

it was a critical deception. The notes continue—

Mr. Sadler, Goomalling: Moved as an amendment that Mr. Wood should adhere to the policy of the Australian Wheatgrowers' Association at the forthcoming conference at Canberra.

Mr. Ackland jumped to his feet and said that it was ridiculous to ask Mr. Wood to be tied down to such a request. He attacked Mr. Cullen of the Wheat Stabilisation Board in Victoria for spreading publicity on behalf of the Commonwealth plan.

As only a propaganda agent of Mr. Pollard, said Mr. Cullen.

Mr. Maisey supported Mr. Sadler's amendment and warned Mr. Wood that he would not be in his shoes—

I would like the Premier to take note of this—

—if in the future the State Marketing Act threw growers back on the open markets.

That is the point about which I am concerned. Just imagine if the wheatgrowers were to be thrown back to the wolves on the open market, and conditions such as existed from 1929 to 1939 were to come about once again. I consider that I have given a fair exposition of the wheat position.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What about the member for Beverley?

Mr. REYNOLDS: I think that I will leave the hon. member alone. However, I feel convinced that the wheatgrowers of this State are going to vote whole-heartedly in favour of the Australian Wheatgrowers' Federation scheme.

The Minister for Education: What Mr. Pollard suggests is not the wheat federation at all; it is something quite different.

Mr. REYNOLDS: What is it?

The Minister for Education: It is something different. Work it out for yourself.

The Minister for Lands: That is the point. The hon. member should know.

Mr. REYNOLDS: Had the Minister for Education been in the Chamber earlier, I would have convinced him.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is impossible.

Mr. REYNOLDS: In conclusion, I trust that I have not bored the House but I have endeavoured—

Hon. A. H. Panton: You have done a very good job.

The Minister for Lands: You have thrilled us.

Mr. REYNOLDS: The facts and figures I have given will stand up to any investigation because my information has been extracted from authoritative statements and the statistical figures are irrefutable.

On motion by Mr. Graham, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.48 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 11th August, 1948.

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

QUESTIONS.

ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL.

(a) *As to Patients and Intermediate Beds.*

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many patients are located in the new Royal Perth Hospital?

(2) When will the intermediate beds in the new Royal Perth Hospital be available to patients?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) 189.

(2) Date of opening is governed by availability of nursing staff. This has been affected seriously by the poliomyelitis epidemic. Every effort will be made to open these wards at the earliest date.

(b) *As to Estimated and Actual Costs.*

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) What was the estimated cost of the first section of the Royal Perth Hospital?

(2) What was the actual cost?

(3) What is the estimated cost of the second section which has been started

(4) What is the estimated cost when the full scheme is completed, including necessary land resumptions?

(5) What is the total area of land considered necessary adequately to provide the necessary space for the whole buildings?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) £658,000.

(2) Approximately £1,180,000.

(3) £525,000.

(4) and (5) The ultimate capacity has not yet been decided, consequently cost and area cannot be indicated.

HOUSING.

As to Cost of Homes at Hilton Park.

Hon. G. FRASER asked the Chief Secretary:

What was the cost of homes contracted for in 1946 and completed at Hilton Park in 1947, under the Commonwealth-State rental scheme?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

The average contract prices for homes built in Hilton Park in 1946 were: April, 1946, two bedroom, £925; three bedroom, £1,090.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. HEARN (Metropolitan) [4.36]: At the outset of my remarks, I offer you, Mr. President, my congratulations on your victory at the recent elections and on your re-appointment to the honourable position of President of this Council. I trust that your occupancy of the Chair will be as pleasurable to yourself as I feel it will be of benefit to the members of this House. I would like to offer my congratulations to Sir Frank Gibson and Sir Charles Latham on the honour bestowed upon them by His Majesty the King. Their long record of public service is known not only to the members of this House but throughout the length and breadth of the State. I trust they will both be spared for many years to enjoy their honours and to continue the

good work for which they have been known so favourably for such a long time. I am sure the members of this House will agree that this signal favour has not been conferred upon them undeservedly.

I would like to take this opportunity of paying a tribute to my predecessor in this seat, Sir Hal Colebatch. He is a distinguished citizen of this State and the Commonwealth, and his very long period of public service is recognised not only in Western Australia but throughout the whole of the Commonwealth. I realise the very high responsibility that is laid upon me in succeeding such a distinguished gentleman and I can assure members that it will be my constant aim to prove myself a worthy successor to Sir Hal. I would also like to express my gratitude to hon. members for the very warm welcome they have extended by word and deed towards new members. I am sure that I am speaking for my colleagues in this respect, and in the short time we have been here we have already formed what I feel will be lasting friendships.

I have listened with a deal of interest to the speeches so far delivered on the Address-in-reply. The variety of the speeches has intrigued me and I really wonder just how the Leader of the House will possibly be able to answer all the points covered by those speeches. As one of the members for the Metropolitan Province, I am gratified to know that the Government intends to take advantage of the visit of the British Town Planning Expert, Sir Samuel Abercrombie, and consult him about the long range development of our capital city. As one travels through the outer suburbs, particularly in the northern areas, one is conscious of a problem that will become more urgent every year. I feel that there should be a blue-print for a long range plan for the future extension of Perth. I am glad that the Government is alive to its responsibility to future generations.

The speech of the member for North Province, Mr. Miles, greatly interested me. Certainly the years have not diminished his enthusiasm, and he is to be congratulated upon still calling himself a visionary because I remember that the Old Book says that, where there is no vision, the people perish. During the war period it was my great privilege to be stationed in the great

North-West of our State for a period of six months, and, in the course of my duties, I travelled regularly from Carnarvon to Wyndham, through the back country and round through Marble Bar. Those of us who remember—and all will remember, though in the days of peace we are apt soon to forget the days of war—and know just how we felt about those North-West areas in the dark days of the war, should be able to make a very realistic approach to what I consider is a national No. 1 problem.

We have to remember that the world is shrinking every day. When we realise that we in the city of Perth are only eight hours distant from Broome, we must appreciate that the coming air age brings national responsibilities, and the story told by Mr. Miles of the decrease of population in the North over the last 20 years down to 6,000 or 7,000 at the present time, represents a national calamity. Thinking of the potentialities of those areas, we have to bear in mind that, if it be true that New Guinea is the front door of Australia, then our North-West must be regarded in the same light, because, unless we as a people, either through the State or the Commonwealth, appreciate the urgent need for the rapid development of those areas, we are going to encounter grievous trouble. The Premier should be congratulated upon having made a trip through the northern part of the State and I trust he will make vigorous representations to the Commonwealth Government to ensure that something is done, not on a long range plan, but on a short-term plan, in order that those areas may be populated and made safe for democracy.

In the course of my remarks, I do not propose to cover a wide range of subjects. I wish briefly to refer to some of the problems that formed the main issues during my recent election campaign, and I think that they are topics of interest to the electors, if not of the State, at any rate of the Metropolitan Province. Before dealing with those topics I should like to say a few words on the question of price control. The Metropolitan Province, to my mind, is the nerve centre of the commercial and manufacturing life of the State, and it is has been my privilege for many years to be associated with those interests. In my particular walk of life, I have been in constant touch with business people and I know something of

their reactions in this present contingency. The Government can be assured of the loyal support and co-operation of the business community of our State in the task ahead. The success of State price control is so vital that any possibility of failure cannot be entertained. The business community is anxiously awaiting the announcement of the Government's plan.

Quite recently I had the privilege while in the Eastern States of contacting the State authorities and business interests generally and learning something of the proposed set-up in the various States. After deep consideration, I feel that the Victorian plan is an excellent one and would be very suitable for Western Australia. For the information of members I propose to give a brief outline of the Victorian plan as I believe that that State is moving in the right direction. The name of the first official is decontrol adviser, which to mind, is a very different thing from a price control officer. The decontrol adviser, operating in an honorary capacity, will take the chair at meetings of the decontrol advisory committee, which the adviser will select with the approval of the Minister in charge, namely, Mr. Oldham, the Attorney General of that State. The committee will be advisory to the price decontrol adviser so that its decisions will not necessarily be binding when advice is tendered to the Minister.

The objection to a nominated committee is that Cabinet would be overwhelmed with nominations from organisations and much ill-will would be created as a result of the final selection. The committee is to be fully representative of all interests. It will therefore consist of a manufacturer who is acceptable to the Chamber of Manufactures, a distributor who is acceptable to the Chamber of Commerce, an outstanding retailer, two representatives of rural interests, one of the larger producers such as the graziers and one of the smaller producers such as the dairy farmers, and three consumers' representatives, one of whom will come from the Trades Hall, while the other two will be women aimed respectively with the Liberal and Country Party interests.

The set-up will be as follows: There will be no commodity committees operating under the advisory committee. The co-operation of all trade organisations will be sought and a request made for applications

to be submitted for decontrol or, where that is not immediately possible, for simplification of existing controls. These requests will be submitted to a three-fold test—

(a) Is decontrol sound from a business economics point of view?

(b) Can it be achieved without creating administrative problems in relation to items where continuance of control is essential in the public interests?

(c) Is de-control in the national interests at this stage?

Subsequently, after consideration by the committee and more especially by the member of the committee most closely in touch with the particular problem under review, and after discussion with the prices decontrol adviser and the prices commissioner on the administrative side, advice will be tendered to the Minister. The Minister will then consider the advice from the Cabinet point of view and of policy generally, and will transmit the necessary instructions through to the prices commissioner. The routine therefore will be:—Trade organisations to the prices decontrol advisory committee; from the prices decontrol adviser to the Minister; from the Minister to his administrative officer. It is intended that the prices section will work in Victoria as the prices decontrol branch of the Attorney General's Department and it is proposed that the commissioner will be known as the prices decontrol commissioner.

I trust that our Government will use the wealth of experience that is at its disposal in connection with this vital work, since I believe that on its successful functioning, moving towards ultimate decontrol, lie the future fortunes of this Government. I say that in all seriousness. Never has there been a time when the business interests of Western Australia have been so happy and willing as they are now to co-operate from the point of view of seeing that there is at least a stabilisation of prices with a view to ultimate reduction.

During the elections I mentioned on the platform, many times, the question of Communism. It will be remembered that in the House recently I asked the Government a question concerning the ramifications of Communists in this State. I realise just how careful the Government must be in answering that type of question, though I feel some information could be given not only to

this House, but to our citizens regarding the activities of Communists. I am quite aware that a member in another place has described this as "Red-baiting," but I think that if one considers what is happening in Malaya today, one is justified, as a citizen of the Commonwealth and of Western Australia, in inquiring as to whether we ourselves are free from this pestilent minority which ultimately—and this has been proved in the case of many countries—is able, through apathy and carelessness on the part of law-abiding citizens, to seize control and thus end the liberties of the people.

No-one can possibly be impressed—and I think that goes for men of every political creed—with the Commonwealth Government's attitude on the question of Communism. I believe that whilst it is alive to the danger of Communism, it is prepared to use Communists for political advantage; and until we are honest, until we put the welfare of our country beyond the reach of party politics, I am afraid we are not going to get that straight and undeviating line of conduct that one would expect from freedom-loving citizens. I would like to know whether our own State Government is satisfied with the information received from the Commonwealth as far as Western Australia is concerned. I believe the time has arrived for us to make our citizens aware of the aims and objectives of the Communist Party. They are quite plain and straightforward. They are simply these—

We pledge ourselves to intensify our revolutionary knowledge and practice to better equip ourselves for the historic task now facing us of gaining the people of Western Australia towards the Soviet socialist state.

That statement formed part of a report to a conference of Communists and was unanimously carried by that conference in this State. It is just as well to realise that these Communists have pledged themselves to reach this objective by revolution and, if necessary, by violence.

I suppose most members have read the story of the close-up in Malaya as reported in today's issue of "The West Australian," and I am sure it will be felt that such things could not occur here. But the very fact that they are happening within a few hours of Australia's shores should make us wide awake to the danger that confronts us. I suggest that the question of dealing with

Communists is far beyond a party question. Think of the tremendous ravages they were able to accomplish in Queensland and think of the memorable stand—and I pay a tribute to the Premier of Queensland and his Government on that stand—which was taken! I am not quite sure whether they will not have to pay a much greater price for freedom. I suggest the time has arrived when we, as a freedom-loving people, and when this Government should be prepared to come out in the open and support men of the calibre of the Queensland people who refused to bow down to the few—the minority—who endeavoured to sabotage the whole industrial life of that State.

Twenty years ago the Communist membership was 200. Today, in Australia, on the Communists' own figures, it is 20,000. It must be noted that this party has never believed in large numbers, but has always worked as a minority, influencing and neutralising the rest of the citizens in the particular States in which they have worked. That point should be taken well to heart by citizens of this State. I feel that the Government should do something to give our people some idea of the fact that Communism is not only a menace in the Eastern States, but that these individuals are firmly planted in Western Australia.

I desire to speak for a few moments on industrial relations, and if I might be pardoned for doing so—bearing in mind the remarks of my friend Mr. Bennetts who spoke of the iron curtain that fell around Sir Hal Colebatch and the reactionary forces that arrived in this Chamber—I would like to give reasons why I consider I am at least fairly competent to talk on the subject of industrial relations. I was born in an artisan home where the eternal struggle to live was a very real one and where the family's budget was vital every week. I was almost one of the foundation members of the furniture trade union in Perth, and that might surprise Mr. Bennetts. In the development of my life I have never lost the contact or the point of view of the working man, and as the years have gone by it has been my privilege to lead the employers' organisations of Perth—and I honestly believe that these organisations are not quite as black as they have been painted.

I would like hon. members to cast their minds back to the dark days of the

war emergency when the Commonwealth Government called upon every citizen in the Commonwealth to do everything in his power to co-operate with the Government to resist a common enemy. I am sure that every member in this Chamber took part in that co-operation. The war, by the grace of God, some outside assistance and plus our own efforts, was ultimately won, and I say quite definitely that the contribution made by the businessmen of Australia towards the solution of the immense problems which faced Australia at that time, was of immeasurable value. Apart from some odd letters which some people ultimately received from the various Ministers, what has been the net result of that effort? I say advisedly that every sense of co-operation, every spark of unity, has been destroyed by a subsequent appeal by the Commonwealth Government to class prejudice. I am not defending employers, but I wish to give members a correct and true picture of the situation as I know it.

Let me inform the House that I lived in industrial England before unions possessed any power at all, and I know the tyranny of the employers under those conditions. I could go on, but I do not want to weary the House, concerning the individual bad employer of the Georgian days. I have been in Australia for many years and I have seen the wonderful job done by the industrial labour organisations, but since the war we have lost our sense of values. It appears to me that the extra power given to the Commonwealth Government during the war years, has been used not for Australia as a whole, but for a section of the people, and in endeavouring to serve that section, it has failed miserably. Every rise of the basic wage is followed by a rise in the cost of living. I believe we must get back to basic principles and if the employers admit the evil that existed in the old days, so surely the modern trade union should remember this fact instead of creating a tyranny. It is time we called it a day. We must do this because any rise in monetary wages means increased costs to the workers, and that is doing much to cause an inflationary spiral.

We cannot depart from the old gospel of work and high wages. I believe that men should be able to sell their labour on the best market, but once having sold that

labour, the time has arrived for them to deliver the goods. I do think that there is a clarion call not only to the employing interests of this State, but also to the Labour leaders, to be honest and come right out and tell the world that the only way there can be any real improvement in the living standard is by an increased effort, a united effort, and co-operation between management and staff.

I do not know whether any members have been fortunate enough to peruse a publication entitled "Thinking Aloud," and read in it an article on "The Gospel of Work," as written by A. L. Rowse, who is a well-known historian and a Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford. This gentleman has also been a Labour candidate for the British Parliament on several occasions, and is a very staunch member of the Labour Party. I wish to read one or two extracts because I believe his remarks apply to Australia just as much as to England. He wrote—

For a long time now, I have had this article, with its message, on my conscience. For I know in my bones, as someone who comes from a working class family, has always kept contact with working people, and is deeply anxious that they should do well by the country in the day of their power, that there is something wrong with them and their attitude towards work. It is not, I believe, beyond remedy; but it is very important that someone, above all one of their own should speak out and tell them the truth, with sincerity and simplicity.

There is a most enlightening parallel here to what happened in Russia after the Soviet Revolution. Since we are caught in the difficulties involved in the transition to a new social order, there is every reason why we should profit from other people's experience and avoid the mistakes that cost them so much suffering. For the first four years after the revolution (1917-22), Lenin kept to the programme of complete "wartime communism" which was partly inherited from the controls of wartime and partly due to rushing through the policy of nationalisation regardless of consequences.

The consequences were terrible. Industry went cranking down to complete disorganisation and decay; paralysis afflicted the whole of enterprise; incentive to work was lost throughout the economic system; famine stepped in; hundreds of thousands died of want. Even later, under Stalin, it is the upsetting and damaging of the monetary incentive to work—the simplest and most natural barometer for enterprise—that has necessitated such brutal and barbarous compulsion to work, the forced labour gangs, the concentration camps, the knocking of people on the head, and all the rest of it. And though a lot of that is simply in the Russian tradition—their his-

tory has been full of it—there is a most important lesson for the Labour Movement and its Governments to learn here, if we are to avoid the slow-cracking down of the economic machine to inefficiency and decay with all its consequences in a declining standard of living for all the community. What is the point of all the bright blue prints for the future if this is what is going to happen? The lesson of the Russian Revolution—and we have their experience before us as a lesson: If you monkey about with the monetary incentive to work, if you discourage enterprise and even things up to such an extent that nobody wants to do anything, you set going a process of economic inefficiency and decline with dire consequences—such as only the most drastic remedies can arrest.

The final quotation I shall read from the article refers to trade union restrictions and is as follows:—

One other lesson we can learn from their experience—as to the role of trade unions in a Labour State. Under a socialist, or a semi-socialist economy, there is no good purpose served by the restrictive practices of trade unionism. Their whole aim should be to increase production, since their possession of political power ensures that the surpluses made do not appreciably accrue to private interests any more: they are distributed by social taxation, in social services, etc., back to the people. There is, therefore, no moral justification whatever for their restricting production in any way or by any practices whatsoever; they ultimately impoverish themselves and lessen the whole community's standard of life . . .

And so I think that, whether we like it or not, if we wish to avoid the dreadful recession that we hear so much about, and which has been quoted by our own Prime Minister, the sooner we can get rid of his false value and everyone in his own particular line adopts a keen sense of duty, the better it will be for Australia. We must have a widespread recognition of the community of interest which all sections have in policies leading to improvements in efficiency, the enlargement of our national income and a just distribution of the products of industry. This can be achieved only by an appreciation of actual responsibility by employer and employee towards one another. There must be a generous measure of trust and confidence between employer, management and employee. It was Viscount Cecil who said on one occasion—

Under modern conditions industrial success can only be achieved if all concerned put their whole energy, mental and physical, intellectual and muscular into the common undertaking. They must work as partners and not as rivals.

I now wish to pay a tribute to the commonsense of the mass of workers in this State, and of the employers because as we view Western Australia in relation to the rest of the Commonwealth, we have to admit that we have been fortunately free from industrial strikes of any magnitude. We have only had one strike that we could even talk about, and sometimes I think it would be just as well if we tried to visualise why it is that we in Western Australia have been so fortunate. I consider it is because of the commonsense of the working man and the general attitude of the employers. The more one mixes with the working man the more one becomes convinced of his inherent good sense and decency. However, there is something else to which full marks should be given for our freedom from industrial strife. I refer to the State Arbitration Court.

Since the introduction of the Arbitration Act, credit for which must be given to a Labour Government, there has been built up in this State a record of arbitration second to none in the Commonwealth of Australia, and that has been made possible by the attitude of employees and employers. The employer, it will be conceded, occasionally demonstrates that he has some good points. If we are going back to the time when the Commonwealth Arbitration Court decreed the provision of a 40-hour week, it will be remembered that it was quite competent for the employers here to insist that every separate industrial union should make application to the local Arbitration Court in due course to have that provision applied to its section. The attitude of the employers, however, in common with that of the present Liberal-Country Party Government, was to say to the employees, "You shall have the 40-hour week." That spirit of sweet reasonableness, we felt, and we still feel, should do much to cement the cordial relationships between Capital and Labour. We also agreed to the provisions for annual leave, which involved an extra 14 days on the then period, as well as to the increased margins which first of all applied in the metal trades and subsequently, by agreement, were conceded in every other skilled industry throughout Western Australia.

That was possible because we have, I believe, an Arbitration Court in this State that is functioning as is no other tribunal of that nature in Australia today. We must

realise that on our State Arbitration Court bench we have the youngest personnel of any tribunal in any other part of Australia. That suggests that we have men on the bench who realise we are living in fluid times, and they are able to adjust themselves to changing conditions. Because of their ability to conform quickly to changing trends, I believe they have saved this State quite a lot of trouble. We are also blessed in that regard by the best regulated apprenticeship system operating in the Commonwealth. For that we have to thank the original Industrial Arbitration Act, plus the development of appropriate regulations as the years have gone by, together with the attitude of those who have sat in the Arbitration Court. To them we can be thankful for the development of a very wonderful system of arbitration.

I believe that if we could only realise the advantages of the worker and the employer getting together, and if we could only appreciate just how far we can proceed by that means in getting down to basic principles in endeavouring to apply a little more than the ordinarily acknowledged rate of work today, particularly in view of the tremendous problems facing Australia in these times, we would derive infinite advantage. There is no doubt that under any system of inflation it is the working man who will suffer. I believe something should be done in the matter of get-together conferences, such as have been suggested on many occasions by the Prime Minister of Australia. Failing that, I consider that with the ramifications of Commonwealth awards, much good could be derived from free and frank discussions between Labour leaders and the representatives of the employers in this State.

On the question of our railways, after a searching inquiry and the conclusions of the Royal Commission that investigated our system here have been made known, it is the intention of the Government to bring down legislation dealing with the situation. In those circumstances, I feel the present is not the opportune time for lengthy statement on the subject by any private member. On the other hand, bearing in mind the financial state of our railways and their past history, I trust that the Government will see that in any suggested increases in freights and charges, which have already been forecast in His

Excellency's Speech, the provision made in that regard will be commensurate with the seriousness of the position. Naturally, on such a matter we will possibly not see eye to eye with the people who live in the country areas.

However, what are the facts of the case, from the financial point of view? It is well over 30 years since there was any adjustment of freights and charges. If we had been prepared to run our businesses on the basis of no adjustment for a period of 30 years, we would possibly have been out of business altogether 28 years ago. Seeing that we are living in a period when primary production is prospering and high prices prevail, surely it is not too much to expect that the Government will see to it that the present awful trend in our public finance is stemmed to some extent and the necessary adjustments made to that end! Should the State fall on evil days once more, we shall assuredly have to go to the aid of anyone living in the country districts and possibly we shall have to remit charges under such conditions. I suggest to the Government, therefore, that if it is to do anything in the way of increasing freights and charges, the alterations shall be commensurate with the present seriousness of the railway financial position.

I shall finish my remarks on the note of private enterprise. I believe in private enterprise. I am a product of private enterprise. One of the tragedies of these modern days is the fact that no young person in this year, 1948, can start in business and make a success of it under the conditions that exist today, as was possible for me in 1912. We have lost so many privileges, which have been taken from us one at a time, that if one were to regard the sum total of them, one would get a shock at the realisation of what has been lost. Whatever the Government attempts in the way of commercial enterprises, the private business man could do better. I view with alarm any departure on the part of the present or any other Government in the direction of embarking upon commercial undertakings. I believe the whole administration under Government control prejudices any chance of success in the running of a trading concern. I still believe—I may be a pessimist—that notwithstanding the Royal Commission's conclusions with respect to the Wundowie project, time will

tell and that the Government, if not very careful, will be involved in a much greater financial loss than it ever anticipated. I feel that at this stage I should sound that note of warning. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [5.26]: May I be permitted Mr. President, to express my personal appreciation of the fact that you have been restored to comparatively good health, that you were successful in being returned as one of the representatives of the North-East Province, and that you were unanimously elected as President of this Chamber? I feel it is a tribute that this House paid to you in electing you to your present position unanimously. During the short time I have been in this Chamber I have always found you to be most tolerant and to recognise, and allow for, the shortcomings of members. At the same time you have always endeavoured to carry out the business of this House with the dignity and decorum that are so essential. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the newly-elected members and I trust their stay in the House will be most pleasurable to them.

My congratulations also go to those members who were again returned at the last election, and also to Sir Frank Gibson and Sir Charles Latham respecting the honour that has been bestowed upon them. I desire to associate myself with the eulogistic remarks that have been made concerning them.

We have heard a great deal recently about price-fixing. In the Lieut.-Governor's Speech I notice that reference is made to the fact that, following upon the withdrawal of the Commonwealth Government from price fixation, we are to have placed before us certain legislation for the purpose of controlling prices. I believe it will be necessary for some time to come to fix the prices of certain essential commodities until supplies in that regard at least reach some equality as between the supply and the demand. Due to the fact that this is not a large manufacturing State, it will be necessary to import certain products and manufactured goods from the Eastern States. Bearing in mind the provisions—I think I am right in referring to the particular section—of Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution,

which provides that there shall be free trade between the States, I am just wondering what type of legislation the Government will introduce and how it will endeavour to fix prices of goods and products that are manufactured in the Eastern States.

It will be remembered that, following upon the 1914-18 war, price fixation ceased on the day that peace was proclaimed. On the other hand, I have a very vivid recollection that in 1919 Western Australia made no endeavour at all to deal with any price-fixing legislation. I know that Queensland attempted it and, after passing a certain measure that covered the manufacture of clothing, a firm in New South Wales took action before the High Court under Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution. The High Court ruled that the Queensland legislation was ultra vires the Commonwealth Constitution, and the legislation was therefore rendered null and void. Thus it creates in my mind some wonder as to what action the Government here will take to institute ways and means whereby commodities manufactured in the Eastern States and sold here, shall be dealt with and their prices controlled. I am told that there is to be a conference between the various State Governments to consider how it can be brought about. I still feel that notwithstanding what legislation the Government may place on the statute-book, there may be endeavours to approach the High Court to have it set aside under Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

I have heard some members of this Chamber say that they are not much in favour of price-fixing. The Government has stated its intention to introduce legislation controlling prices, and consequently I am wondering exactly what support it will receive in this Chamber. The Commonwealth Government has handed the baby to the States, and it will now be the States' responsibility. There will be criticism of price-fixing and it is the State Governments that will now be criticised, not the Commonwealth Government. It will be the Government's duty to introduce legislation dealing with the subject that will be satisfactory to the people of the State as a whole, as well as to some of the manufacturing interests in the Eastern States.

Some people and organisations believe the time has arrived when uniform taxation

should be abolished and the States should have restored to them their right of taxation. This is a most important question and one to which the Government and the citizens of the State should give serious consideration. Australia, as a whole, is only as strong as its weakest link. Western Australia comprises one-third of the area of Australia, but has a population equal to only one-sixteenth of the total population of Australia; therefore, it must of necessity cost more to govern this State than to govern some of the populous Eastern States. Victoria is a small State in comparison with Western Australia so far as area is concerned; but it has a large compact population and is very highly industrialised. Therefore, it is possible to manufacture goods at less cost in Victoria than here.

Victoria in the past has also been one of the lowest taxing States of the Commonwealth. In these circumstances, it is but right for the protection of Western Australia that uniform taxation should be continued throughout Australia, so that, irrespective of where one's income is derived, one pays the same rate of taxation. It would be doing Western Australia a great disservice if the States succeeded in again assuming their taxing rights, especially in view of the fact that we have a small population and have to administer a huge area. To travel to some parts of Western Australia involves a journey extending over a day and a night; whereas in some of the smaller but more populous States people can travel to any part of them in eight hours. It would be in the interests of the State to refrain from requesting a return of its taxing rights.

Hon. G. Fraser: The Premier is already wobbling.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I dare say he is, because he has said that he has already had requests made to him from, I believe, the president of the Liberal Party, who is a supporter of the Premier. No doubt the Premier will give some consideration to what he says. The development of our North is of prime importance and I am indebted to Hon. G. W. Miles for his recent speech in this Chamber in which he dealt with many of the requirements and necessities of the North. But, as I have already indicated, Australia is only as strong as its weakest link; and therefore I consider the best way of overcoming the difficulty is to retain uni-

form taxation and for our State to endeavour to secure from the Commonwealth Government as large sums as possible to be made available for the purpose of developing the North.

I regret no reference is made in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech to legislation for the purpose of broadening the franchise of the Legislative Council. A Bill for that purpose was introduced last year. Although it was the policy of both the Liberal Party and the Country and Democratic League to initiate such legislation, for the purpose of granting flatholders a vote, doing away with plural voting and giving a vote to householders' wives, I regret to say that the Bill was defeated. The Government apparently brought the Bill down in good faith in another place, but the supporters of the Government in this Chamber voted against it, and so it was defeated.

Hon. G. Fraser: That is the sort of action that makes members Communists.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That is the sort of action that makes for common sense.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: That may be the opinion of some persons.

Hon. A. L. Loton: This is a House of view.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: It is a party House, and the hon. member knows it is.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You had the best arbitration legislation passed by it.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: In my opinion, that Bill was one of the greatest pieces of political trickery put over the electors of the State, because many of the members in this Chamber were assisting Government candidates on the hustings at the recent elections, and one would naturally expect that it would be their policy to support the Government's action in this matter.

Hon. G. Fraser: Some were members of a Select Committee that recommended it, and then they voted against it.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: It is contrary to the policy of government of the people, by the people, for the people; and it will breed contempt for the parliamentary system.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You know that the keenest advocate of it was defeated at the last election.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: Where?

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: By the electors.

The Chief Secretary: In the Metropolitan Province.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: Notwithstanding the defeat of the Bill last session, I hope the Government will bring in a similar measure this session in an endeavour to retrieve some of the prestige which it lost as a result of the action in this Chamber.

With regard to our railways, I am aware that a Royal Commission has reported upon them and I presume the Government will in due course introduce legislation to implement the recommendations of the Commission. I am sorry to hear at times unpatriotic criticism of our railways, as they are the main means of developing the State and are the arteries of commerce. It is said that the railways are not being conducted on proper business lines; but I venture the opinion that no private company would run a railway for developmental purposes. It would want a large population in the rural districts before it would run a service such as the Railway Department provides. For instance, superphosphate is carried by the railways at 1½d. per ton-mile. Recently, owing to there being insufficient rollingstock, superphosphate was carted by road; but road transport did not cart it for 1½d. per ton-mile, nor were the farmers expected to pay a higher freight, as it would have been unfair to ask them to do so. The Government therefore subsidised the cartage of superphosphate by road, and that subsidy went to make up the deficit.

I see no difference between the Government subsidising road transport for the cartage of superphosphate to the agricultural districts and the railways carting it and in consequence showing a loss, as it is absolutely necessary to foster our agricultural industry. I believe the railways have done a very good job in promoting the interests of the industry. More consideration should be given to the great difficulties that the Railway Department is experiencing in running a transport system of that nature. We have many non-paying lines and, instead of these being a charge against the department, I consider they should be a charge on Consolidated Revenue until such time as they are able to pay their way. If we are to develop the State, the taxpayers as a whole, and not a section of them, must be called upon to bear that cost. We are showing a deficit in the running of our railways, but we are doing something to

develop the State, for which the people should pay.

Hon. G. Fraser: If we put the railways on a business footing, there would be a squeal from all over the country.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: That is so. I recently travelled to the Eastern States, and I take the opportunity of congratulating the Commissioner of Railways on the new Westland train he has placed on the Goldfields run. There is nothing to compare with it in other parts of Australia, where I have been. Further, this State always endeavours to supply sleeping compartments for the second-class passengers, as well as for those travelling first-class and that is something which does not prevail in the Eastern States, except Queensland. Rolling-stock in Western Australia has been short, and so it is in the other States. The criticism levelled against the management of the system in Western Australia is no different from that in the more populous States. One of the Royal Commissioners appointed by the Government to inquire into the management and running of the Western Australian Government Railways is an official of the South African Railways, which have the same gauge as we have here. But the South African Government does not permit competition with its railways. It endeavours to have them protected.

Hon. A. Thomson: Are they not protected here?

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: Other forms of transport are not allowed to run parallel with the railway lines, and the Government there controls road transport as well as that by sea or air. It recognises that its railways are established, as are ours in Western Australia, for developmental purposes and should be protected. I want to bring under the notice of the Honorary Minister for Agriculture the matter of the supply of offal to dairy producers and poultry farmers. This is a subject I have endeavoured to raise before in the House. There was a time when the Department of Agriculture controlled the distribution of offal, but now it appears to be in the hands of the millers.

The difficulty, I believe, is that the demand for offal is greater than the supply. That is quite acceptable to those who desire to purchase it for the feeding of stock and poultry, but exception is taken to the prepared foods, or laying mash and dairy

ashes being manufactured and distributed to the producers. Owing to the shortage of offal they are said to contain a large proportion of crushed wheat. The result is that the prepared foods are sold at a wholesale price of £12 per ton and a retail price of £13 per ton. Bran and pollard are sold wholesale at £7 17s. 3d., per ton and retail at £8 13s. 11d.

The Honorary Minister: Too cheap!

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I am given to understand that the prepared foods do not contain the percentage of crushed wheat that they are supposed to. As the return for the products of the dairy farmers and the poultry farmers is computed on the cost of production, they are not receiving a very fair price. If they were to obtain bran and pollard at £8 13s. 11d. per ton, instead of £13, as is the case with prepared foods, they would be able to show a larger margin of profit. I would, therefore, like the Honorary Minister to give further consideration to the question.

This matter is not brought forward as an item of criticism. I believe the Minister is conscientious, and has looked into the subject, but it appears to me there is something wrong. The flour millers are controlling the mill offal. If one were to telephone to a mill and ask for five tons of offal, he would be laughed at; but if he asked for five tons of prepared food he could get it without any trouble. Consequently, I believe there is something wrong. The milk producers have told me that owing to the exceptionally dry season and the lack of green feed, the milk that has been produced has been low in solids and butter fats. That has caused the milk to fall below the standard required under the Health Act.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It must be a pretty low standard.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: It is low to this extent, that where samples have been taken prosecutions have been launched.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I think the butter fat test for milk is 3.2 here.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: The dairy producers have asked that the summonses be withdrawn because, owing to the shortage of green feed and offal, they are not responsible.

Hon. L. Craig: Feed has very little to do with the quality of the milk. It is the cow.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: The Health Act provides that vendors who sell under-standard milk shall be prosecuted. No local health authority is empowered to withdraw a summons once issued. Consequently, the summonses have been dealt with and the court has had to exercise its jurisdiction. I mention these facts to show the Honorary Minister that there is a great deal of discontent in connection with the supply of offal.

I want to draw the attention of members to the importance of composting municipal garbage. At present, garbage is destroyed either by incineration, which is extremely costly, or by being dumped into some low-lying portion of land which it is desired shall be filled in. That also costs a great deal and it is a nuisance to the people of the surrounding district. The method of incinerating the garbage is expensive because the capital cost is very large and, in addition, the residue must afterwards be disposed of. By either of these two methods we lose something of great value to the State and that to my mind, is of national importance. The material for use in the making of artificial manures is buried and destroyed. If the system of composting were adopted, a nuisance could be converted into a valuable asset.

The composting of this waste would provide hundreds of tons of humus which could be used to return certain minerals to the soil. Nature has ordained that trees shall have a certain amount of foliage, which, in the first place protects the land and, in the second place, when it falls to the earth, sets up eventually a form of humus which is absorbed by the land. As we clear various properties for agricultural purposes we do away with the protection afforded by the trees and so provide the means by which erosion takes place. When there is no protection from trees, erosion of the soil follows in the wake of excessive wind and rain. It is considered that a system of composting the garbage of cities could be undertaken. It could be done by the use of activated sewerage sludge, many hundreds of tons of which are now being sold to gardeners of all descriptions.

Hon. A. Thomson: How much a ton is paid for that sludge?

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I could not say; I understand it is sold by tender. That sewerage sludge could be used as an activator for municipal garbage so that it could be turned into a very good fertiliser which would provide humus for the soil. At present we are importing inorganic fertiliser which is merely used as a tonic for the plants. That is to say, it assists them to grow but does not put anything back into the land. I ask the Government to endeavour to call a conference of some of its officers to deal with the question. The activation by sewerage sludge is called the "Indore Method," as it was first used in Indore. During my recent visit to Sydney I made an inspection of another form of composting. There they are using cultivated bacteria. By the use of that bacteria, garbage that goes through a cylindrical type of vessel at a temperature of from 75 degrees to 80 degrees F. passes out, after treatment, at from about 175 degrees to 180 degrees F. That is utilised as a fertiliser and is being used very extensively in parts of New South Wales. Although the plant I refer to is only very small and the undertaking is in its infancy. I understand that new plants are to be erected in North Sydney, so they will be able to deal with a great deal more of the garbage. May I be permitted to quote a statement by Sir Albert Howard, formerly Director of Plant Industry, Indore, and Agricultural Adviser to Central India, who said—

The condition which results from the operation of Nature's round, from the orderly revolution of the wheel of life, from the adoption and faithful execution of the first principle of agriculture—there must always be a perfect balance between the processes of growth and the processes of decay. The consequences of this condition are a living soil, abundant crops of good quality, and livestock which possess the bloom of health. The key to a fertile soil and prosperous agriculture is humus.

In the metropolitan area of Perth a conservative estimate of organic house and trade refuse suitable for composting that is at present dumped and burnt, would be not less than 60,000 tons per year which, if composted would return 30,000 tons of humus. The expense involved in treating this would be no greater than the present cost of disposal, and allowing for the value of the manufactured fertiliser, there would

be a saving to the community of approximately £100,000 per annum, apart from the more important savings through improved health and increased production. I am asking the Government to give consideration to this question because I believe it is of national importance to this State. I would like to point out that Sir Stanton Hicks, a very eminent medical man and an authority of very many other questions, including composting, will be in Perth for the Medical Congress shortly. I therefore ask the Government to endeavour to contact him whilst he is here with a view to finding out something more regarding that which I have already discussed.

Hon. E. H. Gray: He might come down to Fremantle.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: He is going to Fremantle. The question of housing has been mentioned in this House and I am very disappointed in the treatment that Fremantle has had in that regard. As a matter of fact, some figures were drawn up and presented by the Fremantle City Council at a deputation to the Minister, at which I was present. A few months ago, the figures worked out at one house per 1,000 of the population per year and that is against 22 per 1,000 of the population per year in other local authorities. I feel that Fremantle is entitled to more consideration because it is an industrial centre. We are endeavouring to encourage the establishment of industries there and naturally we desire to provide homes for the workers. Ten months ago it was decided that the State Housing Commission would build 60 homes, under Parts III and IV of the Workers' Homes (Commonwealth Housing) Act, in the White Gum Valley district, but no start has been made with the work. On making inquiries I was informed that the architectural branch of the State Housing Commission had decided that the land was unsuitable. On making further inquiries I was told that the land was of a stony nature but when I pointed out that houses could be built on brick piers I was informed that the area would be too costly to sewer. That was the last straw that broke the camel's back, because the land is not even a seweraged area! We were told by the Government many years ago when the Fremantle council adopted the septic tank system, that the area would never be seweraged owing to a low depression and the necessity to tunnel

through the hills to the ocean. After all this delay, the State Housing Commission has now decided that the land is suitable and they do intend to build 28 houses in the future.

Hon. A. Thomson: You did get some results then.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: As a result of the deputation to the Minister and the efforts of the members for the Fremantle district, we, at least have got somewhere. I would like to say something with reference to the question I asked the other day regarding houses for two- and three-unit families. Duplex homes, flats and expansible houses have been erected in Belmont and South Perth, but not one in Fremantle. I do trust that some endeavour will be made to expedite the building of houses in the Fremantle area, and that the Government will not be very long in doing so.

The question of hospitals has been mentioned and I want to pass quickly over it, as I do not desire to deal with it extensively after hearing the fine address by Dr. Hislop on the problem. However, there has been a considerable shortage of doctors, particularly for the Fremantle Hospital. As a matter of fact, that hospital is short of two doctors now. It has lacked three doctors, and the other members of the staff have been called upon to work very long hours. I was wondering whether it would be possible for this State to offer some greater inducement to medical graduates, who have received their medical degree in the Eastern States, to come to Western Australia. I do not know exactly how one would do it because I understand the salary offered here is slightly higher than that which is offered in the Eastern States, with the exception of Queensland.

It seems to me that medical students prefer to remain round the seat of learning and are also influenced by the fact that there are in the more populous States larger hospitals that provide them with opportunities for a post-graduate course near their homes. That may be the reason for the shortage of medical practitioners available for Western Australia and I do know whether any other inducements could be offered to them other than a further increase in salary. However, if there is anything more the Government can do, I suggest that an effort be made to induce them to come here. Short of that,

the only other alternative is to establish a chair of medicine in the University of this State, and I trust the Government will give consideration to that matter very shortly. There are many other questions I wanted to deal with, but I understand the Minister desires to make a statement before the tea adjournment.

The Chief Secretary: That need not stop you from going on.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: Very well; I will take advantage of that. I want to bring under the notice of the Minister a very important question so far as Fremantle is concerned. Times out of number references have been made in the Fremantle City Council and also complaints have been received from ratepayers that the nuisance of decaying seaweed around the sea wall at Fremantle has become disagreeable to such an extent that the residents have asked the Fremantle council to do something about it.

Hon. L. Craig: That is some of your compost!

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I do not know what it is, but it is certainly very obnoxious to the nostrils, and, in addition, the fumes from this decaying seaweed are causing the paintwork both inside and outside dwellings around the Fremantle sea wall to become very discoloured. The Fremantle City Council was so concerned about it that tenders were called for the removal of the seaweed, but unfortunately the only tender received was for a sum of £500, and for any additional removal, £350. As the depositing of the seaweed probably occurs at least twice a year, the council could not undertake the responsibility involved. The reason for that is that it is not a responsibility of the local authority, whose commitments only go to high water mark. From the high water mark the responsibility becomes that of the Fremantle Harbour Trust and eventually of the Government. The Fremantle City Council has asked the Harbour and Light Department to offer some suggestion by which the nuisance can be mitigated, but all it has had from the engineer was the reply that he was not able to offer any suggestion as to how the difficulty can be overcome.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Can the seaweed not be used as a fertiliser?

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: Yes, it can be used as a fertiliser.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I understand that during the course of my earlier remarks I contravened the Standing Orders by making reference to the way members behave in this House. I assure you, Mr. President, that it is not my intention to reflect upon this House or upon any member, and if I have offered offence, I express my regret. I was dealing with the seaweed nuisance at Fremantle when the sitting was suspended. I ask whether it would be possible for the Government to arrange for a conference between the Fremantle City Council and the Public Works Department to discuss this matter and perhaps agree to some financial basis for combating the nuisance. In this way, the Government and council would be doing a service to the ratepayers whose properties are adjacent to where the nuisance occurs.

I have arrived at the parish pump stage and am somewhat inclined to be parochial, but I consider that these questions should be brought under the notice of the Government with a view to some remedial action being taken. There is a slip at South Fremantle known as the Louisa-street slip. It has been there quite a number of years, but I have been unable to ascertain who constructed it in the first place and who maintained it until it fell into disrepair. The reason why I am concerned about it is that two ex-Servicemen are engaged in boatbuilding in that locality, and it would be advantageous to Fremantle and the State generally if repairs were effected to the slip so that the boatbuilding industry would not be impeded. I believe that representations have been made to the responsible department, but that nothing has been done. I suggest the Public Works Department should make some endeavour to assist these men to establish themselves in this industry.

I remind members that Fremantle is the western gate to Australia. People newly arrived from Europe and particularly from England come to Fremantle and the first impression they receive is often lasting. Unfortunately, the view of Fremantle from the harbour is not very attractive, particularly on account of the dilapidated buildings that exist on Government property. I am not now referring to the railway buildings on railway property, because it goes

without saying that they are in a dilapidated condition. That is due, of course, to the exigencies of war and the fact that during that period it was not possible to obtain material and labour to maintain them. I realise that whatever material is now available must be used for constructing houses, hospitals and schools, so I am not making any complaint in that regard. I understand that eventually those buildings will be repaired and that the view from the harbour will be improved.

What I wish to bring under the notice of the House is the fact that the Commissioner of Railways, apparently with the idea of earning a little more revenue—I suppose he cannot be blamed for that—allows certain railway property to be leased for the erection of sheds where industries may be carried on. I understand that the Commissioner, unfortunately, is empowered to grant a lease only up to three years, and that the terms of the lease require the lessee to remove the building at the request of the Commissioner. The result is that no private individual who desires to erect a building there for the purposes of his business is prepared to use brick or other substantial material, and thus we have unsightly structures, mostly of galvanised iron, right close to the waterfront.

The Fremantle Municipal Council has beautified the surroundings. It has leased the property once known as "Uglieland" and has transformed that area into a fine reserve at a capital cost of £1,000, and an annual expenditure of something like £500. In addition, rose beds have been laid out in front of the railway station, which have improved the locality considerably, but on the left, looking from that beautified area, are these iron buildings, and they detract from an otherwise aesthetic setting. I hope the Commissioner will look into this matter and, if he desires to lease railway property, will take steps to grant a reasonable tenure so that lessees may erect reasonably decent buildings.

There is a burning question at Fremantle today and it concerns the provision of a maternity hospital. This matter has been discussed on many occasions and a deputation waited on the Minister for Health, but unfortunately we have not yet received consideration. Maternity hospitalisation in Fremantle is very poor indeed. We had a

maternity hospital under the name of Bundi Kudja Nursing Home, which had a license for 14 patients. During the last few months, that hospital has been closed to maternity cases and is now conducted as a general hospital. Hillcrest, in North Fremantle, has provision for 14 patients; Sister Ellen's in East Fremantle for 10 patients, and Sister Bathgate's for a similar number.

In view of the fact that there is a very large district from Rockingham to Mosman Park and around to Canning Bridge that must be catered for, we feel that the time has arrived when the Government should give some indication as to when it will build a maternity hospital. We are aware that these things cannot be done at once, but we desire that some plan be adopted so that we shall know what sort of building will be ultimately erected, where it will be located, and the number of patients it will accommodate. So far we have received no indication at all and, as the district is badly served in this respect, I ask the Minister to discuss with the department the requirements of the district.

Hon. G. Fraser: Not much encouragement is given to increasing the population.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: The question of diphtheria immunisation has been agitating the minds of those associated with health committees and health boards for a considerable time. Fremantle and district can claim to be the pioneers in establishing such a clinic, and this example was followed by other local authorities. Since the introduction of these clinics, the incidence of diphtheria has dropped considerably. The Fremantle clinic has been formed by the co-operation of various contiguous local authorities and has been carried on by a committee acting in an honorary capacity with finance supplied by the respective local authority.

The committee has done a very good job, but we have been told by the Commissioner of Public Health that it is necessary to undertake more organisation and that opportunities should be availed of to visit the various homes. He has decided that notification of births and the addresses shall be given to local authorities with the object of those bodies giving the matter additional attention. The committee considered this proposal and found that it would be neces-

sary to engage an organiser, which would cost another £400 or £500 a year. We asked whether it would be possible for the Government to subsidise the committee for this purpose, but unfortunately no assistance has been forthcoming.

This work has been thrust upon the municipality which, in the earlier stages, undertook it voluntarily, and that it has done a very fine job is indicated by the fact that its example has been followed by other local authorities and that there has been a decline in the incidence of diphtheria to a very low figure. The Government seems to act on the principle that where there is anything pertaining to revenue, it should go to the Government, but where expenditure is entailed for health purposes, it should be thrust on to the local authority. I do not consider that this is fair. This is a national question and, if we are to consider the children of today as the citizens of tomorrow, we should do all in our power to ensure that the children receive this protection. This is a matter in which the Government should be interested, and those local authorities that have assumed the responsibility of organising these clinics should receive some consideration.

Portions of the Fremantle Hospital buildings are now very old. The difficulty seems to be that there is no plan for improvements. We are not in a position to know what to do, because it is necessary that certain renovations should take place; and until such time as a proper plan is evolved, it is not possible for the hospital to know exactly how to undertake the improvements necessary to bring the place to a reasonable standard. I know that the hospital question is actuating the mind of the Government—or Governments for that matter—but consideration must be given to the formation of a plan for Fremantle. I am not suggesting that that plan could be brought to fruition within a short period, but various sections could be erected over a period of years until eventually we would have an institution of which we could be proud. The hospital site in Fremantle is ideal. I have heard suggestions that the hospital should be removed to some other locality, but I feel that, with the eventual removal of the building known as the old migrants' home—a building which was called the No. 8 Australian General Hospital during World War I—the land on which

it stands could become part of the hospital grounds.

Then there are two schools—one known as the Alma-street School and the other as the South-terrace School. Those institutions are on a principal highway and will subsequently have to be moved from that locality. So I feel that there is ample land for the expansion of the hospital. Moreover, the ocean view that can be obtained from the upper storeys of the building is one that provides an aid to patients in regaining their health. The building is also in a central position. I would therefore ask the Minister whether some method cannot be adopted whereby a general plan could be brought into being under which different extensions could be built from year to year until finally we had an up-to-date hospital for Fremantle and the surrounding districts.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that notwithstanding the lateness of the season, people in the agricultural districts will be blessed with reasonably good crops. I realise that the metropolitan area is dependent on the primary and secondary industries, particularly agriculture and goldmining, for its prosperity. I trust, therefore, that there will be an abundant harvest and that everybody will benefit thereby.

On motion by Hon. L. Craig, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 7.48 p.m.