dairying, fruitgrowing, potato-growing and tobacco-growing. Although the people were encouraged to go in for tobacco-growing, unfortunately there is no market for them. Only the other day I received a complaint from Worsley, saying that several men down there, some of them foreigners, had been growing tobacco but were now in a parlous state because there was no outlet for their produce. The timber industry is to me one of the principal industries in the State, and I should like to remind members that the present marks the hundredth year since the first load of timber was sent away from Western Australia. On that memorable occasion, 30 loads of mahogany were sent to, I think, South Africa, and ever since that day the timber industry has been growing and growing in this State. It is a wonderful industry, and deserves every consideration. A few years ago we had a Timber Industry Regulation Act passed through Parliament, but unfortunately the previous Government saw fit to render it almost null and void, and workmen's inspectors were dismissed, while the principal inspector was put on to other work by the Forests Department. During the last few months the present Government have reduced railway freight, royalty and other fees in the timber industry, and these concessions, I understand, are offered as encouragement to those in the industry to extend their operations and employ an increased number of men. I feel sure that if they carry out their undertakings, if the employers will take advantage of what the Government have offered and given, then no doubt the industry will improve. I do not intend to detain the House at any length, but I feel it necessary to touch upon these few complaints and grievances. Of course, the complaints I have made will be, or have been, already put before the Government, and I hope something will be done about them before very long. Western Australia to-day is not at all as prosperous as it should be, but we feel that prosperous times are ahead, are still

somewhere round the corner, and that we are nearer that corner than we have been during the last few years. I want to thank the House for an attentive hearing. I sincerely congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your elevation to the chair, and also to congratulate the Premier upon his return to office. I am convinced that the victory of the Labour Party at the recent elections was a reflection of the people's wishes, and an indication of what they require shall be done during the next three years. Also, notwithstanding the criticism of members opposite. I am sure that our election promises will be carried out, unlike certain promises made by the late Government at the previous elections.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [8.0]: In congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, on being elevated to your high office, one cannot congratulate oneself. I started on the Opposition side of the House nine years ago, progressed to the Government benches, and now have fallen back to the cross benches and am starting all over again. I propose to dip into some of the questions raised during the debate because I feel that in times like these we should all look outside our particular electorates. Ordinarily members are twitted by critics of the parish pump variety, and of course it is necessary for members to deal with local affairs, but surely at a time like the present when the countries of the world are in such difficulties we should attempt to understand some of the problems lying beyond our immediate borders. The real trouble, in my opinion, must be traced ultimately and fundamentally to the orthodox economists, because they are the final guides of our destiny, and we must surely attempt to find means of discrediting them so that they may be replaced by others more fitted to guide us out of our troubles. It is easy to blame banks, Parliaments and all kinds of institutions, but the ultimate person to be discredited, I think, is the orthodox economist. That is very easy to do. Every Parliament sets out to achieve the health, wealth and happiness of the people it represents, but every Parliament to-day has achieved only disease, destitution and despair. The most striking commentary on the situation that I have come across was a statement recently made in the House of Commons by Mr.

Maxton, M.P., a statement that was not contradicted. He said that in 1931 there were 24 years' supplies of goods available to the world if at that time the whole of the world had downed tools. That is a striking statement, because it was at that very time that under the orthodox economists we were able to stage the biggest financial depression in the world's history. From that statement gold and perishables need to be excluded. We are always short of gold and always need perishables, but beyond that there were 2¼ years' supplies of goods available had the whole world downed tools. This shows that our leaders of thought, namely, the orthodox economists who, of course, guide the bankers, including the central banks, Ministers and Parliaments, have been operating on a system that is no longer in existence, and that is expressed by those who study the subject in the phrase that we have now emerged from the age of scarcity and have reached the age of plenty. It is usually stated in this connection that those economists are trying to fit a system of business and economics and finance which operated satisfactorily in a time of scarcity into a time of plenty. Of course we have seen the result. I feel therefore that I should try to assist the Government by pointing out that the only way to get out of our difficulties as a State Parliament is to discredit the orthodox economists—those persons responsible for the Premiers' Plan and responsible practically for the whole of our existence. If they could be discredited before a representative and capable judge, commissioner or court, where there could be no question of political bias, we could make some progress, but until we have utterly discredited before an impartial tribunal, the policy now being operated—the policy of trying to manufacture some imaginary situation—there is very little hope for us. I am not trying to manufacture some imaginary situation. In the last few days a new quarrel has developed between the economists. Take a few remarks by a London banker published here a few days ago, one of course who follows the advice of the orthodox economists—

The bank compliments the Treasury on having demonstrated to the world that divorce from currency in gold need involve no recourse to the printing press to balance national accounts or to give industry an unhealthy stimulus The balancing of the Budget and

the maintenance of a sound currency have produced an era of cheap money and many other advantages.

Almost at the same time the London "Times" published a letter by certain economists of English Universities, and commented as follows:—

The conclusion come to by the "Times" correspondents was that Governments should cease to try to balance their Budgets, and must borrow freely for expenditure on capital account as the means for injecting new credit into active circulation.

Following that we have this statement—

Comes now into the forum Mr. Hartley Withers—

He is well known as an orthodox economist.

Mr. Lambert: Related to the member for Bunbury.

Mr. Withers: The member for Bunbury is not an orthodox economist.

Mr. NORTH: The statement continues—

His latest essay being published in the "Sydney Morning Herald" of 1st July, 1933. The British Chancellor of the Exchequer has been talking about the new policy adumbrated of deliberately unbalanced Budgets. This policy, it has been claimed, is not the broad road that leadeth to destruction after all, but is in reality the straight and narrow path leading to salvation. Borrow money (from the banks, of course), and spend it on public works so that industry will start up again owing to consumer demand.

So there is a new quarrel developing over the argument whether we should balance Budgets or not. After 31½ years of the Budget-balancing attitude, that must come as a rude shock to an already disheartened public. At the back of this question is the suggestion that, under the influence of orthodox economists, Parliaments for many years have neglected their duty by forcing upon the banking institution the unnecessary burden of becoming our currency makers, or becoming private mints. That is no fault of the banks. For a long time I felt very perturbed about that aspect, but the failure has been on the part of Parliaments, though not this Parliament, because we have not the power. Parliaments failed to create their own currency under the Crown's prerogative, and have slowly fallen back until to-day, in Australia, less than £1 in £10 is a national pound. The other £9 are merely fictitious currency created really by the pri-

vate Banks, though in part by the central banks, but purely fictitious currency which might never have been created had the Crown's prerogative been retained and the Government had produced their own currency. The Government actually do so now, but, as I have pointed out, to the extent of only £1 in £10. They have been allowing the private institutions to act for them. I do not blame the private institutions. They have, in a sense, come to our rescue, for a percentage consideration, of course, but no country can ultimately endure upon a currency that is really fictitious. Over 90 per cent. of our currency, whether credit or other form of overdraft, is a debt currency, carrying interest and being repaid, usually being repaid by the borrowing of a larger sum.

Mr. Lambert: How do you suggest that we can overcome the difficulty?

Mr. NORTH: If what I have stated can be shown to be facts, and if it can be demonstrated that the Crown's prerogative can and should be exercised, the Premier would have a good case to place before the Loan Council. He could point out that there is no need for this deliberate plunging into debt in order to meet the needs of those in distress when all the time their own currency is available to them, with the limitation I have mentioned. The Federal Parliament have stipulated a specific relation between notes and gold. That, however, is only a very small matter, in relation to this crisis.

Mr. Lambert: Every country has been in pawn since the dawn of the Christian era.

Mr. NORTH: This trouble began when the cheque-created currency started. Owing to the fact that it is so hard to get publicity through the Press and through broadcasting—perhaps those institutions consider the question not sufficiently interesting—underground movements are being started to effect a cure. That is most undesirable. Surely their case should be ventilated. I have a rather startling document, a manifesto of a new political movement called the Australian Monetary Reform Movement, launched in New South Wales, and with branches, I believe, in Western Australia. I am informed there was a meeting at the Town Hall, but there was not a word about it in the Press. It is all underground. Thousands of persons are joining the movement. It is intended to have committees outside every polling booth and to fight the next Federal election on the issue of monetary reform, and so on. There

is another big movement, the Douglas Credit movement, which has over half a million adherents. In this State there are nearly 40 branches. This is an underground movement because it cannot get the recognition to which I believe it is entitled. I think it should be brought to light so that we can investigate it and ascertain whatever may be learned about it. A letter appears in this morning's "West Australian" over the names of my leader, the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan), Professor Walter Murdoch, and Mr. John Curtin. When such a letter could be sponsored by members of opposing parties, it shows how desperate the situation has become. Perhaps in part it is cheering that this money question has become no longer a party question but is a national question of equal importance with the White Australia policy or the national highway policy. It is very cheering. The fact remains that until we can get full publicity on these questions the movement for reform will be underground—not a very desirable state of things. The ideas at the back of the movement are very much like the ideas expressed in the "London Times" to which I have referred, and which are different from the ideas contained in the banking circular I read out. Their policy is to create a unity of purpose amongst citizens and organisations in Australia to remedy the cause of our economic and social troubles. They first suggest that they are going to exert pressure on Governments in support of the following measures: (a) the restoration to the Government of the Crown's prerogative to use money and credit. Australia's assets, human and otherwise as published in the Commonwealth Statistician's figures were valued some time ago at about £13,500,000,000. These must be the assets they are talking about. The policy goes on to provide for the proper use of our national credit: (1) to reduce taxation, (2) to stabilise prices. They want to restore the price levels to the time when the depression started and enable debtors to get back on to that basis. The third point is that they want to make up Government deficits, and the fourth is the payment of a bounty on wool, wheat and other products, recover costs of production without any addition to the national or floating debt. This is enough to show that the new movement in Australia is determined to follow along the lines upon which people in the Old Country are feeling their way.

Mr. Lambert: Would you favour the cancellation of the bank charter, and replacing that with a National Bank?

Mr. NORTH: That is another question. This movement has no connection with the political question of the nationalisation of banking. If that question is brought in it is quite a separate one. These changes can be operated just as well with national banks as with private banks. It is rather a question of whether some inventor may go along to the Railway Department with a Diesel locomotive and suggest to the Commissioner that by the use of this engine he could improve things 100 per cent., and provide other advantages. This would not necessarily mean that the railways would have to be run by a private company, for that question would not be involved. It is a matter of improving the fluidity and speed of credit.

Mr. Lambert: This Parliament can only deal with them if they are a national railway.

Mr. NORTH: The movement I refer to has only a meaning in our State provided we achieve secession. As things are, however, the Premier is constantly going to Canberra. The only pressure we can exert as a State Parliament is by urging him to influence the deliberations at Canberra by bringing forward these new ideas. Actually they are not new ideas. They are merely underground ideas. They cannot get to the light of day. The number of persons who believe in these doctrines is growing fast. They represent the ideas of persons who are trying to connect up the monetary system with the present days of plenty as opposed to the monetary system in vogue in the old days of scarcity, and the need for repayment of loans which applied in the days of scarcity. The moment you produce more than the market can deal with you get misery and want. That is commonplace. I remember making a few remarks to the electors at Claremont five or six years ago, when I used a phrase which meets the case, that under our economic system universal over-production spells universal ruin.

Mr. Lambert: We have no economic system; only chaos.

Mr. NORTH: We have left the age of scarcity, and have to devise a monetary system that will meet with the age of plenty, that will measure out goods in quantity and not necessity so that every time there is

quantity we have to tighten our belts. In the election for Claremont I had two opponents, both of the same party as myself. One was sufficiently partial to the idea of a public inquiry. Claremont is a conservative seat, but 4,000 electors voted for an inquiry into these new ideas, and 1,600 voted to leave things as they were.

Mr. Lambert: Notwithstanding the fact that you suggested it.

Mr. NORTH: The 4,000 votes entitled me to bring forward these doctrines. It is the least I can do. Seeing that we have to deal with many problems raised during the debate it seems to me it would be possible by the concerted efforts of the House, if a sufficient number of members are prepared to deal with the subject on a suitable occasion, to arm the Premier with a demand to the Loan Council for the introduction of these new ideas. After all they are not new ideas; let us call them unorthodox ideas.

The Premier: They are long over-due.

Mr. NORTH: I have always had a dislike for publicity. The Premier holds the same view; he said so not long ago. If a member desires to avoid publicity he has merely to talk upon these subjects.

Mr. Sleeman: That is not very wide of the mark.

Mr. NORTH: I have attended many functions at which there were far more important persons than myself present, such as His Grace the Archbishop, His Worship the Mayor of Cottesloe, and others. The details of one of these functions duly appeared in the Press, with reports of the speeches, but apparently the member for Claremont was not present. He was a complete ghost. If any member dislikes publicity, which public life so often brings, he has only to make a few suggestions on monetary reform to achieve his end. It is extraordinary the effect it has.

Mr. Lambert: Should you not have consulted Professor Shann before making these statements?

Mr. NORTH: He is a long way off. My Leader made an interesting contribution the other evening to the debate with regard to our industries being put upon their feet. That is one of the chief objectives of the money reform system. He made another point, that each country would naturally

export those things it was best fitted to produce, and import those things it could not produce. In this age of plenty which has overtaken the old age of scarcity a new situation rather comes into conflict with these ideas. In everything except primary production the ability to manufacture has become a simple one for any country. Every country through the extension of exports from the old world and the United States is now able whenever it chooses to manufacture nearly everything it wants. This has caused great complications in respect to exports. We have, too, the well known fact that 95 per cent. of manufacture is represented by the manufacturing processes, and about 5 per cent. represents human labour. We remember in the old days in Melbourne, Sydney or Perth the old bogey that we could not manufacture because of the terrible cost of wages. That is now reduced to infinity because only about 5 per cent. of the cost represents wages, and 95 per cent. represents the process. The substitution of cheap power for the old methods of manufacture has given a new meaning to secondary industry. To-day nearly 90 per cent. of the world's production can be produced anywhere. In every country tariffs exist because each country can easily supply its own market with its own products. I am tempted to make a few remarks about the new economics, but it would hardly be the occasion to do so. The time has gone by for subterfuge. One has to remember the millions of people who are in a state of misery and see whether the new methods can be applied to the situation to assist us out of our troubles. In my district there are two or three ways in which this new credit can easily be absorbed if the Premier is at a loss to know what to do with his funds! One of these things is to extend the deep sewerage system to Claremont. That is a reasonable request. Some ten or twelve years have gone since the septic tank system was brought into vogue in order to avoid expenditure. From Cottesloe hundreds of men have been sent away all over the place making gravel roads for the long distant future to assist in further glutting the market with more produce, when they might well be occupied in their own district doing a little cleaning up. We have seen the Cottesloe sea front almost

smashed to pieces for want of labour on the part of our own unemployed in handling a few tons of stone which is readily accessible to the spot.

Mr. Thorn: That is only a pleasure resort. You do not compare that with country roads.

Mr. NORTH: I do compare it with the construction of a network of gravel roads in places where there is not a cocky within a hundred miles, when such roads can only be used many years hence for the conveyance of produce to an already glutted market. The work is done only to give men something to do. According to eye witnesses there is nothing else in it. I trust the time is coming when some of these works can be done for the people while they are alive to-day, rather than for them when they will be in the next world. The unemployed should be able to spend usefully some of their time in doing something for their own districts. About £30,000 worth of work in Cottesloe will be lost through the efforts of the Government to construct roads for the future export of produce to the London market, when London is already urging us to reduce export produce. I hope in future it will be possible to allow some of these men to do very necessary work in their own districts and restore the beach to a proper condition.

Mr. Lambert: Do you think it would be a good idea to get a shipload of scantlings sent to Cottesloe for this purpose?

Mr. NORTH: It is a necessary and essential work. The sewerage operations referred to could with advantage be carried out. It would be a reproductive undertaking seeing that rates would be collected from the unfortunate residents. If it is desired to pull up the tramlines I hope they will be replaced by trolley buses. The claims of my electorate are I think, on a par with the claims of other districts. It is quite true that the unemployed from the Claremont electorate have been sent all over the country. One learns that in many cases they have been sent to carry out very ambitious works in order to supply a market that is already glutted. The time has come when there should be a concentration upon necessary local works, in order to give the unemployed husbands a chance of seeing more of their unfortunate wives.

MR. MANN (Beverley) [8.31]: I was hopeful that the debate might be adjourned at this stage, but the Premier will not agree; so I must endeavour to make the few remarks I have to offer. Firstly I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on the high position to which you have been appointed. During the last Parliament we had ample occasion to admire the attitude you adopted as Chairman of Committees. I wish also to congratulate the Premier and his party upon their attainment of the Ministerial benches. From speeches made by new members on the Government side of the House one might almost infer that the days of depression are past. The Premier must be proud of the fresh blood in his party, because his new followers have introduced into the Chamber a highly optimistic spirit. The member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) referred to the youths who have entered the House as the result of the general election. I am inclined to agree with the hon. member that youth, not only in this State but throughout the world, must play a large part in shaping the destinies of the human race. In Germany an entirely different attitude from that of practically every other part of the world has been assumed as a result of the methods initiated by Hitler. Whilst I agree to some extent with the member for Northam on the stand taken by the United States with reference to the temporary rehabilitation of the world, I am inclined to believe that the principles of Hitler will run a close second to, if they do not actually accomplish more than, the American method. The member for Claremont (Mr. North) spoke on the monetary question and the position held by the banks. I care not which Government be in power here—whether Labour, Country Party, or Nationalist—unless the present position alters we shall be nothing but a glorified local governing body. Our powers have been and are being whittled away by the Commonwealth. The finances of Western Australia are controlled not by this Parliament but by the Loan Council, the Associated Banks, and the Commonwealth Bank. We must try to show the people who have elected us that we accept the responsibility of control in a definite spirit, and that can only come about by our establishing freedom from Eastern control. Unless that freedom is secured, this Parliament must before long crumble into ruins and be absorbed by the

Commonwealth Legislature. On the hustings I expressed agreement, more or less, with the proposal to reduce the number of members of Parliament; but I do sincerely believe that if we continue in our present condition, the result will be to bring the status of members of Parliament into greater disrepute than at present with the Australian public. There was a time when Parliament was regarded as an exalted body. To-day members of Parliament are subjected to the jeers of Press and public.

The Minister for Mines: Principally those members of the public who have tried to get here and have failed.

MR. MANN: I agree with the Minister largely. However, some newspapers endeavour by their cartoons to make a butt of politicians. That occurs time and again, especially in certain Eastern rags. Even in our daily papers the politician is often presented as a terrible looking man, which I submit is not justified at all. This also happened with regard to the ex-Premier. Such is the position to which Parliament has sunk. I see little prospect of any advance of the State until we again have control of our own destinies. I hope the Premier will allow the subject of currency to be brought before the House for an open debate. The same suggestion has been made with regard to unemployment, and I hope it will likewise apply to the primary industries. I am one who represents a primary-producing electorate, and unfortunately am a primary producer myself; so I know what present conditions are in that respect. I welcome the suggestion for the appointment of a Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank, from which much good may result to the State. There has been a slight increase in wheat and wool prices during the last month or two, but nevertheless there is a great possibility of a decline in the markets of the world. It is characteristic that when the Commonwealth wool enters the world's market the price falls. Before another three years have passed over our heads, before the present Government see the end of their term, we shall, I fear, be in a much worse position than that of three years ago. I shall not detain the House, as what I say will have no effect on the future of the State. What has been said by other members will have little effect indeed on that future. However, we have to live in a new

world; and I believe that in the adoption of younger ideas lies the possibility of recovery. The new conditions must lead to a new line of thought. It has been said that the dead rule the living. I agree with that remark in this sense, that we allow laws and conventions made many years ago still to remain in force. No party has the courage to alter prevailing conditions. Must we continue to go down and down under the present system? What prospect is held out to the boys and girls coming on now? A youth of 17, unemployed, said to his father the other day: "I am not responsible for having come into the world. No more am I responsible for the conditions that now prevail. What is my prospect in life?" That is the view now being expressed by thousands of young men 17 and 18 years of age. Are those youths in 10 years' time to carry the burden of debt we cannot carry? Can they be held responsible for prevailing conditions, which even we ourselves did not make? They take a vastly different view. If ever youth was inclined to Communism, it is so inclined at the present time. I trust the Premier and his Ministers will have three successful years. If the Labour Party can lift Western Australia out of the rut, I hope that party will be returned to power for many years. As regards this side of the House, I feel sure we shall do all we possibly can to help the Government. The present age is an extreme age, and we are concerned for the welfare of this State more than for the welfare of Australia or that of the whole world.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.40 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 1st August, 1933.

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

QUESTION—PROSPECTING SCHEME.

Hon. J. CORNELL (without notice) asked the Chief Secretary: Will the Minister be good enough to inquire from the Minister for Mines whether there is any substance in the assertions made in many parts of the Eastern and Northern Goldfields that the activities of men sent out under his prospecting scheme are being seriously hampered through delay in issuing necessary tools and other prospecting requisites?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: I will.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

President to Present Address.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.35]: I move, without notice—

That the Address-in-reply, as agreed to by the Council on the 25th July, be presented to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor by the President and such members as may desire to accompany him.

Question put and passed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. E. Rose, leave of absence for four weeks granted to Hon. J. Ewing (South-West) on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by Hon. L. B. Bolton, leave of absence for four weeks granted to Hon. J. Nicholson (Metropolitan) on the ground of urgent private business.

181:

SUPPLY BILL (No. 1), £1,500,000.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 27th July.

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.38]: Before dealing with the Bill, may I also be allowed to congratulate the Leader of the House upon once more filling that position. I am sure we all felt, with the news of a change of Government, that Mr. Drew would naturally fall into his old Ministerial position. His wide experience and the confidence all members of this Chamber repose in him, single him out as the ideal Leader. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Kitson on again being selected to take some of the