

was suspended, and an inquiry was held. Dr. Bentley, as Chief Officer, suspended the matron, but the Under Secretary promptly reinstated her. Next Dr. Webster suspended the matron. There was another inquiry, this time by the Public Service Commissioner, who immediately reinstated her. How in such circumstances can we hope to secure reasonable administration? What will happen to the patients, and where does the taxpayer come in while quarrels of this nature are going on? To overcome the difficulty Dr. Webster has been transferred to Claremont.

There is another point, namely, the treatment of the patients at Heathcote. Dr. Webster is particularly well versed in the cardiozol treatment, which has given such successful results. What will become of that treatment? Does the new man know anything about it? I understand there has been one death at Heathcote, but I am not attributing that to the new doctor. What may happen if treatment of this sort is entrusted to a man who does not understand it? I hope the Chief Secretary will clean up the whole trouble one way or the other. If some of the executive officers are wanting in their duties, let them be transferred. I hope the Minister will not leave things in their present unsatisfactory state. Everyone is dissatisfied. Something should be done to overcome the continual bickering and quarrelling that occurs. Suspensions are becoming almost a weekly occurrence. Let us put a stop to all this trouble and protect the patients in the institution. They deserve every protection. There are other matters that I could have dealt with but I will leave them till a later date. I trust my remarks will not be regarded by the Chief Secretary and Honorary Minister in any personal way. I have never indulged in personalities. I notice that the Chief Secretary is smiling.

The Chief Secretary: I was smiling at your colleague.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: All my endeavours are in the direction of working unitedly with other political sections in Parliament for the benefit of the State as a whole. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. H. V. Piessé, debate adjourned.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,500,000.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

House adjourned at 6.17 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 9th August, 1938.

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

MOTION—CONDOLENCE.

The late Hon. S. W. Munsie, M.L.A., and the late Mr. E. V. Brockman, M.L.A.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [4.34]: I move—

That this House desires to place upon record its profound sense of the loss sustained in the passing of the late Hon. Selby Walter Munsie, a member of this House and Minister for Mines and Health of the State at the time of his death, and that an expression of the sincerest sympathy of members be conveyed to his widow and family by Mr. Speaker; and that this House desires to place upon record its profound sense of the loss sustained in the passing of the late Mr. Edmund Vernon Brockman, a member of this House at the time of his death, and that an expression of the sincerest sympathy of members be conveyed to his widow and family by Mr. Speaker.

It is with deep sorrow I move this motion deploring the great loss sustained by the country in the death of the two hon. mem-

bers. The late Mr. Munsie, as we are all aware, was a member of this House for a lengthy period, over 26 years, having entered it in 1911. In 1924 he became a Minister without portfolio administering the Department of Public Health, and in 1927 he became Minister for Mines and Minister for Public Health. All of us know the respect and esteem which the late Mr. Munsie inspired. We knew his unbounded energy and enthusiasm in all matters that he undertook to deal with from an administrative point of view. Though sometimes Ministers are called upon to undertake duties which do not entirely appeal to them, we know that everybody cannot have the same portfolio. Mr. Munsie, however, was peculiarly fitted by temperament and interest and outlook to administer the two portfolios of Mines and Public Health. His predilections were for those two departments, and it was a pleasure to him to be appointed to them. For many years he administered them with conspicuous ability. The health of the community, and particularly that of the poorer section of the community, was near and dear to his heart. Every advance made while he was in charge of the Public Health Department represented a distinct personal pleasure to him. Whenever an advance could be made in ministering to the poorer section, and also to the general welfare, he was enthusiastically in favour of it. The late Mr. Munsie felt it not only a duty but a great pleasure and privilege to be associated with those advances. As regards mining, somewhat similar conditions obtained. Mr. Munsie was brought up as a miner, and worked in the industry for years. When he was a private member, anything affecting the mining industry received his closest consideration. All that tended towards the welfare of the industry and that of the men working in it had his fervent advocacy. I repeat, it was a privilege and a pleasure to Mr. Munsie to be in charge of the Departments of Mines and Public Health. His passing leaves the State poorer, because of the sincerity and energy and enthusiasm which he displayed in the administration of the departments confided to him. In respect of those qualities—though one does not like to draw comparisons—Mr. Munsie was hardly to be equalled. I ask the House to place on record its sympathy with his relatives and its deep regret at his passing. We feel great sorrow at the loss of one who did so much

in those two departments and as an administrator generally, and we feel appreciation of the great services the deceased gentleman rendered to the State.

I am also anxious to refer to the member for Sussex. When I mention that hon. member's name, I turn almost automatically towards the chair he occupied in this Chamber. Mr. Brockman came of a distinguished family of pioneers, who did so much for that portion of the State which he subsequently represented in Parliament. Mr. Brockman was not with us very long. He was first elected in 1933, so his tenure of the seat was comparatively brief. However, it is recognised on all sides that he thoroughly understood, from living amongst the people of the South-West, all their problems and all the problems of the country. He thoroughly knew what could be done with that country. Prior to entering the House he had occupied many public positions, and in this Chamber there was a general respect for his alert understanding. Whenever Mr. Brockman addressed the House on matters connected with the south-western portion of the State, we all knew that he spoke from a perfect comprehension. He was of great assistance in passing on to us information which he had gained in a lifetime's work in the South-West. All his speeches were received with the utmost respect, because all of us felt that he completely understood the subject and was thoroughly competent to express valuable opinions on it. The House is the poorer because of the loss of those two gentlemen who gave such distinct service to the House during the time they were members of it. We know that every member tries to do his best and does his best, but the gentlemen who are the subject of these motions rendered a tremendous service to this country. I am sure that all members will be anxious to join in a message of condolence to the relatives of these two distinguished men. It is therefore not with pleasure, but at least with sympathetic understanding that I now desire to move the motion I have read.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.41]: I desire to associate myself with the remarks of the Premier. It is, of course, in one's duty through life to express regret, as the Premier has already expressed it, at the passing of men that have rendered service to this State. The late Mr. Munsie will

certainly be missed from this Chamber. He was a vigorous debater and had very fixed ideas. As the Premier has pointed out, he was a man who did his very best not only for the people he represented, but for all sections of the community. Towards the latter period during which he served in this House, there were times when I felt he should have been away from the Chamber. Had he not devoted himself so thoroughly to the work of the country in which he was engaged, he would probably have lengthened his life. But at times when he should not have been here he rose to debate a question in that vigorous manner that was so characteristic of him. I do not know of any man who has faced the subjects with which he had to deal so seriously as did the late Mr. Munsie. He certainly was not always right, but he was always able to maintain the point he raised whether he was right or wrong. He will be missed and his position will be difficult to fill. He had a thorough knowledge of the departments he administered, as the Premier has pointed out, and he devoted a great deal of time particularly to the health of the people of this State. Some of the legislation for which he was responsible will probably last much longer than that of many other Ministers. When people of the future come to consider some of the legislation that he placed on the Statute-book, they will be compelled to admit that Western Australia produced someone with a good deal of knowledge of the requirements of the community. On this side of the House we differed from him in politics, but there was no hard feeling in respect to those differences, and that is characteristic of this House. Mr. Brockman, of course, belonged to the farming community. He was a descendant of one of the old pioneers and devoted his time to benefiting the people of the country. Both men will be sadly missed. Many times Mr. Brockman came into my room and we discussed various problems, and his passing has left a void that will be difficult to fill. I used often to discuss matters with him that affected not only the farming community, but the State generally, and the was always sound in his advice and the views he held. I regret that we have to associate ourselves with messages of condolence to the widows and families of these men, but we can convey to them our recognition of the fact that the late members

performed services of great value in the interests of the people of this State, and that despite the political differences of hon. members, all on both sides of the House, appreciate the great work they performed. Much as I regret the necessity for our doing so, I feel that this side of the House must associate itself with everything said by the Premier in conveying to the relatives our deepest regret on the passing of men who served their country so well.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [4.45]: On behalf of those in this part of the House I desire to support the motion submitted by the Premier. The late Mr. Munsie for a long time filled very distinguished offices under the Crown and discharged the duties associated with those offices with great ability. He was a man of broad humanitarian feeling and the State and this House have suffered a loss by the passing of one who was so well equipped to render service to the State and to the House. The late Mr. Brockman was very near the ideal of a member for the district he represented. It did not matter how far he had to travel or how arduous the duty that he had to undertake, he never hesitated if he thought it would benefit or help a single member of his constituency. Going through his district recently, I found that he was not only respected by, but also had the deep affection of all the people—I think without exception—in his large constituency. His passing is a very great loss to the State. We desire to be associated with the expressions of sympathy to the relatives of those two members.

Question passed; members standing.

QUESTIONS (3)—MINING.

Reservations.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What was the total number of mining reservations in existence on the 31st July, 1938? 2, What is the total area comprised in the whole of them? 3, What number of these reservations was granted under the amended Act of 1937? 4, What is the total number of applications lodged for reservations under Section 297 of the Mining Act for the year ended 31st July, 1938, and not yet finalised?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, 21. 2, 5,842. 3, 19. 4, 1.

Men prohibited from working.

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister for Mines: How many men have been prohibited from working in mines, under Section 13 of the Mine Workers' Relief Act, since 1st January, 1934?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 66.

Workers' Compensation payments.

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister for Employment: What amount of money was paid by the State Insurance Office under the Workers' Compensation Act in respect of accidents in the mining industry for the years 1934-5, 1935-6, and 1936-7, and to end June, 1938?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT replied: Year 1934-35, £70,838 16s. 7d.; year 1935-36, £89,426 12s. 7d.; year 1936-37, £118,892 12s. 6d.; year 1937-38, £116,752 17s. 4d. Amounts paid in respect of Miners' Phthisis are not included.

QUESTION—WATER SUPPLIES.*Hydraulic Survey.*

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Water Supplies: 1, Has the report on the recently completed hydraulic survey over certain Great Southern and other areas yet been submitted to him or to the Director of Works? 2, If not yet submitted, when is it likely to be? 3, Whether yet submitted or not, will he (having regard to the very critical water supply position in the area affected by the survey) undertake to lose no time in making a statement on the report, so that the further necessary steps may be taken expeditiously, and so that any decision to give effect to the recommendations or any part of them may be executed with the least possible delay?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, 2, and 3, The engineering survey report has been submitted to the Director of Works. This is now being checked and examined, having special regard to the hydraulics of the proposals. Upon receipt of the Director's report defining the area capable of being supplied from the proposed headworks, the financial and economic features of the project will be thoroughly investigated to enable the Government to arrive at a decision. All possible expedition is being exercised consistent with the magni-

tude and importance of the scheme contemplated.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, IMPORTED AND COLLIE COAL.

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the price per ton of imported coal to the Railway Department in the truck at Fremantle on 30th June, 1937, and 30th June, 1938, respectively? 2, What was the price per ton of local coal to the Railway Department at the pit's mouth, Collie, on 30th June, 1937, and 30th June, 1938, respectively?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, 30th June, 1937, large 38s. 2d., small nil; 30th June, 1938, large 41s. 8d., small 38s. 2d. 2, 30th June, 1937, large 13s. 9.17d., small 9s. 6.21d.; 30th June, 1938, large 13s. 6.12d., small 9s. 4.70d.

QUESTION—COLLIE COAL INDUSTRY.*Davidson Award.*

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What are the names of all the bodies which took part in the negotiations that led to the decisions now known in the coal industry of Western Australia as the Davidson award? 2, What are the names of all the parties now governed by that award?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Amalgamated Collieries of W.A. Ltd. The Commissioner of Railways. 2, Amalgamated Collieries of W.A. Ltd. The Commissioner of Railways.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

On motion by the Premier ordered: That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 4.30 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m., if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

On motion by the Premier ordered: That on Tuesdays and Thursdays Government business shall take precedence of all Motions and Orders of the Day.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. North, leave of absence for six weeks granted to Mr. J. MacCallum Smith (North Perth) on the ground of urgent private business.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,500,000.

Message.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier resolved:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day, and to enable the business aforesaid to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [4.48]: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year ending on 30th June, 1939, a sum not exceeding £2,500,000.

This amount is required to finance the State's operations until the Estimates are passed. The Estimates are well in hand and it is expected to present them to Parliament at an early date. The amount of Supply asked for is as follows:—

Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	£ 1,700,000
General Loan Fund	500,000
Treasurer's Advance	300,000
Total	£2,500,000

The Bill is for three months' Supply and the total is similar to that of last year. For the first three months of the last financial year the expenditure from Consolidated Revenue was £1,728,353, which does not include expenditure under special Acts such as interest, sinking fund, contributions, etc. The amount required from General Loan Fund will cover the expenditure for the first three months of the financial year, and will be particularly required to

ensure sufficient employment for those who are dependent on the Government for relief. The Loan Fund will be used to the best advantage, enabling as many men as possible to be employed on useful works. The Treasurer's Advance is to meet expenditure that cannot for the time being be charged against votes, or otherwise cleared. The amount asked for is £300,000. It was estimated last year that there would be a deficit of £128,855, but the actual result was a deficit of £10,693, an improvement on the estimate of £118,162.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.52]:

While I am aware that the Premier has a certain amount of money on hand, he has not made arrangements for the collection of the arrears of all the taxes that are due. He has no authorisation from the 30th June except that applying to the arrears. I should have expected the Premier, in view of what was contained in the Governor's Speech, to make some pronouncement as to what alteration was proposed in regard to taxation. The amount asked for by the Treasurer is considerable, and presumably, with the credit balance of £10,000 he had on the 30th June last—

The Premier: No, it was a debit balance.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, I meant a debit balance—he has no authority for the collection of any taxes except those that are in arrear.

The Premier: Except the financial emergency tax.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, that might be expected to bring in a little over half a million in the next six months—from the 30th June last to the end of December. There is no doubt that a considerable amount of arrears will be collected through ordinary taxation channels. I do not know the reason for it, but it is a fact that a great many assessment notices have not yet reached the people. I do not know whether the Treasurer is aware of that, but I am aware of it, and consequently a considerable sum of money could have been available to the Premier by the 30th June. No doubt that will be available between now and the end of the year. Some pronouncement should be made by the Government in the direction I have suggested. We are asked to provide over two millions, and I want to know what the policy of the Government is going to be in the way of taxa-

tion. We cannot have money without taxation, and it is expected that at the end of the year there will be some alteration in the financial emergency tax. I have come to the conclusion that the financial emergency tax will be abolished in name only, and I have an idea that the tax will be collected at the source in a compulsory way along the lines of the Act in existence now. At the present time, however, it is paid in a voluntary way.

Mr. Raphael: I do not know that it is voluntary.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There is a provision in the Income Tax Act which was passed last year enabling the tax to be paid from month to month, by way of contribution from the source. Judging from what we heard in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech the other day, it looks to me that it is the policy of the Government to bring in a form of compulsory payment at the source. I am aware what a million of money means to the Government, and I know that there would be some difficulty in balancing the Budget without that sum of money. Is it the intention of the Government to bring in some new form of taxation? The sum asked for is very large and it may be only a little more than that for the corresponding period of last year. All the same it is a big sum and we should be taken into the confidence of the Government and told how it is proposed to raise the money. I doubt whether the arrears that are yet to be paid by way of taxation levied last year will meet the requirements. Some I know will come from Loan funds, and I am aware there is still something available from the last flotation. On previous occasions the Premier has told us what he proposed to do by way of taxation. On this occasion, however, we know there is to be an alteration but we have not been told anything. After all, the House is responsible to the people for the expenditure of money and the collection of taxes, and consequently we should be acquainted with the policy of the Government. I am asking the Treasurer, before he requests us to pass such a large sum, to take us into his confidence and say what he proposes to do. I know that it will not be possible for him to give us details, because they will be the subject of legislation. He can, however, say in what way it is proposed to relieve the lower-paid man, as suggested in

the Speech, and how it is intended to make up that money.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [5.13]: This is the usual formal motion that enables us to carry on the affairs of the country in the interim between the assembling of Parliament and the introduction of the Budget. The Leader of the Opposition knows that, irrespective of whether there is to be any alteration in the form of taxation. The Budget will be introduced, I hope, before the end of September. We cannot at this stage deal with something that has not yet been finalised. We are aware of the principles respecting what is to be done, but as to when and how the money is to be raised, that has not been definitely decided, and that never is decided, and no information is ever given, until the Budget is introduced. At the moment we are merely asking for Supply, and the money is required to enable us to carry on the affairs of the State. We shall want this sum of money to carry on the affairs of State for the next three months. This formal motion is moved for Supply which anticipates the expenditure of certain money. We are only authorised to spend the money during the ensuing three months when the Estimates will come down, both the Expenditure and Loan Estimates. That will be the time when the Government will make its financial statement, and will set out what it proposes to bring into revenue for the present year. Never, I think, has a statement been made upon all matters dealing with the policy of the Government except on the Budget Speech. This principle will be followed in the manner that has been adopted in this House for as many years as I can remember. The financial proposals of the Government are just what have been stated in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. At some stage—the Speech does not say when, for that will be decided by the House when it deals with the question—a proposal will be brought before the House to deal with the amalgamation of the financial emergency tax and the income tax. When that will commence will be for the House to determine. That is all there is to it. The House will determine when such an amalgamation will take place. At present I cannot say when the House will be asked to put a date to the Bill, which has not yet been prepared. That is the position as it is at the moment.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [5.18]: I am prepared to acknowledge that the Treasurer is not at the moment in a position to give the House information as to how he proposes to raise this large sum of money.

The Premier: This is the usual method to follow.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am afraid the Treasurer does not understand the position from our point of view. We are asked to authorise the expenditure from Consolidated Revenue of £1,700,000, and of £500,000 from loan. I do not propose to deal with that. It has already been practically authorised, because it has been carried forward from last year's authorisation. Evidently it is proposed this year to make a variation in the income tax collections. So it appears from the statement which has been made. The Treasurer tells the House, and those members who are not acquainted with the conduct of the House, that it is only a formal motion. I can recall the time when it took three days to get a Supply Bill through, and that is within the memory of the present Treasurer. The only alteration was that we were on the other side of the House on that occasion, and the hon. gentleman was occupying a seat on this side. There was nothing formal on that occasion. The Premier knows that I am not an obstructionist, but I do want some idea of how it is proposed to raise this money. The Treasurer asks this House for an authorisation. We bear the responsibility, and we want to say whether the money shall be handed to the Government for expenditure or not. We cannot hand over money when we do not know how it will be collected, or from what source it will be collected. Had we been continuing on with the ordinary forms of taxation, I would have raised no objection. The Premier, however, has already advised the people that it is proposed to bring in an amended form of taxation. I want to know that we are not doing something wrong. I want to be sure that members will agree to the new form of taxation, and that it will bring to the Treasurer the amount of money that was collected last year. It is on last year's collection that this authorisation is asked for. If that is right, I want him to tell us that, when he introduces the taxation measures, he will not get less money than he did last year. I also want to know that his legislation will not be such that we cannot approve of it. I am not referring to this House only,

because both Houses have the authority to exercise their judgment on that question. A departure is going to be made. I am only asking what I consider is something reasonable, namely, that the Treasurer will give us an assurance that the new taxing measure will not make much difference in the collections for the year, and will not impose an additional burden on the Treasurer. If the new taxing measure will throw out of employment a greater number of people than are out of employment to-day, it will become an added burden upon the Treasurer to provide further employment, which of course means the additional expenditure of money. I want to have that assurance. I would not have raised the question if the Premier had not put the words into the Speech that it is anticipated that some alterations will be made. He tells us now it is proposed to relieve those on the lower salaries, and to increase taxation in the case of those who are better able to bear it. I have examined the Taxation Commissioner's report for last year. The Treasurer will agree that his scope for increasing taxation in this State is very limited. He certainly realised that when his first financial emergency tax was imposed. No doubt he realised that when he became Minister for Railways and Minister for Justice in the previous Labour Government. The Treasurer of that day, Hon. P. Collier, had to tax the lower paid people in order to get in his revenue. If he had taken the whole of the higher incomes he would still have had a deficiency. We on this side of the House are fully aware of the danger there is in attempting to obtain money that is not available from taxation. There is the danger of building up a greater deficit than the Treasurer anticipates to-day. He ought to give us the assurance I have asked for. I want to know that the proposals of the Government will not materially interfere with the revenue returns, and will not place an increased burden on the Treasurer of the State by compelling him to find employment for men who must seek it at the hands of the Government.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [5.25]: I have pleasure in informing the Leader of the Opposition that whatever taxation proposals the Government has in mind, there will not be a very much smaller amount of money collected. I am pleased at the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition on this question,

and the recognition he implies by his remarks that there is a necessity for taxation to be levied to a somewhat similar extent as was levied last year.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There certainly is while the present Government is in office.

The PREMIER: Whilst any Government is in office. I do not want to embark upon a debate on bookkeeping. The alternative is to charge what should be expenditure from revenue to expenditure from loan. I hope no Treasurer will go back to the bad old days, which have now gone. I should like to pay a tribute to the member for Boulder, who, when occupying the position of Treasurer got down to tinctacks as to what should be charged to Revenue and what should be charged to Loan, and made the necessary adjustments in both the Revenue and Loan accounts. Whilst we continue to charge to Revenue what should be charged to Revenue, and only charge to Loan what should be charged to Loan, we shall require a considerable amount of revenue to pay for the social services the State has to provide, such as police, education, child welfare and so on. There is no intention seriously to reduce the amount of revenue by way of taxation that comes into the Revenue account. That is the assurance the Leader of the Opposition desires. There is not going to be a wholesale reduction in taxation.

Hon. C. G. Latham: This authorisation must be based on the collections of last year.

The PREMIER: None of the money represented by this Supply will come from anything but measures of taxation which are already in existence. We will not have passed any other taxation Bills by the time this amount runs out.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They must date from the 1st July last.

The PREMIER: We shall not collect any money for another four or five months. No money can be collected under the Income Tax Act until the Act itself is passed this year, and I do not think we can come to that before the beginning of October. By that time this Supply will have run out. The Estimates will be down then, and the full financial proposals of the Government will be before the House. Everyone will then understand the position. I cheerfully give the Leader of the Opposition the as-

surance that we expect to get as much taxation this year as we did last year. If we fail to do that, from the commitments I can already see, it will be very awkward for the Government. The increase in the basic wage will cost us a couple of hundred thousand more this year. The proposals for a national insurance fund, which the Federal Government has passed, will involve a contribution by the Government, as an employer of labour, of perhaps £70,000 or £80,000.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Will not the Treasurer be relieved of that to some extent?

The PREMIER: No. We shall not be relieved of anything. It will be a contribution which the State, as an employer of labour, will have to make to the national insurance fund. Without trenching upon the Budget I should say there would be increased expenditure, as a result of these two items alone, of over a quarter of a million. If anyone is optimistic enough to think it, I assure him there is no hope of any great reduction in taxation. The same amount will still have to be levied to carry on the services of the State. After the Budget Speech the House will understand exactly what the Government proposes as a means of carrying on the affairs of the State.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

The PREMIER: I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1939, a sum not exceeding £1,700,000 be granted out of Consolidated Revenue, £500,000 from the General Loan Fund, and £300,000 from the Public Accounts for the purpose of temporary advances to be made by the Treasurer.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

All Stages.

In accordance with the foregoing resolution, Bill introduced, passed through all stages without debate, and transmitted to the Council.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.*Second Day.*

Debate resumed from the 4th August.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [5.35]:

At the outset I desire to tender my congratulations to the member for Hannans (Mr. Lenhy) on his election to this House. He has already heard this afternoon that he follows a man who rendered great service to the State, and I feel sure, from the speech he delivered on the opening day, we may expect from the new member quite efficient service. I sincerely hope he will continue in the vein he indicated in his initial speech. If he does so, he will probably help to minimise the element of seriousness that is perhaps too often displayed in this House. To the member for Sussex (Mr. Willmott) I also proffer my congratulations and I am indeed pleased to see that gentleman occupying a seat in this Chamber. We were together many years ago in circumstances quite different from those that confront each of us to-day. I have known Mr. Willmott for 18 or 19 years.

Mr. Marshall: You mean the member for Sussex?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not want the hon. member to interrupt.

Mr. Marshall: Then don't refer to him by name, or I will stop you every time.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We have a new Speaker in the Chair, and apparently a new "Speaker" on the floor of the Chamber!

Mr. Marshall: You have been here long enough to know the Standing Orders, and I will keep you up to them.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I wish you, Mr. Speaker, would control this young member whose capacity to direct us is quite unknown to members on this side of the House. However, I know the member for Sussex very well and I know that he will render good service to the people of the State and particularly to those he represents. I say to both the new members that they will find, although we may differ politically during the course of our debates in the Chamber, when we leave the Chamber we are broad-minded enough not to allow our political views to interfere with our personal feelings and relations towards each other. Dealing now with the Lieut.-Governor's Speech, I confess I had hoped to get a lead from that deliverance. I did hope

that it would provide at least some substance on the basis of which an intelligent speech could have been delivered from this side of the House.

Mr. Cross: That would be a novelty.

Mr. Needham: That is stretching a point.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I can assure hon. members that there is nothing in the Speech that is encouraging or enlightening for the people of Western Australia. The Speech certainly provides a lengthy review of what has taken place during the past financial year. I had thought that a Speech from the Throne, as it were, would convey to Parliament an indication of what might be expected in the future. After listening to the interjections that we have heard this afternoon, I am rather forced to the conclusion that we cannot expect much, because where there is no policy, there cannot be any clearly defined thought in respect to matters of the future. As a statistical review of what has taken place during the past 12 months, the Speech was quite worth while, because it certainly did explain to the people what had happened during the year. On the other hand, as to what may happen in the future, the Speech left us in much the same position as the Supply Bill that we have just passed to authorise the expenditure of public funds. All this conveys to me the impression that after five years in office, the Labour Government is still without a policy. It certainly has a policy, but it is very limited in extent. Its policy is restricted to road building, to the provision of sewerage and water supplies and to taxing the people. It has no definite policy that means the uplift of the people. We have no indication of a policy that will provide permanent employment for the people. What has been done in the direction of assisting or encouraging industry?

The Premier: That is indicated in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There is very little reference indeed to that phase. I listened to the speech delivered by the member for Hannans, and I endeavoured to glean some information from him. Here was a new member from a country constituency, and all he told us was that he extended his congratulations to the Government because of the improvement in the gold mining industry! We all know what occasioned the improvement in that industry. It was the

high price offered for gold. The position with the gold mining industry was exactly the same as if high prices were offered for wheat and wool. If that should happen, and there was any degree of permanency in the prices, the wheat and wool industries would expand.

The Premier: The improvement was achieved by sympathetic administration.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Sympathy is the cheapest form of assistance of which I have knowledge. We can extend sympathy from this side of the House. A Government is not necessary to give that; all can extend that form of assistance.

The Premier: We gave solid cash, too.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: What is required is a constructive policy that will encourage people and demonstrate to them that the Government knows what it wants and is out to get it. As far as I can see, there is no such policy. I admit that large sums of money have been spent in the provision of increased water supplies for the city.

The Premier: And for the country.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Government has not done a great deal for the country.

The Premier: Yes, and for the mining industry too.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Government was forced to do that. I had an opportunity to visit Norseman recently, and I had previously been there ten years before. I know that something had to be done regarding the provision of a water supply. The people demanded it. The Premier laughs, as much as to say the Government need not have made that provision. If the Government had not provided a water supply for Norseman, mining could not have continued there.

The Premier: Of course, it could not have continued.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: At the same time, I claim that although the Government has provided facilities, they are such as have necessitated the people being heavily taxed. The other day I inspected some sewerage connections that were being put in at South Perth, which is represented by an hon. member who is always desirous of interjecting and displaying his knowledge. Information was conveyed to me that the people concerned had already spent a lot of money on installing septic tanks, only to be loaded now with the additional cost of the sewerage system. I admit that in a city like Perth, up-to-date methods for the disposal of sew-

age must be adopted, but what has gone on serves to indicate that the methods adopted have amounted simply to an additional taxation measure. It all takes money from the people at a time when that money could be more profitably used. Particularly is that so when our industries are languishing, as they are at the present time. Obviously that is when a concrete policy is most required. I have endeavoured to ascertain what the Government policy is in the light of assistance rendered to the wheat industry, but all I can find is some sort of policy that resembles a game of battledore and shuttlecock. The Federal Government apparently endeavours to unload its responsibilities on to the State Government and the State Government in turn tries to shoulder its responsibilities on to the Federal authorities. The two Governments, together with the State Governments in general, should come together to assist the industry, if it is regarded as worthy of assistance. We, on the Opposition side of the House, believe it is worthy of assistance. The industry has brought millions of pounds to the State and is capable of providing many millions of money still, but it requires some assistance, assistance that the people on the land cannot provide for themselves. We look to the Government to provide it. If you have watched the condition of affairs, Mr. Speaker, as you possibly have in your leisure hours, you will have noted the drift of our industry. There is no indication of encouragement forthcoming. Look at the development of our secondary industries. There is nothing at all about that of which we may boast. After five years of Labour Administration, I do not think we can point to one industry that has been established.

The Premier: We can point to a very great increase in employment.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, in the State.

The Premier: No, in secondary industries.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But we are still importing vast quantities of goods. The Premier knows that every year the value of our importations from the Eastern States and from overseas increases.

The Minister for Mines: But that is because of the prejudice against locally-made goods. That is all.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Nothing of the sort. I will tell the Minister the reason before I conclude my remarks. If the Minister does not realise it, the important con-

sideration is that we are increasing prices and costs in this State to such a high level that the other States can more than favourably compete with us. There is no doubt of that. I read the statement in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech indicating that the Premier was very pleased at the increased amount being paid to workers on the basic wage. If that increase would really help the people, I would not mind, but is it not merely having the effect of increasing the cost of living? Is not that clearly demonstrated?

The Minister for Mines: No.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does it not illustrate that those basic wage workers are no better off?

The Premier: There has been a big alteration in the basis.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I believe that Mr. President Dwyer has held office for nine or ten years.

Mr. Patrick: More like 14 years.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Well, 14 years, and it has taken all that time to make the discovery. Mr. President Dwyer and fellow-members of the court are responsible for that. I have no objection to the worker receiving the best possible wages, but it is idle to think that if we increase the cost of living and the cost of commodities to such an extent, we shall not be subjected to unfair competition from the Eastern States. Similar goods are being manufactured in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia at prices below which they can be manufactured here.

The Premier: Are you criticising the Government because the Arbitration Court granted the increase?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, I am telling the Minister for Mines what has led to the present position. Surely the Minister must agree that my explanation is right! If he had £10,000 to invest in industry, would he start manufacturing here, or would he go to Melbourne or Sydney? Money is being taken out of the State for investment in the Eastern States in both primary and secondary industries. That is a regrettable fact. The only industry that is attracting money to the State is gold-mining, and that is due to the high price of gold. Even for that industry, less money is being attracted to the State now than there was some time ago. For quite a period the investment market for gold-mining stocks has been dull.

I have a perfect right to complain that the Government has no policy. It does not seem to be able to give encouragement in any direction, either on the manufacturing side of industry or on the primary producing side. One way to give such encouragement is by reducing taxation. If the Government exercised care in the matter of expenditure, it would be able to reduce taxation. I observe closely the various appointments made from time to time by the Government. Really, little is given to the workers, but highly paid men are repeatedly being appointed to various positions. Some of the men in the higher-paid offices are receiving payment far in excess of the amount justified by their service. I cite the Agricultural Bank as an instance. We could get just as good service from one Commissioner as from three Commissioners. Mr. Clarke, one of the Commissioners, draws £1,500 a year, and I presume he receives travelling expenses in addition; but I have not noticed his name mentioned recently, although at one time his name often appeared in the Press. Does the Minister consider that a continuance of that position is justified? Recently the General Manager of the Bank was created a Commissioner, so there has been a slight reduction in expenditure. I contend that the Chairman and the General Manager could do the whole of the work, and that this is one direction in which expenditure might be curtailed. Other appointments have been made on which I do not desire to express myself at this stage. I do not think there was justification for the appointment of an additional judge. If his services were required to assist in the work of the Arbitration Court, it was not necessary to appoint him to a judicial position. Sufficient power is provided in the Act for the court to delegate its powers, and Mr. Wolff would have been a suitable man for the delegated work. I do not pose as an authority, but I watch the work of the Arbitration Court closely, and I have not heard of any congestion.

Mr. Cross: What next!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The know-all from Canning, I suppose, is always at the courts, and knows the position. I have not seen a reference to any of the cases having been carried over when they should have been dealt with.

Mr. Cross: Some of the organisations have been waiting for two years.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I make an exception of the cases that are referred to the Full Court on some special point. I do not think that Mr. Justice Wolff has done any Arbitration Court work, though he might have taken some cases in Chambers. It seems to me that his appointment as a judge was not justified.

The Premier: What about Public Service appeals? Some of them have been standing over for 18 months.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That difficulty could have been overcome by appointing Mr. Justice Wolff a Commissioner, though an amendment of the Act would probably have been required. I do not say that that course would have been advisable; the point is that somebody could have been appointed to hear the appeals. I am aware that the Act provides for the hearing of appeals by a judge of the Supreme Court.

The Minister for Works: He has been a fairly busy man.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: He was a busy man before his appointment to the Arbitration Court. Any man, I presume, could fill in his days after receiving an appointment. I dare say the Minister has some busy times.

The Premier: You also have been busy for a day or two.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, more than busy. What prompted me to speak on the Supply Bill was my concern as to what might happen within the next year. Our failures and successes, our periods of prosperity and depression, are inevitably governed by the national income. I admit that the national income last year was fairly high, but I believe that the Government will not receive nearly as much money this year, despite the optimistic view of the Premier that we had turned the corner and might reasonably look for greater prosperity during the next year. Some of the Premier's own followers do not believe that, and the view is not supported by the Leader of the Federal Opposition, who also is a Labour man. In the course of a statement published in the Press on the 1st August last, Mr. Curtin was reported as follows:—

Mr. Curtin said that recent returns by the Commonwealth Statistician (Dr. Rowland Wilson) showed the first increase in unemployment since 1930. In the first four months of the financial year 1937-38, export prices were higher than in the corresponding

months of the previous year, but thereafter decreased sharply. There had been a constant drain on London funds, with the result that there had been a deficiency of £7,000,000 for the year.

The Minister for Mines: That is what Mr. Casey said.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I have not seen any contradiction of the statement by Mr. Casey. Mr. Curtin's view is sound. The Minister must realise that with the low prices prevailing for wheat and wool, and with the difficulty of finding markets for our commodities, the Premier will probably be wondering before long how he is going to get through the year with the amount of money available. If wealth is not produced by the people of the State, the Premier cannot possibly collect taxation. The Premier passed lightly over my comments on the Supply Bill authorisation. The position appeals to me as being very serious, and I should not be surprised if before the year is out we experienced trouble with some of our industries and if the Premier fails to collect as much money as he did last year. The trade balance last year was £2,045,000, or £500,000 greater than the previous year's favourable balance of £1,548,000. That was exclusive of Australian and overseas interest payments. The annual interest payment in Australia is £1,558,000 and overseas £1,702,000, a total of £3,260,000. Though we had a trade balance in our favour, a considerable amount of money had to be sent out of the country for interest payments. I am aware that all the money paid for interest on Australian loans does not go out of the country, but a great deal of it does, and of course we have no means of retaining any of the money due for interest on our overseas debts. Therefore, when considering our trade balance, we must realise that there is not a great margin in our favour. Our export commodities are important in that they provide credits overseas, but when we examine the prices ruling for such commodities, we find they are at a low level. Wheat to-day is 2s. 8d. a bushel on a 4d. siding basis.

The Premier: It was 2s. 9½d. yesterday.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is no use trying to mislead the people; it was 2s. 9d. yesterday and is 2s. 8d. to-day, whereas at this time last year it was 4s. 8d. That reveals a serious decline, and when we consider the export quantity, we must realise what the

result will be in reduced national income. The price of wool at this time last year was £21 per bale, whereas at present it is approximately £15 15s. Thus the effect of the decline of prices for those two important export commodities must be reflected not only in Treasury receipts but also in business generally throughout the State. I admit that gold production has increased and, to some extent, has balanced those deficiencies; but we cannot expect gold production to continue to increase in the ratio of the last few years. We have an increased acreage sown to wheat this year, but the number of sheep in the State has been materially reduced by the devastating droughts in the North, and a year or two will probably elapse before those flocks can be built up to the previous level. Recently I received a letter from a resident of the Gascoyne district who informed me that he had spent £6,000 on the purchase of ewes, expecting to obtain from them a good dropping of lambs. Unfortunately, the lambing was poor, and he now finds it necessary to hand-feed the ewes, and is thus in much the same position as he was last year. When we face these realities, we must admit that there is no room for optimism. I only wish there were; no one would be happier than I if we could point to a brighter outlook. To obtain fair prices for our commodities is a big problem, but another difficulty is to secure markets for our export produce. I do not know that we shall have much worry as regards wool; but wheat will probably involve a carry-over, one that we shall not be able to market.

The Minister for Lands: We need not have had any carry-over if people had sold in the beginning, at good prices.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister does not understand the position. I am not worrying so much about the people here, though their situation is bad. The trouble is as regards the exporters, because there are no buyers oversea. If the Minister had followed closely the discussions at the Empire Producers' Conference in Sydney, he would realise what I mean. There is great difficulty in selling wheat on the London market. Moreover, sales oversea are bringing down prices, although reduced prices are not justified by the value of the commodity. Japan this year is buying from Australia about half the quantity she bought last year. She is endeavouring to obtain

supplies from Manchukuo; and with the Argentine she has made much more favourable terms than she could arrange with Australia, for the reason that the Argentine takes Japanese goods which Australia does not buy. Further, we must realise that the British Government to-day is doing more than ever it has done to encourage primary production at Home. Then, an extensive defence policy is being carried out oversea as well as in Australia. Not only are Britain's navy and air forces and military forces being built up, but, by way of a fourth arm of defence, there is the production and acquisition of all commodities essential to Britain. The new ideas as to aggression render it useless for Britain to proceed any further with her defence policy unless she can feed the people who are to be defended. Thus stocks of food supplies have become a fourth defensive arm in Britain, and the production of food is being encouraged there. That is a development which cannot cease until such time as there is a better international understanding. For quite a long time we have been looking for such an understanding, but it does not seem to be in the forefront yet.

The Premier: The position appears to be getting worse.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: A little while ago I referred to the army of producers. At the Sydney Conference Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, the leader of the British Delegation and a member of the House of Commons, spoke of the difficulties associated with the marketing of wheat and other products. Sir Reginald said—

You will all be aware of the changes which have taken place in our agricultural marketing organisation in Great Britain since 1932, and you will have some knowledge of the Acts of Parliament which have enabled us to set up producer-controlled marketing boards. The first of these Acts was passed by a Labour Government, and the next by the National Government. It is important to note that both the supporters of the National Government and those of the Opposition Labour Party have made it clear that they intend so to control the import situation that Home food production shall be maintained at a healthy level and that our farmers shall be able to maintain a balanced economy in their farming operations.

It was on that basis that our organisations accepted the Marketing Acts, and prepared the marketing schemes which are now in operation. It is not my intention to describe in any detail the various means which have

been adopted to provide a measure of protection to United Kingdom agriculture equivalent to that enjoyed by our marketing industries ever since our Free Trade system was abandoned in 1932.

The National Farmers' Union has never pinned its faith to any one form of Protection, for the simple reason that we realise that no one form—be it a tariff, quota regulation or direct subsidy—is capable of being applied successfully to the whole range of our agricultural production. We have proceeded with our marketing organisation—which, be it noted, involves the restriction of the freedom of the individual in many directions—on the clear understanding that the appropriate form of Protection would be provided and maintained in each case.

Later Sir Reginald says—

Believe me, saturation point in our Home market is much nearer than many imagine.

That is an indication that we cannot look to Great Britain to take much more than she takes to-day of our products. Unfortunately, when she does take our products she pays a price that may be called a dumping price for the world's surpluses. It is not the world's price we get on the London market, but the price obtainable after the surpluses of other countries have been dumped on the London market. We can rightfully call the price we obtain the world's dumping price. Sir Reginald further states—

We believe that as practical agriculturists you will agree that we should have the right to put each and every acre of our agricultural land to its full and proper use. You will agree, too, that we have a duty as farmers to maintain our soil in full fertility. Nobody can say that we are doing either of these things to-day, under the conditions which we have to face.

Our land could, should, and indeed must, produce far more than it is producing to-day, otherwise we shall never be able to carry out our main duty to our land: namely, to hand it on in good heart to the generation which will follow us.

The demands of our land with regard to the expansion of Home production must, therefore, as I have indicated, also be counted as a limiting factor in relation to the United Kingdom's ability to absorb expanding imports of agricultural produce.

Our marketing organisation in the United Kingdom is based upon the principle of producer-control, and I can see no reason why we should not adopt precisely the same principle in devising machinery to serve our common Empire interests in this matter.

Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith put up a scheme for a board with a representative of each of the Dominions by way of setting up an Empire marketing board, which would

furnish the various markets available to us with advice in such a way as to maintain fair and reasonable prices for those commodities. For a long time past we have been endeavouring to do something like that in Australia, and it is on that point I have to complain of the conduct of the Government. Probably this State depends on the success of such an arrangement more than do any of the other States, because we are comparatively greater exporters than the Eastern States in respect to the volume of our production. It is only fair and right that if the farmer has to pay Australian prices for the goods he has to purchase, he should in return receive a standard living wage in the same way as the worker on the basic wage. Our farmers have not had that. Certainly they did a little better last year, but last year they attempted to clear off some of their indebtedness. In that direction they made a bold attempt, which is reflected in the Government services and elsewhere. But this year our farmers face a position somewhat similar to that of 1932. The outlook is serious when wheat gets down to 2s. 8d. a bushel. Since 1933 the cost of living has gone up by 13s. 8d. per week. That is a substantial amount to tack on to industry. I hate to be a pessimist and to discourage people, but the prospects of Western Australia are anything but bright in some of its main industries. That will be reflected more particularly on the Treasury, because the Treasurer has to find money overseas. He is responsible, through the Federal Government, for finding credits overseas. Such credits must be made available, and can be made available only in one way—by exporting our goods. Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith has told us that the acreage of wheat production in Great Britain has been limited in connection with the price guaranteed by the Government, and that pressure has been brought to bear on the Government to increase the acreage, the proposal being supported by those who advocate that Britain should build up her defences and who say that it is impossible to have a satisfactory defence policy unless the British Government is in a position to feed the people. They contend that the only way to achieve that end is by Britain producing the commodities herself. Therefore we should not glibly tell the people that the corner has been rounded or that prosperity is with us and will stay with us for some years.

The Premier: Where has that been stated?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I saw it reported the other day that the Premier had stated it at a reception. I was not present at that reception. At all events, we will not say where the statement was made. I assure the Premier that when a speech of his is borne by airwaves into the homes of the people, there are more listeners than there are in this Chamber. I for my part fail to see that we are likely to get a much better price for our commodity than is obtainable to-day. The chief thing is to maintain our producers, so that we may be able to pay our overseas debts. Several times a proposal has been put up for a home consumption price of wheat, just exactly as there is a home consumption price for labour. We have never opposed the worker's asking the Arbitration Court to fix a decent wage for him. If he is dissatisfied with his award, then upon its expiration he is permitted to approach the court again. We have set up a tribunal to see that the worker receives a fair and reasonable wage. Mr. President Dwyer finds after 14 years that he has been dealing with the basic wage on wrong lines. He finds that he was not taking into consideration things which he ought to have taken into consideration. The manufacturers, of course, are protected by the Tariff and the Tariff Board. The only man who is not protected is the man to whom we turn when we want anything. Not so long ago every envelope that went through the post declared that Australia must grow more wheat. That slogan was placed on the envelopes by the Prime Minister of the day. It was not that he desired a great deal more wheat to be grown here, but he did want something that would provide for expenditure in London.

Mr. Hegney: What Prime Minister was that?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Mr. Scullin.

Mr. Hegney: Mr. Bruce.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Mr. Scullin found himself stumped for credits in London. He asked, "Which way can we get them?" Now, it is not possible to get gold out of the ground in a hurry, or suddenly to increase the number of sheep, or the production of butter. It is possible, however, to increase the production of wheat. If the wheat industry is so essential to Australia, then in

fairness the wheat producers should have an Australian price. There are many who say that on no account must the cost of bread be increased. That contention, I believe, does not come from the Labour organisations. The Labour organisations, so far as I can judge, have never yet said that they will not pay a decent price for a decent article. The cry comes from men who have a very wrong conception of Labour views, but are afraid of the vote of the Labour men. Then there is the question of a home consumption price for butter.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I was about to point out that the worker has never complained of the higher price paid for butter to encourage those engaged in the dairying industry, but that sometimes people indicated that they were not in favour of increasing the price of bread to the worker. To my mind, the latter contention is raised only by certain individuals who desire to play on the minds of the workers, and to mislead them on the point of whether the price of wheat, if augmented, increases the price of bread. As a matter of fact, when wheat was 4s. 8d. a bushel, the price of bread was just the same as when wheat brought 2s. 8d. a bushel, so actually the price of wheat has little influence upon the cost of bread.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you know why that was?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes: I think it was due to an unfortunate alliance between the master bakers and their employees.

Mr. Sleeman: I think you are wrong.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then we will give the hon. member some information about that. The person who desires to create an impression such as I have indicated in the minds of the workers does an injury and certainly not a service to those engaged in wheat production. There are very few men to-day, irrespective of what occupation they may follow, who will not be in favour of those who grow wheat receiving fair and equitable treatment.

Mr. Cross: What does Lyons say about it?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The hon. member represents a constituency where the lions are, and he should know all about that. We are perfectly aware that the farmers got

into difficulties during the depression period, and since then they have made bold attempts to reduce their liabilities. At the same time, very few opportunities have been available to enable them to do so. Unfortunately, while they have been unable to reduce their liabilities, except to a small extent, they have concurrently been unable to provide fresh power and plant that are urgently required on their farms. In those circumstances, they are not only faced with the difficulties involved in low prices, but those associated with marketing their products. I appeal to the Government, seeing that an all-Australia wheat conference is to be held in Perth in the near future, to make at least some effort to secure the co-operation of the Federal and other State Governments in providing a home price for wheat used within Australia.

The Premier: There will be a Premiers' Conference before that gathering.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I understand we are likely to have a representative there from this State, and I hope the question will receive attention. The matter is extremely serious. We have no right to make political capital out of such a matter. It is a big problem to tackle, and I can assure the Premier that he will receive all the support possible from the Opposition side of the House. I admit the problem is not easy of solution.

Mr. Sleeman: Apparently New Zealand has solved it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: So could Western Australia solve it if it were a matter for this State alone; but it is not. New Zealand is not an exporter of wheat.

Mr. Patrick: New Zealand imports wheat.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: As New Zealand does not export wheat, there is no difficulty there, nor is there any difficulty in Queensland where there is a fixed price for wheat because that State, too, is an importer of that commodity. Again, there is no difficulty in Great Britain, where wheat is 7s. 6d. a bushel, whereas we sell wheat there for 2s. 4d. a bushel.

The Premier: To us.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am talking in English currency; that is, 7s. 6d. a bushel there, and they are paying us 2s. in our currency.

The Premier: Not 2s.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, it would be a little more.

The Premier: There is freight and exchange.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, the price would be about 3s. Having referred to the difficulties of those engaged in the wheat-growing industry and the importance of doing all in our power to assist them, I propose now to direct my attention to other matters. I am surprised to note from the Lieut.-Governor's Speech that the number of men dependent upon the Government for employment has not been reduced during the prosperous year through which we have just passed. The total mentioned, 6,500, is about the same as that referred to in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech for last year. I have pointed out already that the basic wage has increased 20 per cent., and that makes it very difficult for people who depend on sustenance, because the value of their pound is 20 per cent. less than it was in 1932.

The Premier: Oh no!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I want the Premier to understand this—and he does not—that he is under a false impression, although it is one that seems to be generally adopted in some circles, that the pound is worth more irrespective of the purchase value it has.

The Premier: No, they are getting more.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If the basic wage increases 10s. a week, the cost of living must have increased 10s. a week to justify it. Surely that is a sound argument. I admit that the latest rise of 5s. 1d. was brought about by an alteration in the method of fixing the basic wage.

The Premier: The men are getting improved time.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am talking about the man on sustenance, the man in receipt of rations, the 7s. a week man. He is worse off than ever before to the extent of about 6s. a week compared with what he received in 1932. By interjection, the Premier advised me that this increase in the basic wage will cost the State about £200,000, while the Government's contribution under the Commonwealth National Insurance Scheme will represent between £70,000 and £80,000.

The Premier: That was not by interjection, but during the course of my speech.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Well, it was perhaps a little interlude. I suppose the matter has been taken up, but I would point

out that there are many people in the Public Service who get sick leave. Are they to be asked to contribute to this National Insurance Scheme?

The Premier: No.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: They get no return from it. Where the amount paid under any arrangement for sick leave is less than £1, then the amount will be made up, but surely it is unfair to ask the Government and the employee to pay into a fund from which neither the Government nor the employee derives any benefit. However, I anticipate that some relief will be provided for the Government.

The Premier: It is all in the air. Neither the Federal Government nor its experts know how it will work out.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Some little time back it was suggested that encouragement should be extended to a new type of immigration policy. I do not know that it would be wise for us to embark on any very extensive migration policy in this State, because we seem to have difficulty enough now. It is true that the more people that come here, the more we shall have to feed, but I am afraid that the competition for what labour would be available would be more than overcome by the number of people offering. What I am concerned about is the large influx of foreigners.

The Premier: We have no control over that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am aware of that fact, but there are two aspects regarding which I am most concerned. The first is that the foreigners are congregating in community settlements, and I regard that as rather dangerous. The second phase is that the foreigners are taking what little casual labour is available. I admit that in the building trade they filled adequately a gap that had caused considerable trouble. Our arbitration system and the provisions regarding the apprenticeships have had an adverse effect, with the result that to-day there are insufficient artisans to carry out the work that is offering. Recently great difficulty was experienced in securing bricklayers. The result is that people are coming out from the Old Country and from foreign lands and obtaining employment while our people have to be hod-carriers and labourers for them. Why cannot we do something to train our young folk? Even though there may be times when the market will be over-

supplied by labour it is better that our men should become artisans than that they should be labourers for somebody that we import. I am hoping that some consideration will be given to that matter when the question of youth employment is being dealt with, as suggested in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. I do not care what a man is doing. Whatever it is, he is far better able to do it if he has had proper training. This morning, I accompanied the Minister for Lands, and we had the opportunity of welcoming to this State a group of boys brought out by one of the religious institutions in this State. I believe that that is the best form of migration we could have. It is a fine form of immigration. We are giving to those boys an opportunity that would never be available to them in England. They seemed healthy, well-nourished and an intelligent-looking lot of boys. If the State is to contribute in any way to a migration policy, that seems to be the best form in which it should do so. There will probably come times when some of those boys will be on our hands, but the church that brought them out is acting on right lines, provided that we can find a market for the commodities that the boys produce. They are being put on the land, but that is not the last word. The important thing is to have a market for the goods that are being produced. I desire now to point out that under legislation that was recently passed, a problem has arisen over the control of natives. In the Eastern districts quite a number of half-castes found employment with farmers. To-day very few of those men are being employed because no one is permitted to engage a native for half-a-day without a permit from the Protector or the Commissioner of Native Affairs, or whatever he is called.

Mr. Cross: The dictator.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Surely there could be some elasticity. Surely if a man wants some natives to work for him he should be able to get them without this difficulty. The natives are quite capable of doing such work as shearing and they travel from one employer to another, but an employer has to get a license for the person he employs. In the old days, if one man did not turn up somebody else came and took his place. To-day the employer has to pay a pound to employ a native, and can employ only the man whose name is on the license. In this way we are forcing the natives to come to the Government for every bit of help they want.

That is a wrong principle. It is about time that some new method was introduced in the department.

Mr. Marshall: It is about time that any native with white blood in him was excluded from the provisions of the Act.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I have had a very great number of letters recently—

Mr. Marshall: It is ridiculous.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I admit that we have to be subject to the laws of the State and to obey them. If they are wrong we should alter them. Educated natives, men who have been called natives under the Act because they are half-castes, have written to me telling me of their desire to be excluded from the operations of the Act. I have had to inform them that they must make application for exemption to the Commissioner or the Minister. In their reply to me they ask that if they have to suffer the indignity of being compelled to apply to the Commissioner, they shall not be classed as natives when they are white men with white blood and living as whites.

Mr. Marshall: It is absolutely ridiculous.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: With that last piece of legislation, we introduced a system of control of natives in this State that has not a vestige of sense in it. The worst thing of all was introduced by regulation, and when the regulations are laid on the Table—

Mr. Cross: How long do you think they will lie on the Table?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: When the regulations are laid on the Table of the House, I propose to move that they be disallowed. The particular regulation to which I am now taking exception is that dealing with the registration of missionaries. I do not think that anywhere throughout the world, for a very long period, has a minister of religion had to apply to a government for registration before being able to preach the gospel to the people.

The Minister for Mines: Neither do they have to under the regulations.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is the information that has reached me, in a number of letters.

The Minister for Mines: They have written to me, too.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If the Minister for Mines is aware of the position it is about time he gave the public some information on the point.

The Minister for Mines: The Commissioner has done so time after time.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I shall be glad to know that these men do not require to have a license.

The Minister for Mines: Not to preach the gospel.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Every church in this State, as far as I know, believes otherwise, unless different advice has been given within the last week or so. The churches have written in protest, and asked this side of the House to disagree with the regulations.

The Minister for Mines: They have written to me asking the same thing.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I should think they would. It is about time the Government announced that it was never intended that matters should be brought to such a ridiculous stage, and that missionaries should be registered to preach the gospel. In some parts of my electorate there are girls belonging to the Australian Inland Mission who are doing a wonderful work. They are not only nursing these people but preaching the gospel and making them better citizens. There is not a man who has not some religious touch in him. If there is, he cannot claim that he is worth worrying about, because we are all better if we have a spark of religion in us. It does not matter what the religion is, so long as it is religion. The Australian Inland Mission nurses to whom I have referred, are instructing these young folk and doing a very good service. They are also educating the children and looking after them when they are sick. We should encourage them in every way possible. It is costing the Government nothing, but if we put through interfering regulations such as I have been advised are in operation, their work will be hampered. Such regulations should be disallowed by this House. As a matter of fact, I think it is about time we reorganised the department and put someone in control with a better knowledge of the subject. I had hoped that in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech the Government would have attempted to rectify a mistake made in the dying hours of the last session by an amendment to the Bread Act. After having read it, I contend that there has never been a greater swindle put on the public than that piece of legislation. When a person goes to buy an article he is entitled to get the weight of

the article he purchases, but under the existing Bread Act, that is impossible. I blame the Government for the position that has been created, because it forced that legislation through without giving members an opportunity to know its contents. I admit, of course, that I might have been able to acquaint myself with the details, but I do not think I need repeat what happened. After I left the House other members asked for an adjournment for a time and it was not granted, so that we have a piece of legislation on the statute book that says that the only time bread can be weighed is after the dough is formed, one short period of an hour between the time it is moulded and the time it is put into the tin. I know enough of the trade to be aware of that. I cannot imagine an inspector travelling round the bakeries and weighing the dough in that time. When an inspector weighs the dough of one loaf he then has to record that weight as being the average weight of 12 loaves which he happens to be examining. If that is the case, what is there to prevent the bakers from cutting a piece off the loaf and putting it on again afterwards?

The Minister for Mines: It is dishonest.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: What is the legislation for? To show how hastily it was passed, I obtained from the Government Printer a copy of the Act. It is what might be termed now a consolidation. Section 18 provides—

Any person who—

- (1) Sells, exposes, or offers for sale any bread not stamped in accordance with Section four.

Section 4 of the principal Act was deleted by the last amending Act. The Act is now such an abortion as far as the law is concerned that the Crown Law officers—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I draw the hon. member's attention to the Standing Orders, which do not permit of any offensive references being made to a statute. The hon. member must be more careful.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Crown Law officers have made this addendum to the Act:—

The provisions of this paragraph are now obsolete, as Section four referred to was repealed by Act No. 49 of 1937.

I am sorry I made an offensive remark, Mr. Speaker.

[3]

Mr. SPEAKER: You offended against the Standing Orders.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I have considered the word I used and, while I bow to your ruling, I still do not admit it is offensive.

Mr. SPEAKER: "Abortion," it is not a very nice term.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It may not be a very pleasant term, but the dictionary—

Mr. SPEAKER: If applied to a statute, the term is objectionable.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Very well.

The Minister for Works: You meant it to be offensive.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Probably I did. That is probably the only offence I gave to the Speaker. As I say, this legislation was drafted so hurriedly that the person who was responsible for it was unable even to consider the Act then in existence. He deleted a section of the previous Act without making provision for it in the subsequent legislation. A person in the old days was able to buy a 1-lb., 2-lb., or 4-lb. loaf of bread and get correct weight, and he should be able to do so to-day. No provision is now made for the weighing of bread. As for the tale that a person will now get a better-baked loaf of greater weight, I say the man who was dishonest before the passing of this amendment Act will probably be dishonest still. The bread we are being served with to-day is no better than it was previously. May I point out to the Government that when private members introduce legislation, it is the Government's duty to see that officials check it with legislation already in force? We have found that Acts have been passed by both Houses of Parliament which affect other Acts of Parliament in such a way as to make those Acts practically useless. This has occurred during the past two or three years. It is a difficult matter for a layman to follow Acts of Parliament, so when private members introduce Bills the Government should have them carefully scrutinised by its officers. During the period I have mentioned there has been not one word from Ministerial members either confirming or disagreeing with the action of a private member in introducing a Bill. The laws of the country are very serious. Some of these Acts that have been passed have been so worded that when they have come before a magistrate for interpretation, he has been unable to determine their meaning. As a matter of fact, a private

member often introduces a Bill to make clear what has already passed both Houses of Parliament. I would now like to deal with the embargo on the export of iron ore, but in view of the notice of motion in regard to this matter, I presume you, Mr. Speaker, would rule me out of order if I were to do so.

The Minister for Works: Go on with it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I propose to pass now to a matter that has caused concern not only to members of Parliament, but to the public generally. I refer to what is known as the recent Collie coal mining dispute. I think it well to mention some matters that led up to the dispute. About March or April of last year, an award was made by Mr. President Dwyer dealing with the Collie coal industry. Mr. President Dwyer spent much time in investigating the complaints of the workers in the industry. While I sometimes disagree with the awards of the Arbitration Court, I will go so far as to say that it would be difficult to find a man who knows more about industrial matters than does Mr. President Dwyer. He went to Collie and put in much time investigating the dispute in every way possible. He then made an award.

The Premier: When was that?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Some time last year.

The Premier: He was on leave all last year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It was the year before last. After the award had been existence for 12 months, Mr. President Dwyer being away, a deputy president of the court was appointed. The Collie miners made an application to the court for a fresh award and the deputy president appointed Mr. Wallwork, or rather the Government did—

Mr. Wilson: You are wrong.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Mr. Wallwork made an investigation, anyhow.

Mr. Needham: Keep guessing! You will get on directly.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: As a result of his investigation, an award was made.

The Minister for Mines: You are wrong there.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am trying to think of the name of the officer who was made chairman of the board.

Mr. Wilson: Mr. Wallwork.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: He was appointed an industrial commissioner. He was a member of an industrial board that was appointed under Section 107 of the Industrial Arbitration Act to investigate the dispute. I find, Mr. Speaker, that I have overstepped my notes. An award had been in operation for 12 months. It had caused a certain amount of dissatisfaction and an application was made for a fresh award. Mr. Wallwork was then appointed chairman of the board. He was at Bunbury at the time of his appointment. He inquired into the dispute and made certain recommendations. The new president then made an award.

The Minister for Employment: What new president?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Acting President.

The Minister for Employment: No.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is the information I have. However, let me lead up to the position as it now is. An award had fallen due at the beginning of this year, or about May, I think.

The Minister for Employment: It had been in operation for more than 12 months and was therefore capable of amendment.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The award had to run for 12 months before it could be amended, and it had run 12 months. Mr. President Dwyer, on his return, made a fresh award. A report was made to Mr. President Dwyer, and he made an award.

The Minister for Employment: Except that some recommendations of the board were not endorsed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is the position. I remember it now. After this award was made by Mr. President Dwyer, an agitation arose at Collie against it. Evidently the Minister for Labour became very worried. To pacify the coal miners he did something which has never been done before. The dispute was the subject of a matter which was settled by an award, because it affected wages and the hours of labour. The Minister found there was a disagreement, and used Section 169 of the Act to appoint a Commissioner to investigate the trouble at Collie. The House ought to know that, whilst I do not agree with all that has been said in respect to the matter, the Minister had no power to do what he did. Of course he had power to appoint a commis-

sioner, but he had no power to over-ride an award of the Arbitration Court.

The Minister for Employment: I did not over-ride any award.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: He had no power to do so. There is no appeal against an award of the Arbitration Court to any superior authority. It would be wrong for the Minister to appoint a commissioner and give him power that the Act has never provided for.

The Minister for Employment: The only power the Minister has is to appoint a commissioner.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will tell the Minister what he did after that. I would refer to a statement made by him and which appeared in the "West Australian" on the 30th July, 1938. It is as follows:—

On what authority does the "West Australian" base its sweeping statement that Section 169 of the Act is unimportant or comparatively unimportant? The object of that section is to have disputing parties in industry called together under the chairmanship of a conciliation commissioner for the purpose of attempting mutually to settle their differences and thus maintain industrial peace and harmony.

That is all right, provided an award of the court, that is in operation, is not upset. If that is the case, then people are acting as a court of appeal. That is where the Minister was wrong. He went on to say—

The "clear legal intention" of the section is that the Minister for Labour may appoint a conciliation commissioner in an attempt to prevent any threatened impending or probable industrial dispute, or settle any industrial dispute, and may make such appointment notwithstanding that any lock-out or strike may exist. Those are words which actually appear in the section. If words mean anything, those used in the section surely mean that the Minister was empowered to appoint a commissioner to deal with the industrial dispute that was threatening at Collie. The power of the Minister begins and ends with his action in appointing a commissioner.

The Minister said he had the advice of the Crown Law officers. No one would object to his getting that. I want to know whether he had their advice to do what he eventually did. Actually what happened was that Commissioner McVee, an inspector under the Mining Act, reported to the board that he had, in the course of his deliberations with the company and the workers, agreed to alter the award. That is where he was

wrong. He increased the wages, although the award had already fixed them and they had to stand for 12 months.

The Minister for Employment: He was empowered to do that only because both parties had agreed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is the weak reply of the Minister. Why did they agree? The employers would not have agreed, but for a clause in the agreement, a copy of which the Minister was good enough to supply to me. If the employers had had to bear the additional cost themselves they never would have agreed. Fortunately, there is a clause in the agreement entered into between the Amalgamated Collieries and the Commissioner of Railways dated the 3rd August, 1934, which enables them to pass on such a charge. This clause says—

The price of coal shall be subject to adjustment in accordance with the terms of the agreement in respect to basic wage variations.

In the deed of agreement or award made by Mr. Justice Davidson there is such a provision. The words I have quoted were in the award made by him. Similar words are also found in the agreement made between the Amalgamated Collieries and the Commissioner of Railways.

Mr. Wilson: When was that?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: On the 3rd January, 1934. Clause 13 of that agreement provides—

The price stated in the tender is based on the mining rate and conditions now current at Collie and any increase or decrease in the present cost of production due to changes made by the Government or other competent authority, of whatever kind, which enter into the cost of production or preparation of the said coal shall be added to or deducted from the price herein fixed.

Mr. Wilson: What about the other company?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The other company has the same provision. In the Griffin Coal Mining Company's agreement, entered into on the 18th February, 1937, with the Commissioner of Railways, Clause 12 provides —

The price stated in Clause 6 hereof is based on the mining rate and conditions now current at Collie, and any increase or decrease in the present cost of production due to changes made by the Government or other competent authority, of whatever kind, which enter into the cost of production or preparation of the said coal, shall be added to or deducted from the price herein fixed.

The result of the action taken by the Minister is that the Commissioner of Railways has to pay an additional price for his coal. We can always be generous if we are representing a particular firm, and get together with some other firm and have a quarrel and agree to pass on the cost to somebody else. No award affects only two sections of the community, the employer and the employee. Someone else is affected, and that is generally the consuming public which has to pay. There is no credit in being generous in that way. Mr. President Dwyer refused to allow Mr. McVee to be made a court of appeal. That is how I view it. He said, "I refuse to allow anyone to interfere with an award I have made. The Act says the award shall stand for 12 months, and from that award there is no appeal. But the Government appointed a man who allowed the mine workers to appeal to him, to over-ride the award." Quite rightly the President said, "I am not going to allow this, and therefore I will not make it. I have already investigated the matter, and I contend that the decision I have arrived at is the correct one." Who was wrong?

The Minister for Employment. He apologised in the "West Australian" of the 19th July.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: He apologised for saying that it was not within the Minister's right to appoint a commissioner. That is within the power of the Minister. However, I wish to point out the danger of this sort of thing. If the Arbitration Court is to be in the hands of the political party in power, a very dangerous precedent will be set up. Let us make no mistake about that. In this Chamber champions of the Labour movement for years, for longer than I have been here, have upheld this legislation. I refer to the men who built up the Labour movement, and built it up pretty solidly too. They were responsible for the introduction of the legislation, and never once, up to the present, has it been abused. I can picture the members of the Ministry now on the Treasury bench telling the Chamber that it was not the function of Parliament to fix hours of labour or to fix the price of bread, that an authority had been set up in this State to do that, and that it was the right and the work of that authority alone. That was sound advice to tender to this Cham-

ber. While I do not subscribe to many of the views of Labour, I have always subscribed to that one. Members of this House can be as honest as possible in their ideas, without being competent, collectively anyhow, to deal with such matters. Therefore we have always taken the stand that one Industrial Arbitration Court, one properly qualified court, should be set up to deal with wages and hours—only one court, not two or three courts—and that for the purpose of assisting the court in the event of congestion provision should be made for the delegation of the court's powers either by the court itself or by the Minister administering the Industrial Arbitration Act. Yet we now have a Minister who comes along into the movement at the last minute and overrides all the good work that has been done by past champions of the Labour movement of Western Australia. I venture to say that if the clause I have just read had not been in the agreement between the coal mining companies and the Commissioner of Railways, those companies would never have agreed to the decision. The Minister has told every political party, "If at any time you feel that you have a grievance or that wages are too high, or else too low, all you have to do is to invoke Section 169 of the Industrial Arbitration Act and cause a bit of friction so as to induce the operation of that section, and then you will be able to find a way out." A very dangerous precedent has been set up. The section was never intended to be used for that purpose.

The Premier: For what purpose was it put there?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I can easily tell the Premier that. One case is where there is no award governing the industry. A second case is where something not governed by the award is in dispute. Many things might occur. The miners might suddenly be forced to work in wet places not provided for in the award.

The Minister for Employment: The court itself can deal with all those cases.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Of course the court can, and so can the Minister. The court could have done what the Minister did in this instance. But what we have always maintained, and rightly maintained, is that when an award is made by a competent authority, that award shall stand for 12

months, so that it may be given a fair trial. If at the end of 12 months it cannot be fitted in, there may be a new award.

Mr. Wilson: They did it for more than 18 months.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: A new award was made last May.

Mr. Wilson: No, there was not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: As far as my memory serves me, a new award was made in February or March or May.

Mr. Wilson: Your memory is wrong.

The Premier: The award was amended in May.

The Minister for Employment: May of this year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes. The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) is nearly always right, but on this occasion I am right and he is not. I checked it up. The court made all the alterations it thought right to make. That is what happened.

The Minister for Employment: Only to the extent to which the award was made.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: So far as the new conditions justified alterations. We started to play with the Industrial Arbitration Act in the gold-mining employees' dispute. Once a start is made with playing with such Acts, a great responsibility is thrown on Ministers. I am sorry that the men appointed to look after the welfare of the workers in this State should violate the law.

The Minister for Employment: There was no law violated.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I say there was. The Minister overrode an award made by the Arbitration Court.

The Premier: No.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: These people got together and said they would agree to a certain thing. They then submitted the matter to the Arbitration Court, which said, "We will not agree to this." Thereupon the Minister said, "If you will not agree to this, I will do it."

The Minister for Employment: We said we would refer the question to a commissioner.

Mr. Marshall: What will you do when you get into power? You started this in 1930, when you instructed the Arbitration Court to go below the basic wage to the extent of—

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Parliament did nothing of the sort.

Mr. Marshall: You have either a bad or else a convenient memory. This started with the Premiers' Plan in 1930.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I quote from a report published on the 29th July, 1938—

The companies had agreed to accept the decisions made by the Conciliation Commissioner (Mr. J. McVee), the Government also honouring them in relation to the supply and price of coal.

What does that mean? It simply means that one party said, "We will give you what you want so long as the Government will give it to us." The same report of a statement by the Minister for Labour contains the following:—

The court considered the report, and by a majority decision disallowed several of the recommendations made, including the major recommendations. As the rejected recommendations provided for increased wages and improved working conditions for a number of the miners, they were naturally incensed at the action of the court.

I took the Minister's word for it when I said the miners asked for an increase. This is where I got the information.

Meetings of the men were held at Collie, and serious industrial trouble threatened to occur.

If something happens that the men do not like and it is fixed by a court or other instrumentality for their benefit, surely they must abide by it for the time being, until there is an opportunity of amending it. I want to point out that the Government have no right to interfere with the Arbitration Court.

The Premier: Oh!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Suppose this had been done by one of the big firms in Perth, what would have happened? Is there not now an inducement for any employees whom an award does not suit to start an agitation? Would they not be justified in doing it? Of course they would be. The Minister for Labour encourages it, has given employees an invitation to do it. For what purpose was the Arbitration Court brought into existence? Is it to be set aside now and disregarded, or are its decisions to be observed by both parties? In our Industrial Arbitration Act we say that we will set up a court and that an award made by the court shall operate for 12 months, and that at the end of the 12 months it may be amended or re-adopted. But the Minister says now, "It does not matter what your awards are; come to me and I will fix the

matter up." The Government has not observed the laws of this country. For quite a long time it has known that laws have been broken, and has agreed to their being broken. The licensing laws are one instance, and the gambling laws another. We know the things that happen, but no effort is made to stop them. I am concerned with what the public think, what the people we represent think. What will they say if Ministers of the Crown do not observe the law? If Parliament, which makes laws, will not observe them, how can it expect the public generally to have regard for those laws? They will treat the laws with contempt. We cannot make laws in this House and then alter them at will outside Parliament.

The Premier: This was all done in accordance with the law.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I say it was not.

The Premier: Oh, very well.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I say that very definitely, and even so, it would not have been possible if the Government had not been prepared to find the money to pay for the coal. That is where I say the Government is definitely wrong. What will happen should a dispute arise with an outside firm that involves danger of a dislocation? Suppose it takes place in connection with transport facilities, what will happen? Will the Government say, "Even though the award may prescribe certain things and this is not a responsibility of the Government, you need not worry about the award. Come to us and we will appoint a commissioner to fix it up."

The Premier: No, but suppose the parties agree to abide by the decision of a Commissioner?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: To me it is most extraordinary to hear the Premier say that. We have an Arbitration Court, which hears the evidence of both sides and comes to a conclusion. The Premier says that if the employers and employees concerned like to get their heads together for the purpose of taking more money from the public, the Government is prepared to enable it to be done. What will happen in a month's time if the Collie miners feel they have a further grievance?

Mr. Seward: They will get another award.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Are we to have another commissioner appointed? Are we to have another increase in the price of coal? Where shall we get to?

Mr. Wilson: But the President of the Court advised the men to take this course.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Which course?

Mr. Wilson: The course they followed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not know that the President offered that advice. I can hardly believe that Mr. President Dwyer, whom I know slightly, would advise the workers to create an agitation.

Mr. Wilson: I did not say that. I referred to the course they took.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not know what course they took. They created an agitation and a dispute, and the Commissioner of Railways got the wind up and said, "Don't go on; I will appoint a commissioner." Then the Commissioner tendered advice to the Minister, and the Minister said, "I am more powerful than the court, and I will agree to this." What I am endeavouring to do is to point out the danger of non-observance of the law by the Minister and by Parliament. If we do not abide by the law, how can we expect the people to do so? All the democracies of the world that have failed have fallen because of failure to abide by the law. The few remaining democracies in the world are those of the British-speaking people. Let us at least, while we are custodians of that form of government, abide by the law: we cannot do so if we agree to actions such as the Minister took in this instance. I do not know whether the miners were right: I do not set myself up as competent to adjudicate on that point. To my mind, however, there are few men more qualified than Mr. President Dwyer to determine that question, and he inquired into the trouble.

The Minister for Employment: Yes, two and-a-half years ago.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: So he knew all about it.

The Minister for Employment: Unfortunately he did not understand his own award.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Well, the Government will probably appoint Mr. Dunphy, one of the valued members of its party, to determine that. I am sorry that the Government saw fit to appoint one of its political partisans to a high position.

The Premier: Why not? What objection have you?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I would certainly object to it when the person so appointed makes the statement that I note in the "Westralian Worker" of Friday, the 29th July.

The Minister for Mines: I am glad you read a good paper sometimes.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I read quite a number of papers. The Government appointed Mr. Dunphy to a high office in this State, the position of Crown Solicitor.

The Premier: Do you want to make him a pariah and an outcast?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, but he should be careful in his utterances.

The Minister for Lands: Did you not appoint Mr. Justice Draper to the judiciary?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, but I cannot recollect his ever attending a meeting of the National Party and saying anything like this—

He would like it to be understood that although he would not be taking the active part that he had taken formerly, he was not lost to the Labour movement . . .

The Minister for Lands: Why should he be?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: To continue—

. . . It would still be possible for him to lawfully and rightly assist the movement.

The Minister for Lands: Good.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Later on he said—

They had always known where he had stood in the past and they would know where he intended to stand.

What did Mr. Dunphy mean by that? Did he mean that he would give political consideration to matters?

Government members: Oh!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is not so many years ago that, when a Minister was appointed, one of the senior officers offered him advice to keep a stiff upper lip when approaching the Treasury, and we had to listen to that week after week. He did not say what his politics were, nor did he say that he would give consideration to the politics he held.

The Minister for Mines: Dunphy did not say anything of the sort.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes.

The Minister for Mines: You are usually fair, and that is not fair.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But I have read what he said.

The Minister for Mines: Read it as you like; you cannot read that into it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: This is what he said—

They had always known where he had stood in the past, and they would know where he intended to stand.

The Minister for Lands: What is wrong with that?

Member: Only his politics.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: When a man occupies such a position as that of Crown Solicitor, he should forget his politics. Generally speaking, I have always found that we have had little to fear from our officers' politics in this State.

The Minister for Mines: And you have little to fear from this officer, too.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I hope I am wrong. When I looked at Mr. Dunphy's photograph, I came to the conclusion that this must have been a youthful indiscretion. That was the only excuse I could advance for such an utterance.

Mr. Raphael: Have you never been guilty of a youthful indiscretion?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I think it is regrettable that he should have gone to the Trades Hall and given utterance to such a youthful indiscretion. I hope this will not give rise again to any charge of political bias, or that such a charge will ever be levelled against us when we sit on the Government side of the House.

The Premier: We did not go to him in this instance.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am glad to know that the Government did not do so. That is one thing for which I will give the Government credit—the Government did not avail itself of the offer.

The Premier: We went to the Senior Crown Law officer.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Whoever it was, I say with my knowledge of the Arbitration Court—I confess it is not very great, but nevertheless I have a certain amount of commonsense which enables me to interpret the position—the Government was certainly wrong in doing what it did. Leaving that question, and pointing out that the finalising of this dispute amounted merely to a charge against the Government itself, I do not know what the additional cost will be, but it will have to be borne by the Treasury. I am pleased to note that the Government intends to do something at last regarding youth employment. After five years of waiting for something to be done I would quote the words of the Minister for Employment by saying, "Probably it is a very good election bait." He said that the "West Australian" was making much of the Collier coal miner's case for election purposes.

This is the last of the States to deal with youth employment; every other State has dealt with it. About five years ago an appeal on behalf of youth was made to the public that met with considerable response. Yet, so far as I know, nothing has been done for the youth of the State apart from erecting one or two buildings. Whatever else is done, I hope we shall give youths an opportunity of receiving some vocational training. We frequently have the Minister for Lands interjecting, "Well, what would you do?" I am going to state in anticipation of such an interjection, that it is not for us to submit a policy. The gentlemen on his side of the House have been placed in charge of affairs and they are the people to put up a policy. Nevertheless, we have waited five years, and no policy has been enunciated. The Government should get busy immediately. The number of cases of juvenile delinquency reported in the Press seems to be greater than formerly. I do not know whether delinquencies of youth are to-day given more publicity than in the past, but it certainly is surprising how many cases come before the court. I do not think that our boys and girls are naturally bad; the cause of the trouble is that they are idle.

The Minister for Mines: Nine out of ten are under 14.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, they are not.

The Minister for Mines: They are school-boys.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister is making me inquisitive. We will ask for a return and ascertain the ages of the youths brought before the court during the last 12 months.

The Minister for Justice: Some are only nine years of age.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Some are, I know. Some of them have not done anything wrong; they are brought before the court because they are neglected children. I am not referring to those children. There is much good in the boys and girls that are taken before the court. If they had some useful occupation or some kind of training, there would be no need for them to appear before the court. Let me here say that I must admire the Government for some things. During the next four or five months I suppose it will be busy throwing out baits to the electors. One of the most beautiful is the five-day week for civil servants. For several years the Labour Party has been in

power in this State, and just before an election it decides to offer these people Saturday off. Why not be generous to the Civil Service? Why not say, "We will give you Saturday morning off because we believe little work is done on Saturday morning." The public deals with departments not on Saturdays but during the rest of the week. Why not close the offices altogether?

The Premier: They will be eventually.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: This is the first step. As the Premier is going out with his Government, he decides to offer a five-day week.

The Minister for Mines: He is not offering; he has done it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Not yet. This is the position: He says, "Get together, lads, tell us whether you want Saturday off or not." Naturally enough, they said, "We want Saturday off," and, as in other cases, the public pays.

The Premier: We will save money on it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I think we should tell them what ought to be done. We should say, "Come back and keep the same hours as before and still knock off on Saturday." Nobody works at ten to nine in the morning. At that time the mail has not been delivered.

The Premier: We do not wait for the mail.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Nine o'clock is the hour they start work.

The Premier: They work earlier.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If it is a question of vote-catching, we could give these people Saturday morning off and let them have the same hours as they have to-day. Why should not we come out on this vote-catching bait? The Premier has started it.

The Premier: I have not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I say that you have, very definitely.

The Premier: I would not be a party to it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The trouble is that the Premier does not keep a check on some of his Ministers. He is letting them run a bit wild. He has been in this House many years, years longer than I have, and would not do anything foolish. I have always heard leaders of both sides of the House, long before I had the chance of becoming a leader, decrying this principle. It is wrong.

The Premier: Yes, it is wrong.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: This House exists not for our benefit but for the benefit of the electors, but we have adopted some desperate methods in recent years to return men of our own political faith. Not so long ago, at a Legislative Council election, we had a member of Parliament with a number of cards in his hand who went around canvassing his district to get people's names on the roll. He did not even witness their signatures in their presence; he did that in this House.

The Minister for Lands: I saw a Country Party member of Parliament handing out cards on election day near a booth.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is a serious offence. One good thing is that it was not I, and I do not think it was any member on this side of the House, either.

The Minister for Lands: I will say it was not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I think we ought to tell the public that this House exists for their benefit. It is their responsibility to see that the electoral laws are a reasonable set of laws, and that they are observed. The Government should find money to ensure that people compelled by law to have their names on the roll are enrolled. That should not be a function of members of Parliament, who should not be asked to degrade themselves by going from house to house to collect names. If I had my way, I should have a heavy fine imposed on persons guilty of that sort of thing.

Mr. Raphael: Where is the degradation? If you are willing to have people select you as their representative in Parliament, you should be willing to call on them.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If a person goes around saying, "I want to get into Parliament because I want to be there," he is adopting a wrong principle. The point is that we should represent the people because they consider that we are the best representatives available to them.

Mr. Cross: Hear, hear!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There are many men in this House who have never resorted to that.

The Minister for Mines: Do you say that a member should not put people on the roll in his own district if he has a desire to do so?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The law provides that every person of the age of 21 who

has the qualifications shall have his name placed on the roll, and the responsibility is his. If a person does not comply with the law, the member who goes to his house and says, "Let me have your card," is encouraging that person to break the law.

The Minister for Mines: He is saving the person from being fined.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Why would he be fined?

The Minister for Mines: For not having his name on the roll.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: For not complying with the law. I hope the time is not far distant when we shall find sufficient money to keep the rolls up to date through the activities of officers responsible for the work, and not through members of Parliament. Undoubtedly the other principle is wrong. Suppose I started canvassing in my electorate, and because I knew a man had no political use for me, I collected his card and threw it on one side. I have heard it said—and so has the Minister—that I have left people off the roll because their politics were not the same as mine.

The Minister for Mines: Do you say I did that?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, you have heard it said.

The Minister for Mines: No; I would shut my ears to such a thing.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is tantamount to the Minister's admitting that he has heard it said. I do not think for one moment that the Minister has done it, but there are many in this House who may have done it. They have brought cards and had them witnessed here, when the law says they shall be witnessed in the presence of the people concerned.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: That is the point.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The public should be protected, and I am going to see, so far as I possibly can, that they are protected. We should consider this matter. It should be realised that Parliament does not exist for members of Parliament. If we are going to play willy-nilly with electors generally, we shall bring this House into contempt. There can be no alternative. Even to-day, despite the number of people that are sick and tired of our constitutional form of government, folk are being advised in the wrong direction.

The Premier: Of what is this apropos?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Of this habit of members of Parliament getting electors' names placed on the roll when it is not their function to do so. I hope, of course, that the Government will not throw out baits. If, after five years the Government can show the people that it has done good service then, if the people return it to power, I shall be one who will have no regrets. If, however, it is a question of baiting the public, then others can play that game; but to do so would only be letting the public down. As the mouthpiece of the Country Party, I can say that never at any time have we tried to secure support in that way.

Mr. Raphael: What about Sir James Mitchell's "Work for all"? We had that battle-cry.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Never once have we done it, and I do not want it to be done now. If it is, then we are all heading for trouble. We cannot afford to do it. The existing conditions of this State are such that we must very carefully husband our resources. We have responsibility to those engaged in industry and to those looking for employment. If we all turn our attention to these matters, then this side of the House will help the Government, but it will not help the Government if it makes irresponsible promises that cannot be fulfilled. Why was not the matter of superannuation dealt with two years ago, instead of its being brought up immediately before an election? The public servants have not asked for it.

The Premier: They asked me for it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: They do not do it usually.

The Premier: After the Public Service Commissioner recommended it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is usually the case. If I were to offer them an extra 10s. a week, of course they would come along and ask for it. It seems to me something like an election promise, and I object to election promises. It is a bait.

The Minister for Mines: A bait to catch fish.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister will probably catch some. He is young in office and we shall see what he will do. He was not very good to me the only time I went to see him. What other legislation does the Government propose to bring forward? From the Speech, I see the Government proposes to deal with fair rents, firearms and guns, industrial arbitration, workers' com-

pensation, the Municipal Corporations Act, the Navigation Act, land and income tax, State insurance and superannuation. A start was made with superannuation during the last session of Parliament. What has the Government done about it. Is it going to give the railway employees superannuation or is it going to make more promises? Then the Government proposes to legislate in regard to university buildings (Agricultural College), the Scaffolding Act, Profiteering Prevention Act, Bureau of Industry and Economic Research and Workers' Homes. Some of these matters are departmental and will have to be given effect. Some of them are brought forward merely at the behest of the Trades Hall.

The Premier: No.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: As we read it, it comes as a dictate from the Trades Hall.

The Premier: If your party had passed some of this legislation, we would have a very short session this year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We will have a pretty long one. We will be here till February or March. We are anxious to give you, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, a good opportunity. On Thursday last the member for Haumans (Mr. Leahy) spoke about workers' homes. In common with all goldfields members, he complained in this House about the high rents charged for houses on the goldfields. I agree with him. I think no man should be asked to pay an amount greater than one day's wages as rent for his home. I have argued that all the time I have been in this House. The member for Haumans said that people on the goldfields were paying high rents for ramshackle places. A Fair Rents Bill will not improve the position. After all, there must be an insufficient number of houses on the goldfields. That is the first point.

Mr. Raphael: What about the houses in the metropolitan area?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If there are insufficient houses, then the Government should build additional workers' homes.

The Premier: And spend all the money in that way.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The city gets everything. The country, and I include the goldfields, gets very little. The country is entitled to better treatment. The Government would have my support for any proposal to erect a cheap, comfortable type of house on the goldfields. That, I think,

would be the best way to bring down the high rents now being charged there. Apparently, houses are not a profitable investment on the goldfields; otherwise people on the goldfields with money would invest it in cottages for letting purposes. The Government should not build the same class of house on the goldfields as it builds in the metropolitan area. The people in the metropolitan area build rather expensive houses. The Government could, however, provide the people on the goldfields with comfortable weatherboard homes, properly lined, at a rental they can afford to pay. It is no good complaining and then saying a Fair Rents Act will overcome the difficulty. It will not. It would probably have the effect of stopping the building of houses and so overcrowding would follow. No one wants overcrowding: we have plenty of land, goodness knows. I have taken up the time of the House longer than I expected; but I do hope that I have to some extent misjudged the Government. To start vying with each other to win popularity in the way I have indicated is unwise. Such a course will not benefit the public generally, nor will it do us much good.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.18 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 10th August, 1938.

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

QUESTION—HARBOURS, AMOUNTS VOTED.

Hon. G. B. WOOD asked the Chief Secretary: What is the total amount voted by Parliament for each of the following harbours since, and including, 1924—(a) Geraldton, (b) Fremantle, (c) Bunbury, (d) Albany, (e) Esperance?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: (a) Geraldton, £801,965. (b) Fremantle, £1,064,220. (c) Bunbury, £303,000. (d) Albany, £6,000. (e) Esperance, £105,085.

QUESTION—TAXATION, FINANCIAL EMERGENCY AND HOSPITAL.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What amount was collected from the financial emergency tax for each of the last six months of the year ended June, 1938? 2, What amount was collected from the hospital tax during the same months? 3, What was the amount collected from the financial emergency and hospital taxes in July, 1938?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:—

	Financial Emergency Tax.	Hospital Tax.
1938.	£	£
January	60,215	16,456
February	113,012	21,818
March	116,702	24,658
April	119,101	23,404
May	94,806	19,774
June	117,184	24,658
July	68,844	17,285