

all deplore and a stage has been reached when a remedy should be sought.

The consensus of opinion seems to be that over-indulgence in strong drink is largely accountable for this state of affairs. Efforts have been made to curtail drinking, and the fairly stringent restrictions imposed should be productive of good. I hope the military authorities will exercise closer control over members of the Forces. I gather that wherever our troops have been—it grieves me to have to express these views—they have made a bad name for themselves. We should take notice of what is happening and endeavour to check these evils. We must endeavour to help our young people to exercise greater control, emulate what their forefathers did and do their utmost to make Australia the country it should be. I trust that our labours will benefit the people of the State and that we shall be able to achieve the desires expressed in His Excellency's Speech.

On motion by Hon. E. H. H. Hall, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY** [4.26]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 11th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.27 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 5th August, 1942.

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The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—WHEAT.

As to Distillation Plant.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Has any site been selected in this State on which to erect a wheat distillation plant? 2, If not, when is it expected that a site will be selected? 3, If a

site has been selected, has any work been done there, and how much; and when is it expected that the plant will be ready to start? 4, If a plant has been decided on, what amount of wheat per year will it handle, and what amount of power alcohol will it produce per year?

The **MINISTER** replied: 1, 2, 3 and 4. A site has been selected in Western Australia on which to erect a plant for the distillation of alcohol from wheat, and work has been commenced upon this project. It is the wish of the Commonwealth Government that all information in connection with the site, erection, and capacity of the plant should be regarded as strictly confidential.

PAPERS—MANPOWER POSITION.

Ministerial Statement.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS [2.21]:

I have here some papers in connection with the manpower position. It will be remembered that on the 14th May last a resolution on this subject was carried by the House. A letter was sent to the Prime Minister on the 16th May and a few days ago a reply was received dated the 30th July. That reply did not give the information I think this House should have, and consequently I have prepared some papers that bring the facts relating to the manpower position up-to-date in respect to our industries and embody reports from the Agricultural Department on our rural industries. I now ask that the papers be laid upon the Table of the House.

PRIVILEGE—PARLIAMENTARY NEWS.

As to Broadcasting.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [2.23]: Before the Orders of the Day are called there is a matter of privilege which I want to raise. I understand that questions submitted and answers given in this House are in the possession of the Speaker and are released by the Speaker for public information. Last night I was listening to the National Broadcasting Station and the announcer said that she was about to give the Parliamentary news. She then gave in detail the questions submitted by some members and the answers given. She referred to one question that I asked but the all-important one that I submitted, which is a matter affecting all the people

of this State and particularly the working people—the question about the basic wage—was omitted, no reference being made to it. I thought that was an extraordinary procedure and immediately telephoned the station to find out why it was that only some questions and answers were broadcast. I was asked to hang on, which I did for quite a time considering my limited patience, and ultimately I was informed that no explanation could be given. That amounts to censoring the already censored. We know that there are certain things about which we cannot ask questions though we desire to do so, but nobody has any right to censor that which we can inquire about. The broadcasting station has no right to deny the public the information given to this House in answer to questions.

I raise this point because I had to do so in regard to an occurrence in which the Press was involved. It will be remembered that the Press was omitting questions and answers. You, Mr. Speaker, took action, or I assume you did because more attention to these matters is now given in the Press. In regard to announcements over the National Broadcasting Station, I suggest that you make it quite clear that you release questions and answers for public information, and that all of the information so released must be given or none at all. It is quite wrong for Parliament to be denied the right of expression to people outside Parliament on matters that are released for publication and when people exercise the right of saying "We will not publish the information," even when the Speaker has released it, I suggest that some action should be taken. We have to be jealous of our rights and this is one right we must preserve. We must ensure that papers released from Parliament are either published in full or not published at all.

MR. NORTH (Claremont): I support the remarks of the member for Guildford-Midland, because I have had a similar experience on several occasions. I did not know that we had any power to direct the Australian Broadcasting Commission regarding Parliamentary information conveyed over the air. I understood the Commission authorities could please themselves in that regard. In comparing the reports conveyed to the public by the Press and the A.B.C. respectively, the information published by

the Press is 100 per cent. better; in fact, the Press has been very fair regarding the publication of questions and replies, considering that the space available is so limited. I urge you, Mr. Speaker, to take up this matter. If you release information for public consumption, that information should be made use of. Under existing conditions, the procedure is most unfair to the public, particularly at the present time, when so many commentaries are heard upon public affairs.

Mr. Cross: Some of the commentators should be squashed.

Hon. P. Collier: At any rate, is not the information taken from the Press? The announcer generally states that the information is provided by courtesy of the "Daily News." In that event, the responsibility must be with the "Daily News."

Mr. NORTH: No, I do not think that is so. On many occasions the reports dealing with Parliamentary proceedings have been rather arbitrary. I have taken no action in the past, but if it is within your province to do so, Mr. Speaker, I hope you will give the matter consideration.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: My complaint is limited to the matter of questions and answers.

Hon. P. Collier: I suppose the information put over the air was what was provided by the Press.

Mr. Patrick: No.

CHAIRMEN (TEMPORARY) OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to announce that I have appointed Mr. Withers, Mr. J. Hegney and Mr. Seward to be temporary Chairmen of Committees for the session.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day.

Debate resumed from the 30th July.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [2.27]: At the outset I desire to extend my sympathy to the Premier, who has been so ill, and to express my hope that he will be back with us very shortly. My remarks apply equally to the Minister for Works, who also has been indisposed, and we are glad to see him back with us. No one has a greater appreciation of the difficulties confronting Ministers than have members of the Opposition, and it is on that account that we

temper our statements in voicing our desires and our criticisms. I know the Premier has been seriously ill. I had an opportunity to see him, and I am sure all will be glad to have him back with us shortly.

Anyone who has read the Lieut.-Governor's Speech will agree with me that it contains nothing that was worthy of printing. To my mind, we are getting away from the object for which Governors' Speeches were originally intended. In the earlier days, when the member for Boulder was Premier, and also when the present Lieut.-Governor held a similar office, members of Parliament were customarily requested by the Usher of the Black Rod, who came from another place and appeared at the bar of this House, to attend in the Council Chamber to hear the reasons for calling Parliament together. Last session I think the Lieut.-Governor's Speech embodied a history of what had taken place during the preceding year. On this occasion, the Speech conveyed to us particulars about Australia's war effort. We know all about what Australia is doing, and what we desired was some idea of the business to be transacted during the session so that we could fit ourselves to deal with that which was ahead of us. With few exceptions, members will agree with the suggestion that speeches delivered during the session should be as brief as possible. We desire to sit only during daylight, and to carry out the work entrusted to us.

Since Parliament last met, I regret that its status as a legislative institution has substantially deteriorated in consequence of enactments passed by the Federal Government.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Enemy action!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I shall not go so far as that at the present juncture. I voiced my opinions last session when discussing the motion placed before the House instructing the Government as to the action it should take. Since then, the Commonwealth Government has passed legislation dealing with uniform taxation and other supplementary Acts, the cumulative effect of which is to take from the State the right to impose taxation. Subsequently an appeal was, quite rightly, made to the High Court on constitutional grounds to ascertain whether the Commonwealth Acts were legal. The Court, by a majority of one, decided that all the Acts were legal. That means we have little standing as a Parliamentary institution be-

yond carrying out the wishes of the Federal Government. At one time the Commonwealth Government wielded only such limited powers as the States at that time desired to hand over. Restrictive provisions were embodied in the Constitution, with the object of preventing the Commonwealth Government from encroaching upon State rights without going through a very severe procedure involving a referendum, in which a majority of the voters in a majority of the States was required before the desires of the Commonwealth could become effective.

Next I shall deal, with due acknowledgment to Mr. H. K. Watson, with a circular he issued, and I shall quote a few paragraphs to indicate that what has actually happened was anticipated many years ago. On the second page of the pamphlet there appears a copy of a letter published in the London "Morning Post" on the 1st April, 1902, over the signature of Mr. Alfred Deakin, who was twice Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. In the course of that letter, Mr. Deakin wrote—

As the power of the purse in Great Britain established by degrees the authority of the Commons, it will ultimately establish in Australia the authority of the Commonwealth. The rights of self-government of the States have been fondly supposed to be safeguarded by the Constitution. It has left them legally free, but financially bound to the chariot wheels of the central Government. Their need will be its opportunity. The less populous will first succumb; those smitten by drought or similar misfortunes will follow; and finally even the greatest or most prosperous will, however reluctantly, be brought to heel. Our Constitution may remain the same, but a vital change will have taken place in the relations between the States and the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth will have acquired a general control over the State, while every extension of political power will be made by its means, and go to increase its relative superiority.

That is what has actually happened. I presume that at the time that letter was penned and published, the words were passed over as merely those of someone who was writing in the paper but, when one peruses them in retrospect, one must acknowledge that Mr. Deakin displayed great foresight regarding the future trend in Australia. Coming to more recent times, the circular also embodies an extract from a speech by Mr. A. A. Calwell, M.H.R., the Labour member for Melbourne. That gentleman is known to members on the Government side as a man holding rather extreme views. During the course of a debate in the House of Repre-

sentatives, on the 28th May last, Mr. Calwell said—

I think the High Court will not give a legal judgment but a political one. High Courts give political judgments and High Courts are politically minded. Some come from political parties . . . Tonight we are participating in an historic incident. We are considering legislation which, if passed, will fundamentally affect the future of Australia, because it will inevitably result in the destruction of the States as we know them. They might linger superfluous a little longer, but if they lose their right to impose income tax, they will become mendicants existing upon the bounty of the Commonwealth. They will, in effect and for practical purposes, cease to exist as States.

That seems to me to ring the death knell of State Governments.

Hon. P. Collier: Mr. Watson was right about the political appointments. For years past Commonwealth Governments, in making appointments to the High Court, have considered the political leanings of the men to be appointed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Undoubtedly, and judges must be influenced by political atmosphere. Here, as in other States, men who are States-righters begin to take the opposite view very soon after entering the Commonwealth Parliament. Men who are in close touch with the people could render better service to them than could men sitting in Houses of Parliament thousands of miles away. There was no justification for the legislation which was challenged. Had the State Treasurers been called together they would have given the Federal Government every possible assistance. The statement made by the Prime Minister and the head of the National Party, and some other leading men in the Federal Parliament, that it was necessary to pass this legislation because the Commonwealth required money, is quite baseless. The States have never refused money to the Federal Government. Federal loans have been over-subscribed. The legislation represents the second step towards unification; the first step was the Financial Agreement signed in 1928.

Hon. P. Collier: And that was not a voluntary agreement.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No doubt the Commonwealth Government could impose an income tax of 20s. in the pound. The decision of the Federal High Court is, after all, a majority decision by one judge. Were it not that the war is in progress, we should have the right to test that decision in the Privy Council. But now, even if the Com-

monwealth Government were agreeable to that course being taken, the exercise of the right would not be opportune. I believe the judges of the High Court would be fair enough to say, "As there seems to be some doubt about the matter in the minds of at least two of us, this court will allow an appeal to another authority." The High Court can allow an appeal. Mr. Watson has gone to considerable trouble in supporting the case for secession put up by Western Australia. Members will recollect the answer given by the Commonwealth Government of that period. One of the advocates for this State was Dr. Somerville; but at that time Sir Robert Garran was head of the committee appointed by the Federal Government. Here is what Sir Robert Garran said then—

The suggestion (in paragraph 136 of the Case for Secession) that the Financial Emergency (State Legislation) Act, 1932, indicates a probable extension of the Commonwealth's taxing powers to cover control of State taxation is quite groundless It is true that, after the fashion of legal pleading, the title of the Act calls in aid everything that could be thought of, on the spur of the moment, as a possible support—Taxation, Insurance, Banking, Corporations, etc. The draftsman was evidently scratching round for a peg on which to hang the Bill; but taxation was certainly a forlorn hope. The power of the Commonwealth Parliament as to taxation is a power to make laws "for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth," with respect to "taxation, but so as not to discriminate between States or parts of States." It can hardly be questioned that these words refer only to Commonwealth taxation, uniform throughout the Commonwealth, for Commonwealth purposes, and do not cover control of State Taxation. Nothing in any decision of the High Court suggests a doubt of this; and indeed the principles of interpretation laid down by the Court make doubt impossible.

Sir Robert Garran and Dr. Quick were regarded as the authorities on the Federal Constitution. They wrote the standard work on the subject. Now we find ourselves in the unfortunate position that for anything we want in the direction of finance we have to go to the Commonwealth Government. True, some slight avenues of taxation remain to this State; but when we read this morning's newspaper, our hope fades. Queensland so far has not imposed a tax on amusements, and so the Commonwealth Government says, "The Queensland people have no right to amusements unless those amusements are taxed;" and a tax is to be imposed there.

Whether we shall derive any benefits from that taxation is doubtful. The Commonwealth uniform taxation legislation provides that a sum of approximately £2,399,000 shall be returned to Western Australia, but the legislation in no way provides that the same amount is to be returned to us next year; and at the rate the Federal Government is spending money today, little probability exists of any money being left over. I do not criticise the Commonwealth Government's financial policy at all when I say that every man taken out of industry is converted from an earner into a spender, since immediately he goes into the Army he ceases to earn anything. On the contrary, he destroys things. He cannot be a wealth-earner in the Army, though it is true he receives a small wage. Today there is a clamour to take everybody out of industry, whether he can be spared or not. Even the military authorities must acknowledge that the civil community has a great responsibility, definitely equal to that of the military, because the Army must be fed, clothed, equipped, and paid.

Hon. P. Collier: That aspect has not even been thought of.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Just as many highly paid officials are employed to control the military authorities, there will have to be an authority to protect the other side in future. With the heavy expenditure now taking place—over a million per day—it is clear that when expenditure is further increased there has to be built up yet another avenue of expenditure, because departments will grow. Consequently before long we shall find a very lopsided method of trying to carry on the war successfully. That has to be noted, more particularly because of the few crumbs that this State will get from what is left over. For that reason I am gravely concerned about what the financial position of the State will be. Everyone should be concerned on that account. What has the Commonwealth Government got by uniform taxation? This year our State will get little relief. I desire to put members wise on that score. Our taxation measures in the past have always provided for statutory reductions from gross income; the balance remaining was the taxable portion of the income. That has now been altered. The rate is fixed upon the gross amount of the income; therefore, the higher the income, the higher the rate. Deductions are allowed from income, but the remaining portion of

the income is taxed at the rate applicable to the gross income. Possibly members of Parliament and the public were of opinion that they would get some relief from this new method of taxation, but they will probably find that their assessments will be considerably increased. Even the man with a smaller income is not going to escape as he has in the past. What I say now has been fairly well hidden up to date, but anyone reading the Commonwealth Treasurer's speech will find that what I say is correct.

The State that will suffer severely is Victoria. The reward that that State will receive for good government is higher taxation. There must have been good Governments in Victoria, because it was the lowest-taxed State of the Commonwealth. The rate of tax Victorians will now have to pay will equal that of the other States of Australia. That is Victoria's reward for having managed its affairs so admirably and so well.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not necessarily good government at all; natural resources favoured Victoria.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Not altogether. I admit that bad government in New South Wales materially assisted Victoria at one stage, because large amounts of capital were then transferred from New South Wales to Victoria. I shall not say when, as the member for Boulder knows. The effect was to establish many industries in Victoria. That State did not raise its taxation, and consequently business people in other States transferred their businesses to Victoria and so made a greater profit. True, Victoria is a self-contained State and has not many square miles of useless country.

Hon. P. Collier: The area of the State is small.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is compact.

Hon. P. Collier: Victoria expended less on public works than did the larger States.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It has been a well-managed State, there is no doubt about that. It never had a Labour Government, except when such a Government was supported by other parties.

Hon. P. Collier: It did have a Labour Government.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Only with the support of three members of the Country Party.

Hon. P. Collier: True, but the Country Party has been able to remain in power for

several years only by the support of the Labour Party.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is so. I am not taking any credit for the Country Party in Victoria. When that party was in power, however, its members kept a firm hand on the affairs of the State because they understood finance properly. Many demands are made upon Labour Premiers, who are so good-natured that they cannot say no. When members of our party make application, however, we get all the refusals. Victoria is the one State that has got its reward for good government; unfortunately, its reward is a rate of tax higher than it would have imposed.

Hon. P. Collier: Victoria has less social services than have the other States.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Those services are not required in Victoria.

Hon. P. Collier: The poor there are just as poor as the poor here, but they do not get the same assistance.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I would not say that. The member for Boulder has much to say in favour of a cheaper form of government in Victoria, but it must be borne in mind that Victoria has a much smaller area to administer.

Hon. P. Collier: Consider her mileage of railways!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Victoria has made mistakes; for instance, the land settlement scheme in the Mallee district. Victoria produced wonderful beef that she was not allowed to market, except for pig-feed, that is, until the present Government there found that it was fit for human consumption. As the member for Roebourne said, we shall be mendicants of the Commonwealth Government. But it is up to us today to look to post-war times and endeavour to build up industries which will absorb our men when the war is over. The more men who are taken from our industries and put into the military forces, the more difficult will it be to absorb them after the war, because our industries are languishing. I shall not deal extensively this afternoon with our primary industries; I shall leave them to be dealt with by the members of my Party, who will explain to the House what the position is. It is well known, however, that these industries are slipping back rapidly. It will be difficult to build them up again. We shall not be able to build them up by the hard

work and sweat of men and women, as they have been built up in the past. Financial assistance will be required and this State will not be able to provide that assistance without the approval of the Commonwealth Government. That Government will be engaged in finding money for its own requirements, and therefore we shall experience difficulty in obtaining the necessary financial assistance.

What is the future of our goldfields? It is all very well to say that £100,000 has been provided by the Commonwealth Government to keep our goldfields alive. I am not criticising that assistance, but I am of opinion that many of the mines now closed down will not be re-opened after the war. Probably the wealthier mines will be re-opened, but it is not merely a question of keeping down the water but keeping the timbering in good repair.

The Minister for Mines: That will all depend on the price of gold.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It may or may not! I cannot foretell what the price of gold will be except that, if the price rises, there will be more inflation and commodities will become proportionately more costly. There will not be the same profit, however, as there was in the last few years. I hope the Minister for Mines is right. I like Ministers to be optimistic, but, so far as I am concerned, I am not expecting anything like 10s. or 15s. in the pound for my holdings in goldmining ventures after the war is over, because I realise how difficult it is to deal with an industry of that sort once its assets are allowed to get into a bad state of repair.

I listened carefully to the lengthy speech of the member for Guildford-Midland yesterday afternoon. I shall not criticise it; there is a great deal of truth in what he said. Nevertheless, I wish him to remember that he will seriously embarrass the Government if he advocates any extensive increases in salaries and wages, because no provision is made for such increases. Incomes have been pegged and, unless the extra charges are passed on to the public, there will be no earthly hope of paying those increases. I do not say that the extra charges should not be passed on to the public, because probably 60 per cent. of the public could afford to pay them; but we must not forget that we shall be saddling our vital industries—the agricultural and pastoral

industries—with extra charges which they cannot pay and carry on at a profit.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: To what charges are you referring?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Railway freights, for instance! The railways pay an enormous salaries and wages bill. If there is a large increase in the basic wage, that will have to be met by increased freights and charges. There is no alternative while incomes are pegged.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Reduce the basic wage in order to increase prosperity! Get the workers to work for nothing, or for their tucker! That is your argument.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not follow the hon. member. I am not saying that the basic wage should not be increased. Candidly, I do not understand why this State should be treated differently from the Eastern States.

Mr. Cross: Our workers are being treated differently.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I warn members that money will have to be found from some source other than ordinary revenue. If it is obtained from other sources, that may spell the extinction of industries vital to the State. We are faced today with a terrific job. In my opinion, the reason we are not getting the manufacture of munitions in this State is that we cannot compete favourably with the other States, which have large factories. That is the problem.

Hon. P. Collier: The problem is a geographical one, too.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes. The member for Guildford-Midland said yesterday, in support of his case, that partially-manufactured goods were brought from the Eastern States to this State, where further work was done on them, and that then they were returned to the Eastern States for completion.

Mr. Triat: They should not have been sent back again.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No! Perhaps we ought not to be talking about these matters, but I suppose members will use discretion. We have not got a cordite factory in this State. I do not know whether it is intended to fill cartridges in this State.

Mr. Cross: That will be done at the Welshpool factory.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Will shells be filled?

Mr. Cross: I cannot say whether shells will.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The hon. member seems to be an authority on what is going to be done at Welshpool and on everything else.

Mr. Cross: I have been to Welshpool. The hon. member has not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I suggest to the member for Canning that he will get his opportunity to speak. He will then probably explain what the member for Guildford-Midland told us.

Hon. P. Collier: But in a different way.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: He will probably be able to speak for two-and-a-half hours and say very little. We have to be very careful with our national expenditure, because our income is pegged. I warn the Treasurer that there seems to be some inspiration in the statement in this morning's paper about the land tax.

The Minister for Lands: The entertainments tax!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is a foregone conclusion. The land tax was also mentioned. If our land tax is taken away from us, what other form of taxation can be imposed? I dare say the Treasury officials are working overtime devising new methods of taxation not yet available to the State.

Hon. P. Collier: A door tax and a window tax!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: A light tax!

Hon. P. Collier: We will have to get down to that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: A good form of taxation is the advertisement tax. When I was in Italy some years ago a large sum of money was going into Mussolini's treasury from such a tax. No-one was allowed to put up a poster unless it bore the appropriate revenue stamp. The duty ranged from one lire to 100 lira.

Mr. Sampson: It was especially reactionary.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It seems to me it would be a good idea to tax every advertisement in our local newspapers. In Italy, one could not put a notice on a window about a lost bull unless it bore a duty stamp.

Hon. P. Collier: Tax the quack advertiser; the astrologer.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That might be one means.

Mr. Sampson: Why not strive to practise economy and manage with what you have?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is applicable to us, but not to the Government. Already some men are returning from overseas and we are unable to absorb them with the amount of employment offering. Some permanent employment must be provided for them. Parliament has a right to see that work is available for everybody. I remember many years ago a political opponent of the member for Boulder saying that he would provide work for everybody.

Hon. P. Collier: Who, me?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, a political opponent of the hon. member. It is a very sound policy.

Hon. P. Collier: A sound policy for getting votes.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Nobody can argue against that, but when we do find them work we want to see that they receive sufficient to maintain themselves at the standard about which Australians boast.

Hon. P. Collier: The policy was good, but the performance bad.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The hon. member left very little money on that occasion. I can still see the empty treasury and see it going down rapidly. We did not plan a sound economy for those six years, but we have to plan an economy today, looking to the future, and it is a big job. The Ministry has an extension of life due to an Act passed last year, and that should not be accepted lightly, but with the responsibility which it carries because, after all, our constitution is very sound in providing that there should be an appeal to our masters every three years. Without consulting them we extended the period to four years, and it might be extended to five years. The best brains in the whole House should be brought together to plan an economy which will help us, not only in the present war but in the future, and provide a satisfactory settlement for our people when they return.

Certainly there has been some sort of consultative council which has met three or four times since coming into existence. It has not met for three months, and we might say that it does not now exist. Today members who are on it from this side of the House are accepting responsibility for things about which they know nothing. We

were charged with the responsibility of the regulations dealing with lighting, which were reintroduced, and we had nothing to do with them. I do not want to be in any Ministry, but if there is to be an extension my services are available in any way in which it is possible to utilise them. The Government should scrap the whole of the Ministry. I can see men on the cross-benches who can do equally well as and probably a little better than some of those in the front bench.

The Minister for Mines: What are you going to ask them for now?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Nothing, except good service for this State.

The Minister for Mines: They are giving that now.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not care if the number is increased from eight to 10 so long as we get good results. We cannot have good government without money. We are now limited and must be careful not to become stodgy because our income is pegged. I criticised the Minister for Labour yesterday for publishing this book which has been loaned to me. I do not know whether that is a special favour. I notice in the front of the book, which is titled, "The Industrial Development of Western Australia," these words:—

This book is lent to you. It is the property of the Western Australian Government and is not for sale. If you want to have a copy for yourself you may purchase one at the Department of Industrial Development Barrack-street Perth or at the Government Tourist Bureau, Forrest Place, Perth. Price, 2s. 6d.

This is the first time the Government has even been so generous as to lend me something. In the old days the Leader of the Opposition was presented with a copy of anything produced in the interests of the State. This book certainly shows a great deal of what has been going on for a number of years. I criticised the expenditure on it, and I find that the people advertising in the book paid for their advertisements, and at a pretty high rate. I expect the Government will not regain all the cost, but at the same time it will receive a substantial amount of it. My argument, however, was that it would be far better to utilise the money in some other direction and after the war publish a similar book and include all the industries in the State at that time. On looking through the publi-

cation one can see that there have been substantial increases in some of the industries which have been established in this State for some time. The canning industry is one. It has had its ups and downs, but at present it is being carried on very successfully due to the fact that its products are being sold at reasonable prices to the defence authorities. The industry can be maintained on a profitable basis in the post-war period. I am satisfied that a good market for any of the stuff we are producing today for the troops will be found in the near north-west—that is those islands just north of Western Australia—when they are again settled down under their proper governments. We will have to maintain a high standard in order to keep those markets.

I am sorry the Minister for Industrial Development is not here. He sent me a monthly report. I get two monthly returns a year. They generally come just before the House sits each year. I got one last year for July and one this year for July. It arrived this morning. It sets out what the department is doing, and refers roughly to charcoal iron-smelting. I would like the Minister to tell the House, at the first opportunity, just what has been done in that regard. We want some idea as to whether we can utilise the iron ore deposits on the coast of this State. If we can we might build up an organisation like a second Broken Hill Proprietary, Ltd. That company is giving a wonderful service to Australia. It is making steel cheaper than in any other country in the world.

My next remarks will make the Minister for Mines take notice. I wish to deal with the lighting restrictions. Parliament, a little while ago, had an opportunity to discuss them. They were then under the control of the State Government. Because another place disallowed them this House did not proceed further with the motion then before it. Feeling, apparently, that he could not trust his own Parliament the Minister utilised the National Security Regulations. During the last session I appealed to the Government not to utilise the National Security Regulations unless it had to. What the Minister has done is tantamount to saying that we are incapable of controlling ourselves. There are some reasons why we should utilise the National Security Regulations, but not in connection with domestic matters which we should handle. I think,

therefore, that we might have left the lighting restrictions to our State Parliament instead of placing them under Federal authority over which we have no influence or control. The most ridiculous thing is to have the interior of our State in darkness.

Mr. SPEAKER; Order! There is an item on the notice paper dealing with that particular subject.

The Minister for Mines: The Leader of the Opposition knows it is there.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does your ruling, Mr. Speaker, mean that if I want to stifle discussion on any matter I can do it by putting something on the notice paper and not go on with it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not giving that ruling, but this matter is on the notice paper and cannot be dealt with.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Will you, Sir, allow me a little latitude?

Mr. SPEAKER: If I did that I would have to do the same in the case of other members.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not in accordance with Standing Orders. The hon. member can do it if he wishes.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The people in the country are today suffering great inconvenience. People driving cars at night run the danger of killing, not only other people, but themselves as well. That is one of the things on which the Minister, when he returns from the conference in the East, could call together a number of men from this House and another place so that they could deal with it and arrive at some arrangement. It is no use telling me the military authorities say it has to be done, because they are the greatest offenders. The Assistant-Minister for the Army passed me on the road in the country with glaring headlights. He was driving in a military car, but I had to crawl along over a corrugated road, which was blacked-out, and it was dangerous to me. I had to pull off to the side of the road. When I arrived at the hotel I found that the person who had passed me was Senator Fraser, the Assistant-Minister for the Army. I am not complaining. The same thing applies in the city. I would not care to be a tram-driver or a bus-driver under the present lighting conditions. Even the tram lights do not conform to the regulations.

The Minister for Mines: The trams are not bound by the regulations.

Mr. Watts: They ought to be!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: What is the use of having the lights put out in all parts of Fremantle except the wharf and the windows of the headquarters of the different sections of the Defence Forces, which have glaring lights? Let us have commonsense. In the Eastern States they have not put the lights out as we have done. The other day the Prime Minister issued instructions that, at Canberra, there is to be a lifting of the restrictions.

The Minister for Mines: He denied that the next day and said that the Army decided those matters.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is what I saw in the Press. Let us take all the precautions necessary to protect our people, and that can be done by adopting a line drawn not more than 25 or 30 miles inland from the coast. It is only a large concentration of light that is likely to attract an enemy. I am interested in the problem of country transport, and have tried to encourage the charcoal industry, and I pride myself on having done a very good job. Yet we received an instruction from the police that charcoal producers had to put out their fires at night.

The Minister for Mines: The Commissioner of Police says that is not so.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then it has been altered. They had to conform to the regulations, but now the instructions are not to take any notice of the regulations but to allow the fires to continue. Of course, it is only by allowing the fires to continue that we can get burnt charcoal. If those lights are likely to attract an enemy, we should be glad that they are out in the country because, if bombs are dropped there, less damage is likely to be done. If the Government wishes to control lighting, there is a master switch at the Power House and, immediately that switch is put off, the lights on cars and everything else could be extinguished.

The Minister for Mines: You could not switch off car lights from the Power House.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But all lights controlled by that switch could be extinguished, and a heavy penalty could be provided if other lights were not extinguished at the same time. We could have got together and talked this matter over, and even now I suggest to the Minister that he scrap his regulations.

The Minister for Mines: They are not my regulations to scrap.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Prime Minister will take into consideration the desires of this State if representations are made to him.

Mr. Marshall: I am afraid he will not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That has happened in Queensland and New South Wales, where the lighting restrictions were stringent.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is so, and the Minister in charge in New South Wales announced the fact.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes. The Acting Treasurer is about to leave for the Eastern States, and he could ascertain whether consideration would be given to an amendment of the regulations. I say these regulations were imposed because the State Government desired to have them. There are men in this House who interviewed the General Officer Commanding in Western Australia, and he said he had nothing to do with the matter.

The Minister for Mines: Would you be surprised to know that, on the day after the regulations were disallowed, a wire was received from General Gordon Bennett asking that the regulations be re-enacted?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I suppose that is possible.

The Minister for Mines: You said he had nothing to do with it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is what he said. It is all very well for the authorities to say to the people, "You have to conform to the law, but we are not going to do so." Something must be done, and this Parliament is the only body with power to take action.

Mr. Cross: A hundred people have been killed in the metropolitan area.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: And there is a likelihood of another hundred being killed.

Mr. Cross: We shall have to get busy on the matter, quickly, too.

Hon. P. Collier: The trouble is that the wrong people are being killed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, men half or fully trained for war, some of them brought here from America to assist us.

All action requisite for liquor reform can be taken here. The Prime Minister was quite right in saying that such matters should be left to the State Premiers. The Premier of the State should act in a com-

nonsense way. If he feels that he cannot deal with the matter, let him come here and talk it over with us, and we will suggest what action should be taken. There is no need to make party politics of such questions.

Mr. J. Hegney: Mr. Fadden does not agree with you on that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am aware of that. I want the Minister for Labour, who is in charge of factories and shops, to tell me under what authority he closed business houses at 5.30 p.m.

The Minister for Labour: I have not closed any business houses at 5.30 p.m.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I understand that all of them have been closed at 5.30 under an edict issued by the Minister for Labour.

The Minister for Labour: That is not so.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then under what authority was it done?

The Minister for Labour: You seem to know all about it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Will the Minister say that the shops were not closed by his order?

The Minister for Mines: They were closed under the Civil Defence Regulations. I will tell you that much.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then they were closed by the Minister for Mines.

The Minister for Mines: By the Minister for Civil Defence, at the request of the traders themselves.

Hon. P. Collier: The people as well as the traders are interested in a matter of that kind.

The Minister for Mines: That is a State regulation.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then we will throw it out.

The Minister for Mines: You are too late.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, 14 days have to elapse after the regulation has been tabled. The Minister cannot get away with that statement. Consideration has been given by the Government only to certain individuals, whereas the people of the State are the ones who count. Workers employed in many avenues, such as the Midland Junction Workshops and suchlike places, have now no opportunity to do their shopping after leaving work at 5 p.m. or 5.30 p.m. I thought this instruction was issued under one of the National Security Regulations, but I found that was wrong. I wrote to the Prime

Minister, and he informed me that he had had nothing at all to do with it. His letter stated that no action had been taken by the Commonwealth to restrict the trading hours of shops. Consequently this is the second time the Minister for Labour has escaped trouble. I wonder whether the Minister for Mines, who is in charge of Civil Defence, consulted the Minister for Labour.

The Minister for Mines: I forget.

The Minister for Labour: I do not suppose he did.

The Minister for Mines: I do not know why I should consult a junior Minister.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Anyhow, I seem to have made a miss there. Recently there was a dispute in the Midland Junction Workshops, one that could have been avoided if the Government had done the right thing. On one occasion I saw the Premier and told him that if a committee had been appointed in the workshops to consult with one or two officials from the office in order to discuss the problems arising from time to time, all that trouble would have been avoided. But no; they get so hard-headed that they must control everything in this way and in that way. We cannot hope to get good service unless there is a complete understanding between employer and employee. This sort of thing has been happening for a long time in Western Australia. There was a dispute because certain tradesmen were put in the tool shop, and the tool shop has ever since been idle. Now we have to utilise the Commonwealth and get it to send a man over to settle this dispute.

Mr. Cross: You have always reckoned that the boss was sole judge. This is a new attitude.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Is it not remarkable what brainy interjections emanate from some members!

Mr. Thorn: They are not his own.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I have never yet stated that the master should exercise control beyond what he is expected to do. The other party is worthy of some consideration. I have been both employer and employee, and I know the position. I do not know whether the member for Canning has been able to judge from both sides, but I feel sure that the member for Boulder appreciates my point of view. I regret it was deemed necessary to get a man from the

Eastern States for that purpose. These workers are anxious to do what is right.

Hon. P. Collier: Seemingly everything must be done for us from the East.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We are having another man sent over to settle a dispute with the bakers' employees. I do not know whether those involved are bakers or drivers. I suppose that in the near future members on the Government side of the House will be told what they have to say. I maintain that we are quite capable of managing our own affairs. This State has been built up in a few years far better than many people imagine. We have a good foundation on which to build the superstructure, so let us go on building. We do not want to import people from the Eastern States to tell us what to do. I protest against bringing people from the East to settle disputes that could readily be settled amongst ourselves. The men concerned are our own kith and kin; there is nothing peculiar about them, and we ourselves could settle any dispute. In the Midland Junction Workshops ground exists for many complaints. Long after air-raid shelters had been provided for the protection of many other people, nothing had been done for employees at the Midland Junction Workshops. Yet those men are most important workers and, if anything happened to them, could not be replaced. This is a most vulnerable spot; yet nothing was done to afford protection. The lighting at the workshops is bad. I cannot understand why a meal-house has not been provided for the men.

Mr. J. Hegney: They have been agitating for that for 30 years.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I held the view that these men were entitled to a little more comfort, but I was told they had taken a referendum and did not want a meal-house. I do not want to make political capital out of these things; I merely desire to be helpful. If we make these men happy and contented, they will deliver the goods. The same remark applies to bakers' employees. A gentleman has been brought from the Eastern States to settle that dispute for us. The fact of this having been done surely shows a serious weakness.

Hon. P. Collier: He settled the coal dispute, and might be able to settle the bakers' dispute.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I suppose that if the bakers do not want their dough weighed

before baking, we shall have to get someone from the East to settle that matter for us. I protest against this sort of thing. We have capable men here to deal with those matters. We have had disputes in the past, and they have been amicably settled. This State has been freer from industrial disputes than any other State in Australia for quite a long period. When disputes have occurred, they have been well handled. I regretted to read in the "West Australian" of the 22nd July last details of a regulation promulgated under the National Security Act by the Prime Minister. It read:—

It will be unlawful under the National Security Act Regulations for any person to cause or be a participant in any stoppage of production not authorised by a previous decision of the district executive of the Coal and Shale Miners' Federation.

The regulations will provide that it shall be unlawful for the management of any coal mine to make any changes in working customs, practices and conditions of production, except by the prior approval of the Commonwealth Coal Commissioner or Reference Board. Any failure to comply with the order of the Coal Commission or Reference Boards shall be a breach of the National Security Act. It will be prescribed that all matters of dispute in regard to rates of pay and industrial conditions shall be decided by the appropriate tribunals and that any worker or employee failing to work in accordance with the finding of the appropriate tribunals shall be guilty of a breach of the National Security Act.

This is what the regulation is doing. It is no use people saying it is not doing that. It is usurping the functions of the law. The law says that strikes are illegal, but the regulation will allow strikers to go along and get the approval of their union head. That is wrong. I admit we have no control over that here. I hope the trouble does not extend to Collie but it may do so in the near future.

The Minister for Works: That regulation provides that they shall go along and get the approval of the federation.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It says that men shall not strike unless they have the approval of the federation of unions. Every strike is either legal or illegal. We know that when a strike occurs it is the relative who suffer most, and the industry itself. It is no pleasure to me to hear that a strike has occurred in some industry.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: That does not make it illegal.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Industrial Arbitration Act provides that strikes are

illegal, and that lock-outs are also illegal. No one knows more about the subject than does the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: I only know what the Prime Minister said the other day.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: He says the regulation does not over-ride the law, but I say it does. Under the National Security Act, regulations can be made for all kinds of purposes. The Prime Minister has made this one, and it will be legal until it is questioned. I wish to compliment the Government upon its manpower department, which is doing a good job under difficult circumstances. Some of its members I have met only recently. They have a difficult task to carry out, and it is the duty of every member of the House to help them. For a long time we have been endeavouring to get releases from the military authorities so that assistance may be rendered to the agricultural industry, but we failed. I am pleased to say that the new department has been instrumental in providing quite a lot of relief in directions where we were unsuccessful in our own efforts.

Mr. Needham: I think your leader, Mr. Fadden, said there was a muddle in connection with the manpower releases.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: From the point of view of political heads that may be so, but apparently we now have a man who can look after these things. I am not sure that one of the members of the department is not a Trades Hall official. He is a good man and I have every admiration for him.

Mr. J. Hegney: He is a good man.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I hope the hon. member does not wish me to criticise him as the member for Perth suggests Mr. Fadden has criticised.

Mr. Needham: I am talking about your leader.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am the leader of my Party. Whether Mr. Fadden has an opportunity to ascertain the facts of the case I do not know. There may be some justification for his remarks. I know nothing about the Eastern States. I am speaking of what has happened here. Numbers of officials in the departments are doing a good job and a difficult one. I hope we shall give them every credit for what they are doing. We must have sufficient manpower to enable us to carry on our industries. They are weakening considerably already because men have been removed from them.

I also hope we shall be able to do something to put a stop to the impressing of farmers' trucks and trucks used in other industries, where it is essential they should be provided to enable those industries to carry on.

At present a military official can go on a farm and say, "I want that truck." He then places a value upon it. My opinion may be wrong, but I think he fixes a second-hand value as if he were purchasing with the object of effecting a re-sale. The Commonwealth Government has power to acquire those vehicles, but only has power to acquire at a fair price. When trucks are so acquired a just price should be paid for them, not one on which it is possible to resell the vehicle at a profit. At York the other day a military official took possession of a two-ton truck which had belonged to a farmer and had only done 12,000 miles. The price paid was £285, whereas the vehicle was worth at least £400. The farmer was then offered a truck which cost only £180, only to find that it was useless because the engine would not run.

Hon. P. Collier: Has he no appeal?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Only against the price. Many farmers do not read the backs of the forms that are sent to them. The military authority I referred to left a form and said he wanted the truck.

Mr. Hughes: The Appeal Board consists of motorcar salesmen, who know nothing about the cutting down of prices.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Something should be done to protect our people, who will not be able to replace these vehicles. The matter should be taken up by the proper authorities. As a rule when members of Parliament write to these authorities they are courteous enough to send replies. There are others in the State who fail to send replies. Replies have not come to me when I have written to the authorities. Sometimes the reply is a rude one. The other day I sent one of the replies to the Prime Minister, and pointed out that it is difficult for us to approach the military authorities under such conditions. I was told by one local Army officer I was annoying because I had written not to him but to the General Officer Commanding, Headquarters. When a man occupies an official position in this House whether as Premier, Minister or Leader of the Opposition, it is his function to write to headquarters and not to a subordinate offi-

cer. Evidently I annoyed the military authority in question by writing as I did to headquarters.

Hon. P. Collier: That is characteristic of some of them.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is what happened in this case.

Mr. Hughes: Napoleon is said to have answered most of his correspondence by not answering it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I can understand Napoleon doing such a thing, for he probably had a lot of junior officers to deal with such matters.

Hon. P. Collier: There are many Napoleons in the Army.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is of no use to tear down our industries completely. There may be a collapse at any time and we shall have to build up again. If the military authorities are not willing to do the right thing we must look after our own industries. That applies to the wheat position, to dairying, and stock production, etc. They are all going to have a hard time. I admit that recently the price of many commodities has increased considerably due to the fact that a local market has grown up for them, and that there has been a shortage in supply. That, however, is not going to last long. The wheat-producer is in a bad way, and everything is being done to discourage wheat production.

During the recent recess I had an opportunity to see what was being done with flax in the South-West. A good deal of expense is being incurred that is not justified. That is due to the long distance over which straw is being carted for retting purposes. The works ought to be established where there is sufficient space for the retting. Retting means the spreading out of the straw until the outside parts have rotted and the fibre is left bare. The straw has to be carted out and brought back over long distances. I do not know how much it would cost to clear the country adjoining some of the works. Probably the State Government has very little to do with the matter; it is more or less in the hands of the Commonwealth Government. If the flax industry, which seems to be quite a reasonably good proposition at present, can be carried on successfully after the war, that is something the war will have done for us that is worthwhile. We ought to keep closely in touch with the industry to make sure that it can

be profitably carried on after the war. The member for Guildford-Midland has probably said enough about the Welshpool Works. Many of his statements could well be inquired into. The organisation is not of our making, but we shall either benefit from it or not.

Extensive works are being established at Welshpool, and they may be the means of providing an industry for the post-war period. We ought to see that they are made available as quickly as possible. I saw Mr. Essington Lewis of the Broken Hill Proprietary when he was here some time ago. I know that the Commonwealth Government has expended money on buildings, and that no machine has yet been erected in them. I said to Mr. Lewis, "It is useless for you to spend money at Welshpool unless you are sure you are going to instal a plant there." He said that in about three months time everything would be all right. We have now reached the month of August. I am doubtful whether even the member for Canning, who knows all things, is familiar with what is being done at that establishment. It is true that one or two things are being turned out, but we ought to have a full knowledge of what is being done. Recently a number of women was employed at the works and, although they were trained in the Eastern States to handle the machinery, the machines have not been installed.

Mr. Cross: Many new machines have been installed in the last few days.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I said to one of the heads, "Are you going to have the machines put in during the next couple of days," and the head replied, "We have not got them yet."

Mr. Cross: You go out and have a look for yourself.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I would accept that invitation except that I am not allowed in the works. I do not know how the hon. member got in.

Mr. Cross: You can get in.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I would not be allowed within the gates.

Mr. Cross: Not without a permit.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Where do I get one?

The Minister for Works: From Mr. Constantine, the manager.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: How do I get hold of him?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition should address the Chair and not the member for Canning.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: A high fence surrounds the entire building and there is a man on the gate. How am I to get past him? I am asking the member for Canning through you, Sir, how I am to get that permit.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Canning cannot inform the Leader of the Opposition at present.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Not just at present, but when he rises to speak he may be able to do so. If I can obtain a permit to look through the works during the week-end I shall be very glad to go through and see how much is being done. A question has been asked about a power alcohol plant for Western Australia. We were promised long ago that this State would be the first in which a distillation plant would be established. So far as I am aware, very little has been done. As a matter of fact, a week ago there were three men working on the job and now I understand there are only two. In his reply to the question the Minister said that the matter was to be kept a secret. It is peculiar that these matters have to be kept secret in Western Australia while we get over the air from Canberra information about the plant in New South Wales.

The Minister for Lands: I was disappointed that I had to reply in the way I did. I was acting under instructions.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is about time that Ministers of this State were trusted. The Federal roundsman in Canberra the other night gave all particulars concerning the New South Wales plant, with the exception of the locality. Often I think the reports that come from Canberra are exaggerated. In all probability power alcohol is not being manufactured in New South Wales yet. As a matter of fact, the cheapest form of power alcohol is produced in Queensland from molasses, and I do not know that they have yet absorbed all their molasses for that purpose.

I hope the Minister for Industrial Development will tell us something about the alunite deposits, because that will be another worth-while industry. I notice that any profits are to go to the State Government. I do not know how that is going to work out so far as the company is con-

cerned, if a company is operating the deposits today. Is the Government running the enterprise?

The Minister for Labour: Yes.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If that is so I would be very annoyed if the profits were given to anybody outside. I know the leases are privately held. The Minister might take this House into his confidence.

The Minister for Labour: I will at the first opportunity.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I thank the Minister. I do not want to criticise the speech made by the member for Bunbury because I think he did very well, but he was misinformed when he said that the potash, which will be one of the by-products from alunite, is one of the basic contents of superphosphate. It is not! Phosphatic rock plus sulphuric acid, makes super, and to that is added sulphate of ammonia to improve the product for certain purposes, though not for wheat production. The usual contents of fertiliser are in the proportion of 12-4-4, that is to say, 12 parts of superphosphate, four of sulphate of ammonia or nitrate of soda, and four of potash. The potash is used to assist in the production of tomatoes, potatoes and such like.

Mr. Patrick: And vines and fruit trees.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Anything that requires a sugar content. I refer to this matter because the House might be led into thinking that once this by-product is obtained from alunite, cheaper superphosphate will be available.

The Minister for Lands: Many people think that all fertilisers are superphosphates.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Of course, they are not. I was rather struck by the leading article that was published in the "West Australian" on the opening day of this session. With the exception of that section dealing with the Port Pirie-Broken Hill railway, over which we have no control, the article might have been accepted by the Acting Premier as the future very sound policy of the Government. I was rather disappointed that the article should have been published at that time because, after all, the Acting Premier must have prepared some notes and it might seem that he was favouring the paper by using its ideas.

One point in the article that impressed me was that the writer suggested a certain

amount of the time of the House would be wasted in non-essentials. I appreciate that the Press of this State is doing very good work. At the same time, there are made in this House from time to time some very interesting speeches that receive very little publicity. On the other hand, if anything comic or sensational occurs, half a column or a column of the newspaper is devoted to an account of it. A newspaper should be used to educate rather than amuse the public, particularly today. I hope that during this session whatever space can be spared for recording the proceedings of Parliament will be used for publishing information of an educational rather than of an unorthodox character. Generally speaking we have a lot for which to thank the Press in this State. I know how very reliable our local newspapers are in comparison with those in the Eastern States. I have never known them to let anyone down. I repeat, however, that the Press should be used for educational purposes.

I draw the attention of the Minister for Justice to something that should be rectified, namely, the condition of the Legislative Council rolls. The Legislative Assembly rolls are bad enough, but when we find that the roll for the Metropolitan-Suburban Province has approximately 29,000 names on it and that from 20 to 25 per cent. of the people have either left the State or are dead, it is plain that some reform is required. When it is realised that 600 electors in the North can have one representative in Parliament, while it requires 29,000 electors in the Metropolitan-Suburban Province to elect a representative, something is undoubtedly wrong with the boundaries of the Provinces. I ask the Minister whether some investigation cannot be made in regard to this matter. I admit that his limited staff is probably fully occupied, but something should be done to clear up this discrepancy, which is altogether too glaring. Perhaps he could employ some girls to send out circulars. He will know all those who voted. Of course, if the same tactics were adopted on this occasion as in years gone by, some of the electors would have been dead for some time, but generally it can be accepted that those who did vote were live voters. That would account for the 6,000 who voted. Then notices could be sent out to the others with a view to seeing whether the rolls could not be brought up-to-date.

The Minister for Works: Do you not think that it would be better to abolish the Council?

Mr. Cross: Would it not be better for the employees to be engaged in growing onions, rather than going through rolls?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: These interjections would be all right if one desired to make a long speech. A little while ago I heard the member for Canning tell us about the terribly difficult task tram conductors had and how laborious was their work. Now it is proposed to employ women as conductors, which I consider is preferable to having them work in dairies, up to their knees in mud. Women can be and will be employed in the Electoral Office, but the hon. member suggests that instead they should be sent out onion-growing. Let him grow his own onions! If he gets them he will be all right. I was almost going to suggest that we might put the hon. member himself in the Electoral Office in an official capacity, because he would probably have sufficient knowledge to do the work well. I understand he knows his way about even at night time.

The Acting Treasurer will shortly, in the interests of the people, pay a visit to the Eastern States. We say the Minister should do this and do that over there, but nobody knows better than I do how difficult is his task. I do not expect much from him, but whatever he can do in the interests of this State I sincerely hope he will do. It will be worthwhile his making the trip. He usually gets what he wants; but it is not only a question of money but of preserving for us some of the powers and rights we have enjoyed in years gone by.

Mr. McDONALD (West Perth): The Lieut-Governor's Speech has followed the precedent of some years past in giving a survey or history of the past year's operations and something about the legislative programme. I remember reading the first Western Australian "Hansard." One member, speaking on the Address-in-reply, complained that the Governor's Speech mentioned everything under the sun except the weather. He took strong exception to the omission of the weather because he said it was a most important factor in Western Australia. The Lieut-Governor's Speech in the past has mentioned even the weather.

I was looking at a standard work on Parliament by Morrison and Abbott, on page 59 of which they say—

The King's Speech outlines the programme of the coming session.

Under our constitution that is the function of the King's or Governor's Speech in British countries. It sets out the reason for calling Parliament together and the work which members will be called upon to do by the sovereign or his representative, the Governor of the State. That is a very sound constitutional practice, and I hope that whoever is responsible for future Speeches will get back to it more fully than has been the case for some years past.

We have met again in one of the darkest hours of the war. We do not know what is in front of us in this country. We have only one safe guide and that is to be prepared for anything that may happen. The time, therefore, is one for the utmost unity, the utmost co-operation, and it is one for sticking to essentials in action and in words as far as we possibly can. It seems to me, despite much that we have done, that we are still far from reaching the position to be desired in Western Australia from the standpoint of our small population, seeing that in the event of an invasion every man who can bear arms may be needed if we are to meet successfully the threat involved. At this great distance from the central authority at Canberra, it is impossible for us to say whether more could be done, but I hope that in any representations the already overburdened Acting Treasurer will make when he proceeds to the Eastern States, he will urge that an increased supply of available basic weapons, in the shape of rifles and other arms, shall be provided in Western Australia because it of all States occupies the most vulnerable position. We are so far away that the furnishing of reinforcements of men and materials offers great geographical difficulties, and if any State should be built up and made self-sufficient it is Western Australia.

In the last few weeks we have experienced a far-reaching constitutional change. Inevitably in a time of war the functions of State Parliaments are greatly reduced while those of a central government are greatly enlarged. It would be very unwise for people to form conclusions based on present conditions as to the value of the State Parliaments, but there seems to be a definite ten-

dency on the part of some, especially in New South Wales, at this stage to look at the existing abnormal situation, and from those conditions form conclusions as to the part State Parliaments can play in the future of Australia. I do not think anything could be more misleading than conclusions formed on the basis of present-day conditions. Whatever may be the situation in the Eastern States, there is to my mind only one hope for Western Australia, and it is to continue the existence of a vigilant, determined and, I might almost say, aggressive State Parliament and State Government. If those in the Eastern States who are interested in the question of a unified constitution would ask themselves, should they live in New South Wales, how they would view the proposition on the basis of 28 members from Western Australia in the House of Representatives with New South Wales having only five members, they could, on that basis, form some idea of how such a prospect appeals to a State like Western Australia.

Mr. Needham: If unification should be adopted, would not the basis of representation be changed altogether?

Mr. McDONALD: No doubt unification would involve an alteration in the basis of representation in the Commonwealth Parliament. On the other hand, if we are to regard the question in the light of what has been a customary principle in British communities, whereby representation is based on one man one vote, we will still have one-fourteenth of the strength of the Lower House of the national Legislature because Western Australia has about one-fourteenth of the population of the Commonwealth. Whatever may be done under the law as it stands at present, it is almost certain that we shall enjoy a very small minority representation in the national Parliament, but will still have to shoulder the responsibility of developing one-third of Australia.

Mr. Patrick: We will still be the forgotten State.

Mr. McDONALD: Yes. There are sufficient signs of our being the forgotten State today and we should not be disposed to allow such conditions to continue. Since the inauguration of Federation it has been a trite saying that all the advantages have been with the centralised States; and of

all the States, Western Australia has suffered most by comparison. The war has merely served to accelerate that trend. After the war Parliament will have to do everything possible to put that movement in reverse so as to restore the equilibrium of Western Australia in comparison with the other States from the standpoints of population, industries, and general strength. Such a result cannot be possible if we are to perpetuate our latter day methods. The mere continuance of such an institution as the Commonwealth Grants Commission is a direct condemnation of the economic structure of Australia. That we should be what some people term "mendicants" or "the poor relation" is an indication of lack of balance that must be eradicated if Australia and Western Australia in particular are to present anything like features of economic balance that will make for their prosperity and strength. I feel it is the conviction of members of Parliament generally, and I hope the Government will assist to further the objective in every way possible, that the State Government and the State Parliament should retain all the activities they can. There is too much tendency on the part of the Commonwealth Government to say that the State has not done something effectively and that it can carry out the functions better. We must make such conditions as impossible as far as we can, although in some respects the State Government has been rather supine.

For instance, in regard to the hours for liquor trading, control of which belongs to the State Government, we were asked by the Prime Minister to exercise those powers. In that respect we may have been guilty of a long delay before making up our minds as to what the hours of trading should be. We know that all such delays inevitably play into the hands of the Commonwealth Government and furnish it with a pretext for taking over what are at present the functions of the State Government and State Parliament. I hope we shall avail ourselves of every opportunity to assert the right of the State Parliament to examine all matters affecting Western Australia, even if they do largely belong to the Federal sphere. Those who believe in the ability of the State Parliament to work for the interests of the State and believe this institution has a definite function to fulfil on behalf of the State, certainly expect us by

our proceedings to demonstrate that we are capable of carrying out such a responsibility.

In the course of what I trust will be a brief speech, I shall have something to say about post-war reconstruction. I approach that subject with much diffidence for it would be very bad for the nation if, by rosy promises of improved conditions after the war, the minds of the people were to be diverted from the urgency of the position confronting them respecting the necessity to carry out their obligations regarding the present war effort. Nothing in the way of post-war reconstruction or the establishment of some new order should be allowed to divert the nation from directing all its energies to prosecuting the war effort of Australia. At the same time there is a certain psychological attitude that must be recognised, and it is that the people are entitled to expect that after hostilities cease their position will be better than before. They are entitled to a reasonable hope that that will be so.

Mr. Hughes: How could they possibly do that with the load of debt piling up as it is now?

Mr. McDONALD: I am not so pessimistic as is the member for East Perth.

Mr. Hughes: How will this huge burden of debt be paid off?

Mr. McDONALD: We have learnt a lot about financial matters during the last three years or so, and, in fact, since the 1914-18 war. I have made some examination of the problem and while some of my theories are probably quite invalid, still I am confident that it will be possible for the post-war situation, despite the burden of indebtedness created in consequence of the war, to involve no very serious deprivations for the time being and to lead ultimately to a much better position for the people generally. I shall not argue that phase at length, because we always come back to the dictum that the real wealth of the people is what they produce. Despite all the debts in the world our people still go on producing.

Mr. Marshall: And we shall be able to produce a great deal more with all the machinery that will be available.

Mr. McDONALD: Yes. Members will have had some experience of the psychology and the frame of mind of the soldiers who returned from the 1914-18 war. After having been soldiering for some years and living a life of movement, danger and change,

a life in which they had to exercise very little personal responsibility, they were in a state of unrest. However powerful his mind and balanced his character, the soldier will be in a state of unrest for some considerable time after his return from the present theatres of war. I am sure the Minister for Mines will bear me out in that statement. If 500,000 men are to return to Australia at the conclusion of the present war while many others are to be taken out of munition factories and other war activities, we must remember that many of these men and women have been working at high pressure, and to absorb them in the humdrum affairs of peace times will necessitate the making of careful provisions. If that is not done then the Government that happens to be in charge of the affairs of State will have to face the possibility of very serious unrest, and of movements that will not operate for the good of the soldiers or of the people at large.

I would be glad to hear from the Government of the extent to which the committee, which, I believe, has been set up to deal with this phase, has made progress in providing for conditions after the war. Some statement on the subject would be interesting to the House while some contribution from members at some appropriate stage should also prove valuable. When the time arrives it will be necessary to take the men out of camps quickly. They cannot be kept long in camps under peace conditions. If they are so kept they will quickly develop into a state of very great unrest. We must have the machinery available to enable them to be placed in employment and moved back to the surroundings from which they came. They must be returned to their home towns if possible, for that has a steadying effect. We must formulate a programme of works, and we must have what may be called tertiary industries or public works immediately available so as to place the men in some useful occupation. That programme of works is not only a matter for the Federal Government. I saw today a statement by the Prime Minister referring to the Federal committee set up.

We must take care that the responsibility and the privilege of the States to look after their own affairs in this respect are going to be preserved, and that we are not going to be dictated to from Canberra in this very important matter affecting people in our

own State. It is not merely a matter for the Commonwealth Government, but a matter for the State Governments, and for all local authorities, who will make plans showing what can be done in their own districts. It is also a matter for the co-operation of bodies which can lend help, and above all of the Returned Soldiers' Association, whose influence has been something to which the Australian people possibly have not given sufficient credit, and which after this war will prove of inestimable value. Before leaving the subject I suggest that if we are to make the transition from wartime occupations to those of peacetime free of difficulty and free of trouble and unrest, then we should have down in black on white the works that can be performed and the machinery that can be used to take these men from the Army, Navy and Air Force, and from munitions and war industries, and smoothly pass them through the transition period which must elapse before peacetime industries can be fully re-established.

For the consideration of any committee that may be set up by the State I may mention certain matters. First of all, there will be a Standing Army, Navy and Air Force in Australia of a size that we never had before. We shall not be free from aggression straight away. Then we must have munition plants here so that we shall be able to produce the machinery of war necessary in order to protect the State. Further, we shall have the matters of technical education, building new schools, constructing roads and recreation and playing grounds, irrigation works, housing, and—I hope—steel works. I do hope for the development of our resources at Yampi Sound and elsewhere in Western Australia. Possibly we may also have some such great work as those which have been mentioned here many times—unification of gauges, and the Broken Hill-Port Pirie railway. All these things are examples of work that can be done for the absorption of soldiers, sailors and airmen and war-industry employees into civil life, and to help over the difficult period which otherwise might result in chaotic conditions between the time when a soldier leaves the Army and is re-established in civil life.

In addition, I hope the time is not far distant when we shall have a system of deferred wages for all people in the same way

as we have it now in the matter of pay for soldiers. After the war there will be a large volume of workers suddenly finding themselves greatly reduced in pay. They will no longer have overtime; it will no longer be possible to pay them overtime. I suppose that at present three-quarters of the working population of Australia are earning more money, in real purchasing power—not mere paper money—and one-quarter receiving much less. When the three-quarters revert to peace industries and no longer can obtain overtime, they are liable to feel the deprivation. If we can retain, by some means of compulsory saving, a certain amount of money for each individual, to be released by instalments over the period in question, then we shall have an additional safeguard for the unrest which otherwise may possibly assume great dimensions here. I see no reason why in a period like this everybody should not consent to a certain proportion of deferred pay, the same as the soldiers. I see no reason whatever for distinguishing between the man in uniform, who has compulsory savings from his pay for use when the war is over, and workers generally.

Now as to the war effort of this State. I hope there will be some more decentralisation from the Commonwealth Government. I trust that the Acting Treasurer will be able to say a few words on that subject. The whole tendency has been to centralise, with resultant delays, and with a great deal of hampering of enterprise and activity in Western Australia. Much of our direction comes from people in Canberra or Melbourne who have no real knowledge of conditions obtaining here. It would assist the Western Australian people and would make for their efficient contribution to the war effort if the Commonwealth Government could be induced to delegate to the State Government, as its agent, much of the responsibility which it now tries to discharge 2,500 miles away—responsibility in the matter of supply of foods, of production, and of treatment of the primary industries. If the State Government were given the objective and left the responsibility of attaining it, I feel sure the result would be much more satisfactory to both the State and the people. I feel also that there is room for far more liaison between the State Government and the defence authorities in Western Australia. I hold that it

should be the function of a Minister to be in constant touch with the defence services in this State. I have said that we here stand in a different position from the Eastern States.

It is not beyond the possibilities of this war that Western Australia might be isolated from the Eastern States, that communication might be difficult or impossible, in which event the State Government would have to carry a far greater responsibility connected with the war effort, and in relation to the defence services, than would be the case of a State situated in the eastern part of Australia. Therefore I suggest to the Government that in connection with the defence services there should be a more close and constant touch, in order that things which can be done for this State within this State shall be put in hand without delay. Civil defence is a small though important part of the defence of this country. Connected with defence are activities that reach from Wyndham to Eucla, and I feel that the closer the connection between the defence services and the civil administration, the better it will be at the present time—and it will be very much better in the future—if in the event of our being faced with an emergency the civil and military authorities have accustomed themselves to co-operate and to co-ordinate their activities.

There are one or two matters I desire to mention in connection with supplies. The traders and merchants of this State are becoming seriously concerned about supplies; and with your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I wish to mention the matter at this stage, although I hope to discuss it at a later stage on a motion of which I have given notice. I have had the advantage of conversation with the Acting Treasurer on the subject, and I hope that Parliament will have an opportunity to discuss it and to strengthen the hands of the Acting Treasurer and the Government in seeing that supplies to this State are being fairly rationed and brought forward. But there are numerous merchants in Western Australia who are seriously up against it, and who declare that we shall be short of many important commodities. In that connection I have been supplied with information by correspondents whose names I can give to any member who would like to know them afterwards. It appears that a very large firm wrote to Melbourne for certain manufactured articles

which come from Victoria, and received a reply that the goods could not be supplied because there was no shipping. The Western Australian firm then got to work and arranged for shipping space. Thereupon the manufacturers in Melbourne replied—I do not blame them—stating the real facts in saying:—

We cannot afford the time or labour to do the extra packing which is required for interstate orders.

They have such a big and profitable market at their doors in the Eastern States that they are not concerned with Western Australia; we are completely forgotten.

Point of Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order! Do I understand that the member for West Perth is touching a subject-matter of which he has placed a notice of motion on the notice paper? If so, I must rule him out of order.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, can you give me a Standing Order for that ruling? It represents a total innovation. On the Address-in-reply, there is unlimited debate. If you, Sir, limit it by notices of motion which may never be reached, or notices of motion put on the notice paper for the purpose of limiting discussion on the Address-in-reply, the position will be highly dangerous. I submit, therefore, that to say—

Mr. Speaker: Is the member for Guildford-Midland making a speech, or is he disagreeing with my ruling?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I am not disagreeing with your ruling, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: Order! The hon. member is not in order in speaking now, unless he intends moving to disagree.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I am asking you, Sir, if you can quote the Standing Order in question, because I cannot find it.

Mr. Speaker: I am surprised that the hon. member, who has so long been a member of this Chamber, should raise the question. At the time I mentioned the point to the Leader of the Opposition I did not have quite enough information. The point was dealt with by Sir James Lee Steere on the 27th September, 1899, by Mr. Speaker Harper on the 22nd July, 1903, and the 14th October, 1903; and by Mr. Speaker Johnson (later Sir Elliot Johnson) on the 30th September, 1913, and the 17th October, 1913. Their rulings are most definite.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: This is the first time I have heard of it. Excuse me, could you quote the Standing Order?

Mr. Speaker: Standing Order 1.

Debate resumed.

Mr. McDONALD: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I had in any case finished my references for the time being. I was under the impression, from a hasty glance at May's "Parliamentary Practice," that the restriction related to Bills on the notice paper, not to a question or a motion; but I may be wrong. I shall leave that aspect of the matter; in any event, I shall have an opportunity to deal with it at a later stage. I wish to add a word or two on our war effort. The Acting Treasurer, in his visit to the Eastern States, will be called upon—from what I can hear—to deal with the question of hotel hours. This matter is only part of a general problem and we have already taken some steps for the betterment of these difficulties, but they all come back, as part of our defence effort, to the calibre of our people.

We today are inheriting all the virtues and all the defects of our past years as a people, and depending upon our fibre as a nation and the fibre of the Allied Nations: as to what the ultimate outcome of this struggle will be. It is a truism to say that the fibre of the people may be the conclusive factor in the survival of a nation in this struggle. Whatever action the Government takes to ensure that there will be a limitation of excessive drinking—and I suggest also a limitation of the manpower employed in gambling—and to ensure that the strength and the morale of the people will be maintained at the highest pitch, that action will be met by the strongest approval of the people of the State. This is a case where bold leadership will reap its own reward. Our people are prepared to accept restrictions which in normal times would be irksome, as they realise that conditions must be brought about that will lead to ultimate victory for our nation.

On motion by Mr. F. C. L. Smith, debate adjourned.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional Committees appointed by that House.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,350,000.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 4.37 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 6th August, 1942.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

Refreshment Room Facilities.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Railways: In view of the fact that many passengers find it quite impossible to obtain refreshments at Chidlows and Spencer's Brook railway stations, owing to the very limited amount of space available, will he take steps to increase the facilities existing at those stations?

The MINISTER replied: The inconvenience mentioned is not unusual at the present time owing to war conditions. The position is being closely watched but capital expenditure on additional facilities cannot be made available at present.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. North, leave of absence for the remainder of the session granted to Mr. Abbott (North Perth) on the ground of duties with the R.A.A.F.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. F. C. L. SMITH (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [2.19]: The work of this Parliament, although important, is more or less overshadowed by war and the requirements of war, which impose on the central Government a task of such great magnitude that everybody who can help should do so, and none should hinder. War in our time is

different from the conflicts of the past. Ever since the machine-gun was invented, industry has had to bear a greater share of war work. Now we have infantry, cavalry and artillery all highly mechanised, all armed with automatic weapons, and all calling upon the industries of every country and upon the scientists of every country, for scientific application towards their maintenance and equipment. Notwithstanding this, science has not reduced the use of troops in the mass. As a matter of fact, the equipping of armies with automatic weapons has apparently accentuated the use of troops in the mass. The task of equipping those troops is one of great magnitude and we find that, in every country engaged in the war, more workers are required in factories than men in the field. The last war started as a partial war, but finished with all nations engaged endeavouring to make it a total war. Since that war, some of the nations occupied in the present conflict have directed their attention to total warfare, to the bending of their energies in peace-time towards the building up of armaments for future warfare, so that in the case of many of them the outbreak of hostilities merely became an acute phase of normal conditions. But in this country we were not engaged in total war during times of peace. Nor were we organised to an extent, or on a basis appropriate to the dangers that at present confront us. We therefore find that most of our munition factories, and other factories engaged in the manufacture of the necessities of war, are largely located in the Eastern States.

In the early stages of this war the nations to which we were opposed were not so very threatening, but with the entry of Japan they became extremely threatening to us. Now we have to make the best use of all the manufacturing plants at our disposal for the purpose of putting up a maximum war effort. It is quite possible that in that connection some of the States might have suffered in regard to the war expenditure and the building up of factories within them. Some idea of the industrial background of modern military equipment is given by the figures I am about to quote, which were published by the German Institute of Business Research: To construct a cruiser it takes 18,000 men, and they have to work one year. To construct a destroyer 5,400 men are required; for a submarine 4,000 men; for a