

moment, otherwise I would have suggested to him that the time is opportune for the State Government to forgo the surcharge which it levies of 9d. a ton on wheat. I hope that matter will be considered by the Government.

Mr. Cross: What does the Midland Railway Company charge for the haulage of super?

Mr. BERRY: I cannot tell the hon. member at the moment. My association with the Education Department has been not only cordial but of great advantage to the Irwin-Moore electorate. That is very satisfactory indeed, and I do not hesitate to make the admission. The same applies to the departments administered by the Deputy Premier, in his capacity as Minister for Works. One matter relating to the educational system that I have been asked to bring forward for consideration is a suggestion that the Minister should discontinue the necessity for correspondence class pupils to pay postage on their papers. If that charge were waived, it would be helpful to the children outback. I ask the Minister to give some consideration to that suggestion. In conclusion, I commend the member for Claremont (Mr. North) for his references to the Parliamentary institution during the course of his speech yesterday, with which I am in agreement.

On motion by Mr. McLarty, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.13 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 12th August, 1941.

Address-in-reply, fourth day

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day.

Debate resumed from the 6th August.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [4.38]: Mr. President, I suppose never before in the history of the British Empire was there so much anxiety for the future. That is so in the Commonwealth and certainly in Western Australia. I take the opportunity to congratulate Mr. Fraser on the part he is going to take in this conflict; it is fortunate indeed that he is able to do something in our war effort. I am sorry Mr. Parker is not present. There has been some rather unkind criticism of that hon. member; and, were he able to speak for himself, he could probably tell us a great deal of what he has seen and learnt during his travels overseas. I also take the opportunity to congratulate Mr. Nicholson, who occupies the important position in this State of chairman of the Red Cross Society. That doubtless is a full-time job, and I presume that he, like many of us, little thought that after occupying that position during the last war he would be called upon to fill it again on this occasion.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Thank you.

Hon. A. THOMSON: We all appreciate the excellent work that the Red Cross Society is carrying out, particularly the voluntary efforts of our womenfolk. We know that that organisation represents the only means by which our forces overseas are able to receive medical attention and, should men become prisoners of war, it is through the Red Cross that they are able to receive parcels of clothes and food. I congratulate Mr. Nicholson on the work he and his organisation are doing. The Speech delivered by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor was interesting. I noticed the following paragraph:—

Despite many reverses and great sacrifices, the people of Great Britain continue to display

unparalleled fortitude and indomitable resolution. Inspired by their example, Australia is constantly increasing its contribution to the tremendous effort necessary for the victory of freedom over oppression.

I cordially endorse the sentiments expressed in the succeeding paragraph:—

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

I wish I could apply the same statements to the people residing in other parts of Australia. To me it is deplorable that in the oldest State of the Commonwealth there should be apparently a large section of the community that can only be rightly termed "Fifth Columnists." If we are to judge from the frequent stoppages there of important war work, it would seem that there is an organised effort to prevent the accomplishment of what all should desire, namely, that those who have volunteered to fight for our liberty, shall be provided with ample munitions and equipment. In the divided counsels in the political and parliamentary life of France, we saw the writing on the wall. It meant there was no stable Government in that country. Owing to the wording of the French Constitution, no appeal to the people was possible, and it was necessary to endeavour to form successive Governments from the various parties represented in the Chamber of Deputies. A house divided against itself must fall, and so France fell with serious results to itself and an unfortunate effect upon the British Empire. I certainly regret that apparently we have not in the Federal arena the stability we would like to see. Decidedly the State Parliament of Western Australia sets a notable example of how parties should work together in such times as these, in order to achieve the best results for the State, the nation and the Empire. While I have much sympathy with those who are endeavouring to cope with the almost superhuman task of placing Australia in a state of preparedness for eventualities, there appears to be a large section of the community in the Eastern States that has nothing but destructive criticism to offer. I notice that propaganda is being indulged in throughout the Commonwealth in favour of the abolition of State Parliaments. God forbid that Western Australia should ever

be placed under the control of a State like New South Wales.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. THOMSON: Happenings in New South Wales of recent times must surely cause the average loyal Australian to hang his head in shame. Even in to-day's "West Australian" we find a report showing that the Premier of New South Wales has taken strong exception to two of the smaller States combining with the Commonwealth to deny New South Wales the right to secure more money to spend. It seems to me that, in that State at any rate, there is a lack of appreciation of the position confronting Australia to-day. We can only hope that wiser counsels will prevail and by the united effort of every section of the community that we shall ultimately be able to win the war. In the meantime no effort should be spared to ensure that our sailors, soldiers and airmen are provided with the munitions and equipment necessary to enable them effectively to carry out their gruelling tasks overseas. In fact, we require to ensure that full supplies are available for men who will have to bear the brunt of an attack should it be made on our home shores.

We have heard a good deal about the establishment of a new order after the war has terminated. Let us hope that in the creation of that new order we, as a nation, will have some voice. When we contrast the position of the dictators who have forced the present distressing war upon the world, and that of our own King and Queen, we have cause for thankfulness. Dictators go about surrounded by body guards. Anyone approaching must be searched thoroughly to make certain that he cannot possibly do the dictator concerned any harm. Contrast that position with the humanity and humility of our own King and Queen! They go about unarmed and unprotected—except by the love and esteem of their subjects. They walk about as the common people do; they share the common people's trials and tribulations. Could we imagine one of the dictators walking in the midst of the people of his country and being touched on the shoulder by a commoner? Members will recollect that when the King was passing through a concourse of his subjects, a man touched him on the shoulder and said, "Thank God for a good King." The King promptly, and with humility, replied,

"Thank God for a good people." We can feel that so long as we have our King and our Queen, so long shall we be able to enjoy our liberty.

Referring to the suggested new order, Sir Hal Colebatch, during his Address-in-reply speech, said that we should be prepared for post-war conditions. In my opinion it is time the Government of this State sought the co-operation of all sections of the community with that end in view. For many years, in this House and elsewhere, I have advocated the appointment of a finance and works committee comprising representatives of both Houses of Parliament. But Governments, present and past, have preferred to be free and untrammelled in the spending of public money as they thought fit, and asking for authority to do works after having committed the State to the expenditure. For instance let me take the Perth Hospital where a large expenditure was embarked upon by the present Government, and not until then permission was asked. I assume that the Lotteries Commission has guaranteed interest and sinking fund on that expenditure, but in view of the decline in receipts it is a question whether the Commission will be able to live up to its guarantee without detrimental results to country hospitals.

Hon. J. Cornell: The commission can guarantee only from year to year.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Still, such is the position. Returning to the new order, if we are to profit by mistakes on the part of the State after the last war we must have a co-ordinated plan of settlement put in preparation now. The Government and Parliament should in this matter seek the co-operation of all sections of the community. Already certain districts are preparing for post-war conditions, and I propose briefly to cite proposals which have been made by a section of the province I have the honour to represent. The people I allude to call themselves the Albany Zone Development Committee. I quote from the report of a sub-committee of that body dealing with the objects of the committee and the means of carrying them out:—

The following are outlines of the proposals placed before visiting members of Parliament at a conference on Saturday with the Albany Zone Development Committee:—

Report of sub-committee, Albany Zone Development Committee, as to the objects and means of carrying them out.

It is considered that our objectives for a beginning should be—

- (1) To increase the area under pasture on alienated and unalienated land in the Albany Road Board District, and to ask the Government to institute an inquiry as to the best means of bringing this about.
- (2) Drainage of our large areas of low-lying flat country, both west and east of Albany, as this type of land is practically useless until the surface water is got rid of. To ask the Government to undertake the drainage of the area recently surveyed in the Torbay-Young's Siding district. . . .
- (4) To ask the Government to arrange for the laying down of experimental plots under departmental control, on farms of different types of soil throughout the district. Experiment with micro-elements, manures, limings, grasses, etc., should prove most valuable.

(While Dr. Teakle and other officers of the department have carried out small experiments they have only touched the fringe of what is necessary.)

- (5) To endeavour to get the Government to endorse the opinions of their experts as to the suitability of this district for land development. "While we know that Dr. Teakle and Mr. Elliott have expressed themselves very definitely in this connection, the Government officially still condemns this district. As some visiting members of Parliament are aware, different local farmers have demonstrated very successfully as to the capability of some of our land; yet the Government declines to endorse the opinion of its experts."

It is also thought that not only must we endeavour to arrange for new settlements, but it is also essential to assist present farmers to improve their position. In this connection, it is thought the main industries likely to be successful in this district are—

- (1) Dairying and pig-raising.
- (2) Fat lambs.
- (3) Potato and vegetable growing.
- (4) Fruit growing.
- (5) Poultry farming.

Every investigation possible should be undertaken with a view to assisting farmers.

It is believed that the district is suitable for the establishment of a canning factory for vegetables and fruit, but probably this must wait until after the war.

As the production of butter fat increases, so must we urge for the establishment of a butter-grading floor at Albany, and seek to have arrangements made for the shipment of butter overseas from this port.

A bacon factory should also be thought about, particularly as we have all the necessary

facilities for the storage while awaiting shipment of both bacon and butter.

Such are the considered opinions of men who are alive to the position regarding post-war conditions. I propose further to mention briefly various suggestions towards enabling ourselves to deal adequately with the problem of the soldiers when they return. We know that after the last war soldiers were put on land which was not even cleared, and with the assistance given by the Government they were expected to make a living and develop their blocks.

Hon. J. Cornell: That will happen again.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Not if we can help it. We want to prevent that. And that is the reason why I put on record my plea for a co-ordinated scheme of soldier settlement. I continue my quotation—

The development of the country adjacent to Albany to be encouraged as much as possible. This will include—

- (a) Making land available at low prices.
- (b) Providing settlers with the best advice as to procedure for which purpose a committee should be formed. While on this committee there must be Government representatives, majority representation should be given to practical farmers who have made a success of land in the district. The committee should work in conjunction with the skilled officers of the Agricultural Department, and give advice on the best and cheapest means of development so as to prevent over-capitalisation and the consequent risk of failure.

We know that if during the agricultural and pastoral expansion of Western Australia those in authority had sought the advice of established residents of the south-western district, many hundreds of thousands of pounds would have been saved to the State.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Millions.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, millions. Moreover many settlers would have had a reasonable chance of success instead of being driven off their holdings with their hearts broken, as many of them were. Dealing with closer settlement this committee suggests—

- (c) Government assistance to consist of—

(i) Partial preparation not exceeding 100 acres of the land to be made available by the most economical methods, such methods to be subject to the approval and supervision of the committee, whose duty will be to ensure the costs are to be kept down to a minimum. These reservations are made on account of the obvious need for preventing re-

petition of the errors of land settlement in earlier years.

(ii) The cost of such work, without interest, to be included in the prices of the land and payable on the same system as "land rents" on c.p. leases.

(iii) Financial assistance for development of pastures and provision of livestock not to exceed a sum prescribed, so as to ensure no over-capitalisation; such financial assistance to be subject to the recommendation of the committee.

I refer to the use of modern machinery for clearing, instead of a man with a grubber, a mattock, and pick-and-shovel being started on that undertaking, with the result that his spirit is broken. Modern machinery should be supplied, to enable the new settler to clear his land at the minimum of expense, and lay it down in pasture. Thus he would have a fair prospect of getting sufficient land ready to enable him to live in reasonable comfort while continuing to improve his holdings.

- (d) Special consideration to be given to returning soldiers desirous of settling on such lands, including in this case some further preparation by laying down pastures in advance on these lots so as to make them income-earning as soon as possible; otherwise, the same conditions as in (a), (b), and (c) to apply.

The committee further suggests the development of the Albany harbour and the utilisation of lowlying land by an adequate draining scheme. In touching on these points I show how the Government can, by seeking the assistance of residents of the various districts, who would be anxious to see their respective districts progress, prepare in advance schemes that will afford new settlers a fair opportunity to succeed. I feel sure that if the Government will adopt my suggestion and establish committees to assist in co-ordinated preparation for the new order, the prospects of satisfactory fruition will be bright.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Your district gets a rainfall every month.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I have said that members representing the lower portion of the Great Southern have already taken steps to arrange a conference of all sections of that area with a view to ascertaining how best that land may be further developed and made to provide employment. I propose to touch on another aspect of the new order.

I trust that a genuine attempt will be made to decentralise our country districts. Those districts have been depleted by heavy enlistments and recent bad seasons. Empty houses and shops are appearing in our country towns. The city of Perth alone is the only portion of the State that has benefited from the war.

Hon. J. Cornell: There are plenty of empty shops in the city, too, as you will find if you look around.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, but perhaps that is because there has been over-building. On the other hand, I have been informed by land agents that in Perth it is difficult to secure a decent house in which to live. I know that people who have left my own town have found it extremely hard to get a decent house in the city, and have had to go out into the suburbs. While to-day the country is not as popular as some of us who have resided there for many years would like it to be, I feel sure that when the war is over the country areas will again be expected to absorb large numbers of people, including the unemployed and men returning from the war. Therefore I propose to make one or two suggestions for improved conditions for country residents which, in my opinion, are long overdue. I do not hold the present Government responsible for the existing system—far from it. It is a system that has prevailed for a long period. I am thinking of the Railway Department.

We have been told—and the statement is made public on big posters all over the place—that the railways belong to the people. That may be so, but we know that country residents are expected, by the railway freights and charges they pay, to provide the wherewithal to keep the railways going. I know some members will argue that country people are being charged only for services rendered. Last year this House disallowed an increase in railway freights amounting to between £50,000 and £60,000. In spite of that, those charges were imposed by the department, with the sanction of the Government. In view of the extra expense imposed on the Railway Department to meet the Commonwealth child endowment payments, the department has no doubt asked the Government to allow further increased freights. I hope, however, that on this occasion the Government has been wise enough to say, "If there is going to be any deficit in the railways at the present juncture, we do not

favour an increase in freights to make up the loss." The Railway Department is in an exceedingly happy position, inasmuch as it has been able to eliminate all competition from other forms of traffic. With the advent of petrol restrictions the department should be in a still happier position. The Railway Department does not give the country taxpayer that consideration to which he is entitled.

May I instance the situation at Albany? Owing to the war that port and its hinterland lost the advantage of the cheap freights enjoyed by their utilisation of the shipping service. The "Kybra" used to call monthly and business people and those requiring commodities to be taken there availed themselves of the opportunity to make use of the cheap freights charged for the transport of goods on the vessel. That helped to reduce the cost of living and placed the business people of the district in a position somewhat comparable with that enjoyed by business people in the metropolitan area. When it was no longer possible to make use of the "Kybra," an endeavour was made by way of deputation to various Ministers and the Railway Department to secure at least one special train a month for the transport of goods at a rate comparable with that formerly enjoyed by those shipping goods by the "Kybra," which incidentally has been commandeered by the Commonwealth for war service. I am sorry to say that the Railway Department refused the concession. The authorities said they were common carriers and therefore could not differentiate. All I can say is that they are uncommon carriers in a very happy position because they have been able to eliminate competition of all kinds, and are able to say to a district that is suffering as that particular portion of my province is suffering, "We are sorry, but we cannot do anything for you." The policy of the Government and of the Railway Department should be to endeavour to lessen the burden on the country taxpayer. Instead of that, he has to bear additional burdens as I will prove later, and people in the metropolitan area are living under much more advantageous conditions. I have no desire to take away from the metropolitan area the privileges it is enjoying, but if there is to be a new order and decentralisation is to take place and people are to be encouraged to go into the country areas, then greater consideration

will have to be given to those who venture away from the outskirts of the city. They should not be penalised for doing so.

Members will recall that on three different occasions I endeavoured to have a committee appointed to inquire into the over-capitalisation of our railway system. An hon. member who has since passed beyond said to me, "We know what you want; you desire to get this committee so that you may be able to get cheap railway freights. But we are not going to give it to you." And they did not. They were not game to allow us a committee to inquire into the matter. Consequently we still have to carry the heavy burdens that have been imposed on the country districts for so long. Instead of encouraging settlement the present policy of passing the buck to the country is driving people into the city. The fault is not that of the country people, but is due to the bungling and unwise policy of railway construction that was adopted in the first instance. We on the Great Southern who travel backwards and forwards have to journey an average of 60 miles on the Great Southern after we pass Brookton, whereas if a line had been constructed from Brookton downwards that travel would have been saved. It is not so bad for those who use the system only occasionally, but it is an eternal burden on those living along the Great Southern line.

The department has adopted a universal policy of charging railway freights on a mileage basis and under a zoning system. Geographical position and distance from markets should be considered. I desire to illustrate the position of Williams. That town is 100 miles by direct road from Perth, but it is 183 miles by rail. No person is permitted to carry his goods on that 100 mile road, but is compelled to pay unnecessary freight on 83 miles of railway. I do not blame the Commissioner of Railways or the Government; I blame the system. The anomalies that have arisen illustrate a lack of foresight or co-ordination of effort. Again, Kojonup is 160 miles by road from Perth and by rail is 258 miles via Katanning. Consequently, people there are paying freight for over 100 additional miles. In the past I have criticised the Transport Co-ordination Board most mercilessly. I objected to, and fought to the utmost of my power and ability in this House against it, the passing of the measure that led to the formation of the board.

I stated that the Transport Co-ordination Board was nothing more nor less than a transport elimination board, and that subsequently proved to be correct. The first chairman of the board, Mr. Munt, was a good, loyal, active civil servant, but I regret that he had only one view, which was that his duty was to protect the railways, irrespective of the injury imposed upon residents in the country areas. I congratulate the present chairman, Mr. Millen, on having a knowledge of country conditions. He has been much more sympathetic to people living in the backblocks.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. THOMSON: I want to show that this board has set an example to the Railway Department. It is wrong that the Government should compel a man who is within a hundred miles by direct road of his markets to send his goods 183 miles by rail. That is a definite impost upon industry. God knows, the primary industries today want all the assistance they can get and not extra impositions placed upon them. I have here a report prepared by the Transport Co-ordination Board, including reference to something that was done in Mr. Cornell's province. This is an example of what I consider the Government should do. It is headed "Newdegate—Lake Camm—Lake Varley—Holt Rock Road Transport Service." From the Newdegate railway station a radius of 40 miles has been described, and all settlers within that area are charged a flat rate. Thus the settler fortunate enough to be within five, 10 or 15 miles of the Newdegate railway is charged as much as is the man located 40 miles away. A scheme of that kind should be adopted by the Railway Department, instead of penalising people more and more the farther out they go. In the past I have criticised the Transport Board keenly, but I am pleased that the board has shown the Government and the Railway Department ways and means of introducing a new order of charges by giving settlers in remote parts an opportunity to compete with those more favourably situated in relation to the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member is now dealing with a matter affecting the South Province.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I mentioned that fact. The hon. member must agree that

very acceptable aid is being given to the settlers in that province.

Hon. J. Cornell: It took some getting.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The fact remains that the settlers have got it. I do not think such consideration could be obtained from the Railway Department under existing conditions. In support of that statement, I cannot give a better illustration than the turning down of the reasonable request made by the people of Albany. They said, "Give us one train a month and we will load it and do all the handling at the other end." I suppose such a proposition would be too up-to-date for our railway administration. I have no wish to cast any reflection on the department, which is merely following the policy that has been adopted for many years. Seemingly the department was afraid that if such consideration was extended to the southern port, other places would also want it. If any extra burden is to be imposed on the people, I maintain that as the railways belong to the whole of the people, those who reside in the metropolitan area should bear a share of the burden.

I congratulate the Government upon the desire manifested to establish secondary industries in the State. The Minister for Labour has an excellent committee to advise and assist him. If the Government extended that system, it would be advantageous to the State. When an attempt is made to establish industries away from the metropolitan area, those responsible find themselves hopelessly outclassed. They have to pay freight on the raw material to the factory, unless local material can be used, and then freight back on the manufactured goods. Then there is the burden of the higher basic wage. Under existing conditions, it will be difficult for industries to operate in the country districts. We must have cheaper freights. Our Government should do as the Premier of South Australia has done. He has gone out of his way to encourage the establishment of industries in that State, and has given substantial assistance in many directions. I hope our Government will do something along similar lines. If we are going to build up the country districts by establishing secondary industries there, greater encouragement must be given. We must get away from the methods that have been

adopted in the past and have proved unsuitable.

Members have probably received copies of a pamphlet published in Victoria entitled "Justice Now!" It deals with the family wage and makes very interesting reading. I hope that most of what is indicated in the pamphlet will be put into effect. One sentence reads—

Our keenly anticipated new order will be more odious than the old if we merely succeed in exchanging the tyranny of individualist greed for the tyranny of complete domination by the State.

Another part deals with the position of industry and the right of the worker to a family wage—

If such an industry, despite the fact that it finds it impossible to pay the family wage to workers, must be kept in existence by reason of national policy, then there is obviously a duty on the State to make up the difference between the wages which the industry can afford to pay and the family wage which the workers in the industry are entitled to in justice.

If the industry in which the worker is employed is unable to pay the family wage, the responsibility for the payment of a balance so that the worker may maintain his family according to the standards prescribed rests upon the State—if the State regards it as desirable or necessary that the industry should continue to function. In both of these cases there is a direct duty upon the State. The primary duty of the State is to ensure that as far as possible an industry pays the family wage to its workers. Failing that, a balance should be paid by the State itself, which should raise the money by whatever just means it has at its disposal.

With that sentiment I agree, and I think few members would object to its being put into practice. The farming industry has not been in a position to pay the basic wage or the railway freights. The Government must give serious consideration to the question of assisting the industry and making it more attractive to ensure that not only the employees but also the farmers themselves, after meeting their commitments, obtain a family wage. I have no objection to the fixing of a basic wage for the farming industry, but the Government should ensure that the imposts entailed by increased freights, the fixing of a basic wage and the regulation of hours are so adjusted as to leave the farmers in a position similar to that of people engaged in secondary industries.

I shall await with considerable interest the implementation by the Minister for Lands of the recommendations by the Royal Commissioner on the Pastoral Industry. Mr. Fyfe's report was an excellent one, and I congratulate him upon the practical suggestions he has offered for the consideration of Parliament and the Government to overcome the difficulties occasioned by adverse seasons. I hope that when legislation is introduced it will be somewhat similar to the measure I endeavoured to get placed on the statute-book—an amendment of the Rural Relief Fund Act. The State and the industry particularly owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Fyfe for the care and knowledge he has displayed in the preparation of that valuable report. He has gone right to the core of the problem. If the Government's proposals based on the recommendations indicate a possibility of ameliorating and improving the position of the pastoralists in the North-West, they will receive my wholehearted support.

The Speech contains the following reference to technical education:—

The Government considers that in view of the scientific background of all industry, both primary and secondary, more liberal provision must be made for technical education.

A knowledge of the scientific fundamentals of primary industries must add to the efficiency of those industries, while the basis of efficiency in secondary industry is technical preparation.

The war has amply demonstrated the urgent need for technical education. The placing of youth in industry will be an important function of the State in the post-war period when diversified industries are established.

At the opening of Parliament I asked the Chief Secretary what had been expended in buildings and plant, etc., in the city on technical education. The reply was as follows:—

Buildings and plant: 1, Perth Technical College, £104,707; Fremantle Technical School, £12,921; Midland Junction Technical School, £468; Eastern Goldfields Technical School, £1,216. There is no technical school at Wiluna. There is a branch of the Kalgoorlie School of Mines. Salaries: 2, Perth Technical College, £19,139; Fremantle Technical School, £3,465; Midland Junction Technical School, £965; Eastern Goldfields Technical School, £1,523; Expenses, £3,396.

I point out that not one penny was spent on technical education in the rest of the State. No doubt that position is a legacy inherited by the present Government. I have been very keen on criticising the lack of opportunity given to our young people in

the learning of trades. It has taken the war to bring home to the Government the fact that more technical education must be provided. The Government is proposing in country districts to arrange for technical correspondence with isolated youths there. That will be helpful. I have no desire to take from the city children any of the facilities they are now enjoying; but I do want country children to have at least equal opportunities with those in the city in the matter of training, so that they may reach a decent standard of living. I desire to have provided for technical education in the country towns a sum equal to that provided in the metropolitan area.

The Chief Secretary: Have you any suggestions to make?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. The Government has expended on buildings in the metropolitan area a total of £130,462. I have in the past urged that it should not be impossible, seeing that the State owns its railways, to arrange for mobile technical units to visit the principal towns. It should then be made compulsory for apprentices and youths to attend those units and thus obtain firsthand technical knowledge as is done in the case of young people in the city. I do not wish to deprive the city of anything, but if it is possible to spend all that money in the metropolitan area, it should be possible to give children in the country districts the facilities to which they are entitled.

The Chief Secretary: We are using for that purpose buildings in the country districts that were not erected as technical schools.

Hon. A. THOMSON: But the Government is not spending money on salaries especially for that purpose. I admit that in some country towns it is possible to find dress-making classes, typewriting classes, and so on. My wish is that boys in the country should have an opportunity to attend mobile units, such as I have suggested. This could be done by providing the same amount of money as is allocated to the metropolitan area, and an opportunity thus afforded to young people in the country to obtain firsthand knowledge of how to use lathes and machines, engage in plumbing, etc., as is the case in Perth. That should not be an impossible task for the Government to embark upon. We find that in war time marvellous things

are done. Mobile units, for instance, repair machines in the very front line. Our country children constitute our front line, and are just as important to the State as are our youths in the metropolitan area. This development is long overdue. I have been keen on it for many years past, and hope the Government will give serious consideration to my suggestion. No reason occurs to me why it should not do so. The railways have on hand trucks that could be converted to the purpose. They could be run down the line to Pingelly, Brookton, Narrogin, Wagin, Katanning and other suitable towns. If this mobile unit visited those towns only once or twice a week, the youths in those centres would at least be deriving some benefit. To-day young people are denied the opportunities that are available in the city. The consequence is that many fathers leave the country and come to the city because they see no opportunity to educate their children in the country. I do not blame the present Government for not doing these things, although during its nine years of office it should have been able to do something. The position is largely due to the unfortunate system that is in vogue. As part of the new era we are entitled to expect that these facilities will be afforded to the country districts.

The other night Sir Hal Colebatch told us that when he left office as Minister for Education there were four high schools in existence, namely, at Albany, Bunbury, Northam and Geraldton. Since then no other high schools have been established. Our educational system is seriously lacking in that direction. I wish to quote something that appeared in "The Bulletin," at the time when the Minister for Education in Queensland was proposing to raise the school age to as high as 16 or 17 years. The writer of the article in question pertinently pointed out that if such a course were followed the majority of parents would require financial assistance if they were to keep their children at school for the later period. He thought that at least 15s. a week would have to be provided for each child that remained at school. I am not condemning our high schools for they are something to be thankful for. I also congratulate Sir Hal Colebatch on the improvement he was able to effect in our educational system, whereby he gave some country children facilities comparable with those extended to children in the metropoli-

tan area. The article to which I am referring reads as follows:—

Too many young Australians already attend secondary schools, and no good will come of adding many more thousands to their ranks. Compulsory secondary education will not mean, as some advocates of a higher school age pretend, a better chance in life for children of the masses. Only a certain proportion of any community, no matter what the educational attainments of the average citizen, can fill the white-collar positions. Yet few who have attended a secondary school desire any but white-collar work, and most who can't get it are very disgruntled. Such people to-day—if they are numerous—can become a grave social menace, for it is they who constitute the most fertile field for Communist propaganda.

Another article states:—

It took a war to solve the problem of our great army of youthful, unskilled unemployed by absorbing them into either active service or various war industries. But some day we will wake up to the necessity for a national organisation for drafting every boy leaving school or college into a position consistent with his ability, temperament and education.

The Government is responsible for a boy's education until he is 14, but his industrial or professional future should also be its responsibility. At present it usually rests with the intelligence of the parents or the boys themselves as to what they take up, and, as the majority lack understanding and foresight, any old job is taken on as long as the money is good. But it is not realised that it is better to be taught a skilled trade or profession at small wages than to start in temporary and unskilled work with a bulky pay envelope.

A department should be established with powers compelling every mother's son to seek employment and all employers to engage boy labour only through this department. And every boy should be apprenticed until 21 and thoroughly trained in whatever occupation he takes up. Then, in manhood, he would be a skilled operator, artisan, tradesman or professional man.

Our present educational system is not adequate to deal with the present situation. The military department has taken hold of young men and has practically reopened school for them. It is educating them and endeavouring to turn them into tradesmen, thus making them of value to Australia. I hope Mr. Bolton will not think I am stealing his thunder when I pay a warm tribute to the Engineering Union of Western Australia. I congratulate most sincerely that organisation upon one of the finest agreements ever entered into in this State. I refer to the agreement between the engineering trade and the employers, whereby it became possible for the latter to employ more apprentices than had previously been engaged and also to

employ a greater proportion of junior labour. I was extremely happy to see that development. It is something I have advocated for many years. When giving evidence before a Royal Commission, I stated that we compelled our boys to attend school until they reached the age of 14, but that when the school period was over we declared that only a percentage of them could secure employment that would lead to their becoming skilled artisans or tradesmen. I congratulate those responsible upon a wonderful piece of arbitration, and feel sure it will lead to more employment for our boys and greater opportunities for them than they have enjoyed in the past.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Does that not apply only to boys in the metropolitan area?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am not sure. I think it applies to any district where the metal trade is in operation. In country towns many good schools are found. Members may be surprised to know, however, that although children attending these schools can take their junior examinations, they cannot sit for their leaving certificates, but have to go to Bunbury or some other high school. In the country there are children quite as intelligent as are those attending metropolitan schools, but their parents are not in a position financially to send them on to high schools. Many of those children may aspire to positions where the employers consider it necessary that the standard of the applicant should be equal to the leaving standard. Owing to the present position, however, many of those children can only secure their junior certificates, and are therefore at a disadvantage compared with others more favourably situated.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why must those children have their leaving certificates?

Hon. A. THOMSON: In many instances that is a condition of employment, and therefore those particular children are not eligible to fill the vacancies.

Hon. J. Cornell: There are not many such instances.

Hon. A. THOMSON: One or two of such cases in my own town have come to my knowledge, and those very instances have caused me to feel sore about the situation. The parents of some clever children cannot afford to pay the board necessary to enable the children to attend the Albany High School in order to qualify for the leaving certificate. Those children are, therefore,

debarred from obtaining their leaving certificate. If that is to be portion of the school curriculum, the Government should provide extra teachers for country schools. I shall not again enumerate the country towns I have already mentioned that these teachers could perhaps visit two days a week, so as to bring the children up to the standard necessary to enable them to secure the leaving certificate. I feel that I have put forward a practical suggestion. Country members do not object to the expenditure of £65,000 upon the East Perth Girls' School, neither do they object to the expenditure of £23,000 upon a school in Victoria Park; but they do ask that country children should be given the opportunities that are extended to children fortunate enough to be able to attend the East Perth Girls' School, the Victoria Park school and other schools in the metropolitan area. A little over a week ago I visited Boddington, which is portion of my province. If a school similar to that provided there were provided in the metropolitan area, there would be a furor. The children are overcrowded; and they are using beer cases for desks. I am not blaming the schoolmaster for this and I quite realise the difficulties of the Education Department; but I am drawing a comparison with the palatial school at East Perth and the school at Victoria Park. At Boddington the conditions for the children are unhygienic and certainly bad.

The Chief Secretary: How long has that school been in existence?

Hon. A. THOMSON: A long time. I know the Education Department has arranged to remove the beer cases and provide proper desks, but these have not yet arrived. I am dealing with the position as it stood a week ago. I have no desire to take away from the city anything that the city enjoys; but I do ask that the treatment given to the metropolitan children should be meted to the country children, who are just as valuable citizens as are the children in the metropolitan area.

Touching on the wheat position, I realise that both the Commonwealth and State Governments are faced with a difficult problem; the farming community, however, is also faced with it. True, at present we have a stabilised price for a certain quality wheat. The suggestion put forward by Mr. Teasdale, who is the Western Australian repre-

sentative on the Wheat Board, is worthy of consideration. Our production must be controlled, owing to lack of shipping facilities. The suggestion is that the farmer should plant 25 per cent. of his usual wheat acreage and that the Federal or State Government, or both Governments, should pay the farmer 12s. per acre for the remainder.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Many farmers would not want to sow under those conditions.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The point is, if the farmers sowed their usual acreage, what would become of the wheat? Large sums of money would be required to provide storage accommodation for it. The scheme proposed seems to me to be worthy of consideration.

Hon. L. Craig: It has many weaknesses.

Hon. A. THOMSON: All schemes have. The wheat industry must, however, be preserved; every consideration ought to be extended to it, because at present our farming community is facing one of its most difficult periods. It is almost impossible to obtain labour.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: What percentage of the farmers would you say are making 12s. an acre clear profit on wheat-growing?

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am not entering into that phase. My opinion is that our Government would be very much better off if the scheme were put into operation than it would be if it advanced money for super, seed and other requirements of the farmer. The scheme appeals to me as a practical one.

I note that in the proposed legislation an amendment is contemplated to the Traffic Act. I presume such legislation will deal with the proposed reduction of motor licenses and will also make provision for gas producer units. May I venture to hope that the Government is seriously considering the making of provision for third-party insurance of all motor vehicles? The appalling loss of life and the injury done to our people clearly point to the necessity for the introduction of compulsory insurance. I honestly feel that the recommendations of the select committee, of which I had the honour to be the chairman, provide a cheap and efficient method of securing protection to the public.

Another matter I desire to touch upon, the stamping of eggs, was mentioned by Sir Hal Colebatch. As members are aware, I endeavoured last session to obtain the disallowance of the regulations, but was unsuccessful. The effect of the regulations is that

poultrymen, particularly small producers, are getting 1d. to 1½d. a dozen less for eggs than they obtained before the regulations came into force.

Hon. J. Cornell: The regulations are further mystifying the elusive egg!

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, and the consumer is no better off. It is a pity that Parliament did not disallow the regulations. I am sorry I have detained members so long, but there is another matter I desire to mention. For a long time past, woolgrowers in the lower portion of the Great Southern district have been trying hard to have Albany fixed as a wool appraisalment centre. Lately we have heard much criticism about big business, particularly about the Broken Hill Pty. Coy. I have no shares in that company, but Australia can thank God that the company is controlling an industry so vital to the defence of Australia. So far from its exploiting the public, its figures show conclusively that steel is cheaper in Australia than it is in any other part of the world. If the company is making undue profits, then neither the company nor the shareholders would be any more fortunate than are the members of this Chamber in escaping the burden of increased taxation which has already been and will no doubt be imposed. We all feel, I am sure, that we must do our part to bring the war to a successful conclusion. Some of us feel that vested interests in the city are opposing the wishes of the woolgrowers to establish Albany as a wool appraisalment centre. The Minister for Commerce has stated that he approves of Albany as an appraisalment centre, but unless something is done very soon to create that centre, this season will pass and no wool will be appraised there. I wish to point out the difference in freight charges paid by growers in Albany, Plantagenet, Cranbrook, Gnowangerup, and Tambellup. The following table gives the particulars:—

	Miles.	Freight. s. d.	Tons.	Amount. £ s. d.
Albany to Perth	352	70 8	47	134 10 4
Plantagenet	314	74 10	471	1,762 0 0
Cranbrook	286	71 4	468	1,060 4 0
Gnowangerup	276	70 1	839	2,040 0 0
Tambellup	252	67 1	467	1,566 7 11
				£3,072 14 9

Members should bear in mind that Albany was an appraisalment centre during the last war. Mr. Fraser made an amazing statement when speaking to the Address-in-

reply. He said space was so scarce at Fremantle that it was necessary to build a wool store right alongside the Old Women's Home at Fremantle.

Hon. G. Fraser: In the grounds!

Hon. A. THOMSON: At Albany ample space is available for buildings; stores could be erected without causing inconvenience.

Hon. V. Hamersley: They could be built at railway sidings.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. Vested interests, however, prefer to erect them in the metropolitan area. If Albany, where there are stores available, were the centre to which wool could be conveyed for appraisal, great savings could be effected. The following table shows what the cost would be from various centres to Albany with the mileage and the cost involved:—

	Miles.	Freight. s. d.	Amount. £
Plantagenet	39	17 8	414
Cranbrook	66	27 0	631
Gnowangerup	112	37 3	723
Tambellup	92	32 9	764

That gives a total cost of £2,534 that would be involved if all the wool grown in that particular zone was appraised at the natural port of Albany, as against an expenditure of £8,072, or a natural saving of 6s. 11d. per bale. It is strange that, despite all that has been said regarding the farmers, when they are anxious to reduce their costs and effect savings, vested interests represented by the city brokers, retort, "Even if you could effect savings, we shall not shift." The Government is not to be blamed in this matter, because the Premier is with us wholeheartedly.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Vested interests have been antagonistic from the very start.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes; I regret that we were not met in a more favourable spirit. However, I have placed the position on record.

I feel sure the sincere desire of every member of this House is to co-operate with the Government in every direction so that by our united efforts we may be able to retain the freedom that we enjoy to-day and for which our forefathers fought and handed down to us for safeguarding. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply and sincerely pray that when Parliament assembles again, our Empire will have destroyed the disturbers of world peace and that a new era of hap-

piness and contentment, lasting for generations, may be ours.

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan) [6.3]: I join with Mr. Thomson in offering congratulations to Mr. Fraser upon his enlistment in the fighting forces of the Empire. Mr. Fraser has practical knowledge of work that is essential in connection with the war effort, and I join with other members in hoping that hostilities may cease earlier than we anticipate and that Mr. Fraser may be back with us to continue his duties in the interests of his constituents and of the State as a whole. The criticism levelled at Mr. Parker having been referred to by Mr. Thomson, I merely wish to remark that, together with many other members of this Chamber, I deplore those statements. Probably those who criticise the hon. member for what he is doing know nothing of the facts, and possibly they are persons who are doing practically nothing themselves—beyond criticising. Mr. Parker is at least trying to do something, and he had an excellent record of service in the 1914-18 war. These are times when criticism should cease and all should endeavour to advance suggestions of benefit to the nation.

During the course of my remarks I shall discuss matters from the industrial angle. I feel I have some knowledge and information that may be of interest to the House. Owing to the proximity of the tea suspension, I shall touch upon one or two other phases first. I offer my sincere congratulations to Mr. Seddon upon his excellent speech on the Supply Bill last week. He takes the financial position of the State very seriously to heart and closely studies the problem. He imparts to many of us who have not the time to go into financial matters so carefully and thoroughly as he does, an analysis of the position. During the course of his remarks he referred to criticism that had been levelled against the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, one of the most prominent concerns in the Commonwealth. Mr. Thomson also dealt with that question. Being possessed of knowledge of industrial matters, I feel that I am in a position also to refute some of the harsh statements made about the company. As a manufacturer, I have over a period of years had occasion to visit the Eastern States. I

can claim to have a very fair acquaintance with our local industries, particularly with our foundries and factories. When in Melbourne and Sydney I have inspected the large manufactories; I have seen what has been, and what is being done there. Nearly two years ago when the war commenced I was in Victoria and visited among other plants, the Maribyrnong munition works. In my opinion, had it not been for the enterprise and development carried out by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, Australia's war effort to-day would be very little more than five per cent. of what it actually is. Without the raw materials manufactured by the company, 95 per cent. of the equipment and munitions supplied to our troops would have been lacking. Members will appreciate what position Australia would have been in had it not been for the enterprise of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company. It makes my blood boil when I read, day after day, the unfair criticism levelled at the company by men who should know better, seeing that they are on the spot.

Hon. W. J. Mann: It is ignorant criticism.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Of course it is. Some of these critics have had more opportunities than I or other members of this Chamber have had to ascertain what the company has done. I have never been a believer in monopolies, but even if the Broken Hill Proprietary Company could be designated as such, then, in view of all the circumstances, I would agree with Mr. Thomson and say, "Thank God for this particular monopoly to-day." Without the company and its activities Australia's position with regard to the supply of munitions would be indeed serious. I have got together a few facts regarding the company. I feel that Western Australians should know the actual position. As Mr. Seddon and Mr. Thomson have already mentioned, the company's production costs are lower than those obtaining in any other recognised steel plant elsewhere in the world. That surely is something to be proud of. As a consequence, the price of steel turned out by the company is also much lower than is charged elsewhere. Speaking as an interested party, I assure members that for many years we have used iron and steel in our factory, and if we had to purchase supplies obtained from the Old Country, the transaction would entail an expenditure two or three times as much as we have to pay for what we acquired from the Broken Hill Proprietary Company. The steel-making

plant of that concern is considered to be the most efficient of its kind in the world. Even the critics will agree that the conditions under which the company's employees operate are unequalled elsewhere. During the last 20 years, no serious stoppage due to any internal dispute has occurred on the works. Such stoppages as there have been were due to outside considerations such as industrial upheavals involving the coal miners, seamen or waterside workers. It may not be generally known, but immediately on the outbreak of war the Broken Hill Proprietary Company embarked upon the production of shells, and secured the first contract by open tender. On the completion of the contract, the company found that the actual costs were much lower than was anticipated when estimates were prepared. Instead of taking the consequent profit, the company refunded the difference to the Commonwealth Government and that refund represented 2s. 10d. per shell. The total amount involved amounted to several thousands of pounds.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Prior to the tea adjournment I was discussing the Broken Hill Proprietary Company and its efforts to assist Australian industries. The next point I want to make is that it is not generally known that at the present time, in addition to Mr. Essington Lewis—whom I think we all know as the managing director of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company and director of munitions productions, as well as a great Australian—there are 32 of the company's engineers, and ten of its executives as well, engaged full time with the Munitions Department. The salaries and expenses of all these officers are borne by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, and, moreover, the Federal Government is not charged anything at all in respect of Mr. Essington Lewis's private plane, the "Silver City," which he uses to move between the various cities of the Commonwealth. It is estimated that these contributions represent approximately £100,000 per annum, all of which the company pays. Now, though the company's profits read large in actual figures, before criticism is offered they should be taken on a percentage basis in relation to the capital involved. It was pointed out, I think, by Mr. Seddon, but it is well worth repeating, that over 50 per cent. of the shareholders in the company are repre-

sented by holders of from one to 400 shares, and that there has not been a bonus issue of shares out of accumulated profits or reserves since the steel plant was established. The recent issue of 64 shares for every 100 held was actually made from a premium of 10s. per share paid by the shareholders on two previous issues. So this cannot by any means be classified as a bonus issue. Personally I do not hold one share in this company, unfortunately. I am merely endeavouring, from the knowledge I have and from some additional information I have obtained recently, to do justice to the company, which, in my opinion, is rendering so much assistance towards the war effort to-day. During its existence the company has never been charged with a breach of any of the awards applying to its industry; and it is generally conceded that the treatment of its employees and the way in which it pays them, are equal to what obtains in similar industries with more favourable conditions in other parts of the world to-day. Yet this company is able to produce and sell at the prices it does.

Another big advantage that the company gives to the whole of Australia is that its products are sold at the same prices delivered c.i.f. at main ports. In other words, we in Western Australia are able to secure our raw materials at the same prices as those at which they are supplied in any other part of Australia, or, in fact, at the same prices as would be charged to customers if they picked up the products by lorries from the works at Newcastle. That is a highly commendable spirit, especially from our angle, because if it were otherwise this would mean one of the most serious drawbacks we could suffer under in competing with our neighbours in the East—the question of raw materials. We produce so little in the way of raw materials that in connection with almost every contract we are fortunate enough to obtain, we have to rely upon the East for the raw materials, which fact, of course, places us at a serious disadvantage.

Charges of exploitation have from time to time been levelled at the company, which has been criticised in Parliament—not necessarily in this Parliament, but other Parliaments—but in every instance the concern has come through with flying colours. Some hon. members may feel that I am a little out of order in putting up a defence for

the company; but having been associated for so many years with the industries in which the company is particularly interested, and reading as I do from day to day criticisms of the company, I felt I would be justified in offering that explanation to this Chamber.

In times such as we are passing through, one does not feel disposed to offer more criticism than he feels to be fully justified on matters of public interest that may, or may not, have been neglected or mismanaged by the Government of the day. The Address-in-reply debate mostly develops into something of that nature, instead of serving as an opportunity for members to give advice and endeavour to offer constructive suggestions for the benefit of the people as a whole. One thing we are all agreed upon, and that is the putting forward of every possible effort to assist in winning the war. Each and every one of us has a part to play, and whether we are playing it to the advantage of the Empire, our conscience alone can answer. Some are called upon to do spectacular deeds that fill us with pride, awe and even with envy. Others again are working quietly and unobtrusively, yet giving almost their all in helping in some way or other to end this terrible conflict. Thousands in their own way and in their own places are helping to make the lot of our wonderful Fighting Forces more congenial, and bestowing comforts on them both at home and abroad. Others, not so able to help in this direction, are giving or lending in money and kind. It is not for us to criticise the action of this one or that, but each of us should in his own way do everything in his power to end the struggle and return to the days of peace and reorganisation in world affairs that will forever end conflicts of this nature and make for a more even distribution of the world's goods, when all sections of people will be able to live in peace and happiness.

I do not intend to enter upon a tirade concerning what the Government should have done or should not have done, believing that Ministers feel and recognise the great responsibility they carry and the seriousness of the danger that still threatens both our Commonwealth and the Empire. As I said previously, it is my intention to discuss, from the industrial angle, one or two points; and I hope I shall be able to give some information that will be of interest to the

House. Mr. Thomson complained that the Government should have assisted more than it has done in the securing of additional work and more defence contracts for Western Australia. I am only too willing and anxious to give credit when, in my opinion, it is due, and I say this Government has done an excellent job in that direction. I speak from personal knowledge, as I have had the opportunity of paying a visit to the Midland Junction workshops, where I must confess I was agreeably surprised, and even astonished, at some of the wonderful work that is being undertaken there, and the general progress that is in evidence. It has been my good fortune, as I said earlier this evening, to visit from time to time some of the largest and most important factories in the Eastern States; and never in my wildest dreams did I think that we could for many a day undertake some of the work that has been carried out in our own factories here. At the outbreak of the war it was generally accepted that the railway workshops at Midland Junction were the only shops capable of undertaking work of this nature; but now, having been given the opportunity, practically every engineering works and foundry, and even most of the garages, are doing something to implement the provision of munitions and equipment for our armies.

Associated with our Local Board of Area Management, which controls and distributes most of this work, we have several committees which also are giving their time, together with the Board of Area Management—all of them acting in an honorary capacity. I desire to commend most highly the efforts put forward by these bodies, strongly supported by the Government headed by the Premier, who on every possible occasion, when in the Eastern States—and this also applies to every Minister who visits Eastern Australia—does his best to assist in securing additional work for us. It is only by continual worrying and by reversing the general order of things—that is, reversing the old suggestion that the wise men come from the East, and saying that the wise men go to the East—that so much of this work has been secured for the State. It is mostly because of those manufacturers and those leaders in our primary industries who have gone to the fountain-head in Eastern Australia and inter-

viewed the heads of the various departments that have the letting of contracts, who have made this known and put before the Federal departments the position of Western Australia, that we have been able to secure as many contracts as we have in the West. We are gradually breaking down the opposition. That is how South Australia has made such a wonderful advance. To-day that State is taking a lead in the industrial world, and the war effort it is making is something of which to be proud. I had the opportunity recently of spending three days in some of the leading factories in South Australia and at the Islington workshops in Adelaide I saw being manufactured for overseas, some of the finest machinery I have ever seen in my life. Machinery of that type is being produced both at the Islington workshops and in other factories in the Eastern States and is being sent to the East.

Members may be interested to know of some of the work being done in our own State in helping to equip our army. At the outbreak of war it was thought our railway workshops were the only ones with high precision tools and facilities to undertake this kind of work. To-day almost all our factories are doing something. Not only are they manufacturing munitions and equipment, but in many instances they are making their own machine tools. Recently a contract was offered to this State for huge quantities of fuses. We were told that there was not a machine in the State capable of doing the work. The firm to which the contract was offered, said it was not worried about that and that it would manufacture the machine. It did so and patterns have now been taken from that machine and several others of a similar kind are being manufactured. That is only one instance of many that I could cite to indicate that this State is turning out its own machine tools. Unfortunately we are still very short of the necessary tool equipment for more than one munitions annex in Western Australia. I do not propose to refer to my own case, though I could speak feelingly on that subject. But even at Midland Junction, where there have been vast improvements, there is a wonderful annex which cannot go ahead with a large amount of munition work until it is possible to secure tools.

It may be held against me that I have never approved of outside work being done

at those workshops. But times have changed and to-day the position is entirely different from that which obtained when I voiced my criticism. The workshops are now turning out some of the finest triple expansion engines it has ever been my lot to see. They are for use in the ships being built at Whyalla in South Australia, and it is to the credit of this State that we have so successfully manufactured such engines. I noticed a reference in the Press to the fact that a further contract for a similar type of work had been let to this State. Those in control are entitled to our highest praise because all this work is being done in addition to the ordinary activities carried out at the Midland Junction workshops. I could not help feeling a little sorry at the criticism of the Railway Department by Mr. Wood when he was speaking on the Address-in-reply. The Midland Junction workshops are doing a big job apart from the maintenance of their rolling stock and other work necessary to maintain our railways today. As I said earlier in my speech, these are times when we should offer as little criticism as possible, and I shall endeavour during the whole of this session to be kindly disposed to the Government all the time I feel it is doing the best it can in the interests of the State and assisting in equipping our troops and playing its part in winning the war.

Even with all this, our State is not by any means working to its full capacity. The great drawback is the shortage of machine tools and necessary plant. When we secure these, we shall probably double our output in this category. The work I have inspected in our State is equal to that done anywhere else in the Commonwealth. That is a credit not only to those in control but also to the workmen. Why should this State not turn out work equal to that done not only anywhere else in Australia but anywhere in the world? We have the men and, given the facilities, we should be able, as we are doing, to turn out products equal to anything obtainable elsewhere. The pity is that we did not wake up sooner to the fact that we could do these things ourselves. Had we done so, we would have been able to retain the hundreds of skilled tradesmen who, finding in our midst no outlet for their capabilities, migrated to Eastern States factories, with the result that we now have great difficulty in replacing them.

This brings me to the question of employment. With the opportunities now offering, unemployment here should be absolutely nil. Much of our defence work is of a repetitive and unskilled type but at the same time offers a fair margin above the basic wage. That should make it very attractive. In view of the guarantee of reasonable continuity of this defence work, the dole and part-time employment should be things of the past in this State. It is good to see both the State and Federal Governments doing so much to assist the youth of to-day in the way of providing additional facilities for technical training. In this way much is being done to keep the wheels of industry moving. I had intended to dwell on the question of technical training but the subject has been ably handled by Mr. Thomson who, ever since I have known him—which is a very long period—has taken a keen interest in youth employment. Today he must feel—as we all do—gratified to know that there is so much work offering and so many opportunities open to the youth of today; though we are not, of course, happy about the cause. Youth is being better cared for than has been the case for many years, and I can only hope and pray that when the war is over industry will be in such a position as to be able to retain the majority of those now in employment. That is where the industrial development that is taking place is a golden opportunity for this State.

Hon. A. Thomson: Hear, hear!

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: We all realise that when the war is over and our men return, it will be utterly impossible for primary industries to absorb any but a very small proportion of them. This State should continue to develop industrially in order that our returned men and the youths of Western Australia may be placed in employment. There must be more factories in which our youths can be trained, as was mentioned by Mr. Thomson. If the State does not do what it can to secure all possible work for our secondary industries, it will be losing the opportunity of a lifetime. I think members know where I stand regarding technical training and the apprenticeship of youths. I agree with Mr. Thomson's remarks and commend him for the care with which he has studied the question. I sincerely hope the suggestions he has made will be kept in mind by the Government, and

that it will go further by assisting to implement those suggestions. I am not in any way criticising the Government, which is doing an excellent job. In reply to a question asked by Mr. Thomson, I think it was stated that £104,000 had been spent on technical education, or on buildings for technical education. I would not mind if that amount were doubled and it were possible by some means or other to extend that training to country districts, as requested by Mr. Thomson, in order that country youths might have the same opportunities as those available in the city. Such a move would have my support. I agree with him that country youths are entitled to be trained just as much as are lads in the city. In the past it has been very difficult to place all but a small proportion. Today the position is entirely different, and every youth should be given an opportunity to learn something that will stand him in good stead in the years to come. I commend Mr. Thomson for the able way in which he handled the subject.

Unfortunately, those of us who are associated with industry in this State are still feeling the lack of trained artisans, which is due to the depression period, when so few apprentices were given an opportunity to become skilled tradesmen. I cannot help reminding the House that on every possible occasion I have stressed the importance of apprenticeship and the need for additional technical training. I also agree with Mr. Thomson that the school age should be extended. I have previously expressed that opinion and have also said, and repeat now, that the additional time at school should be devoted to technical training. As a large employer of labour, I express again the opinion that any employer requiring an apprentice or a junior worker in his factory, will always select the lad with some technical training. The opportunity boys receive in attending a technical school gives them a chance of selecting the type of trade they desire to learn. To put a lad on watchmaking when he wants to be a blacksmith is useless, and the additional 12 months schooling I advocate should be spent mostly in technical schools in order that the boys may have a fair start. Another advantage is that the elementary training they would secure at the technical schools would be of greater assistance to them when they entered their apprenticeship and would enable them to become tradesmen much quicker than otherwise.

I wish to express my gratification, from the employer's angle—and I am sure every member of this House agrees with me—that we have been able to maintain industrial peace in this State. Members will join in the fervent hope that this will continue. I doubt whether there is one morning when we do not read of a strike, a threat of a strike or a stoppage of work in some of the Eastern States' factories. To know that such harmony exists between employers and employees here is very gratifying indeed. Mr. Thomson referred to an agreement recently entered into between the Metal Trades Union and the employers. That agreement was undoubtedly a triumph for both sides. No fewer than 18 conferences were held, 17 of which I had the pleasure of attending. To attend them was a pleasure in view of the satisfactory outcome. The agreement resulted in placing munition works—those in operation and those about to commence—practically on a level as regards junior labourers, apprentices and overtime conditions, with factories in the Eastern States. The point has been stressed from time to time in another place, by me here and by the business community, that in order to compete with the Eastern States we must have as nearly as possible equality of working conditions. To-day we are getting very close to securing that equality. It is a great achievement for the Metal Trades Union that we should be placed on a level with the conditions in Eastern States factories. Members will appreciate how much better are the relations between employers and employees after reaching an agreement by conference instead of going to the Arbitration Court and contesting every point regardless of whether it is in dispute.

The value of this agreement was brought home to me recently when in South Australia I inspected a munition annex that was working three shifts and manufacturing approximately 10,000 bombs a week. I saw a hundred junior workers engaged in the factory. Practically no skill, such as machining or tool-setting, was required of them; this work was performed by skilled tradesmen who numbered probably 12 to 20. The lads were working like clock work; they were happy and contented and were earning good money, which was much better for them than walking the streets. This could be done in our munition factories in future. I do not desire to be misunderstood. I am not advocating the em-

ployment of junior labour exclusively, but the agreement provides that, subject to approval by both parties, sufficient junior labour to do the work required will be permitted. If there are skilled tradesmen who are able to teach the apprentices, we shall be able to apprentice one lad to each skilled worker. Previously the proportion was one apprentice to two tradesmen or one to three.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is a decided advantage.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Yes, not only to the employer but also to the employee. Much to the delight of Mr. Thomson, many more youths will be able to learn a useful trade that will stand them in good stead when the war is over. My Labour friends, as well as other members, will agree that I have no desire to see a reduction in the standard of living. However, it is gratifying to find that so many youths have thus been enabled to obtain employment.

I should like to pay a tribute to the Department of Industry guided by its enthusiastic Minister and its practical director. The department is doing an excellent job. I keep in fairly close touch with it as an active member of the Chamber of Manufacturers, and I know it is rendering much assistance by giving practical advice to many of the smaller factories in and around the city. Mr. Fernie is a practical engineer who knows his job. I have had an opportunity to judge what he is doing, and his work is excellent. The Government is wise in affording assistance to industries already established here. When the Minister went to the Eastern States some time ago I think he was satisfied that it would be difficult to establish many new industries here. But he can and does assist existing industries, and is thus doing excellent work for the State. From what I have seen of Australia's war effort generally in the last few weeks, notwithstanding the criticism that at times I have had to offer, notwithstanding the shortcomings noticeable here and there, I say advisedly that it is little short of amazing.

Hon. W. J. Mann: It is amazing.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: When I went through the Maribyrnong munition factory, Victoria, in September, 1939, there were about 600 employees. To-day there are over 4,000 and some of the work being

turned out is excellent. Most members have read of what is being done, and if I read a paragraph from to-night's "Daily News," it will bring home to all what the Australian workmen and those in control are doing for the equipment of our troops and the defence of Australia. We have been told within the last week or 10 days by the Minister controlling air production that before the 1st October, Australia will have produced its two-thousandth plane. Members must have felt proud on reading the paragraph in the "Daily News" as follows—

Speedy Australian Bomber.

Melbourne, Tuesday. Three and a half hours after leaving Melbourne the Aircraft Production Commission's experimental Bristol Beaufort torpedo bomber landed at Brisbane, averaging 257 miles an hour and breaking all Australian records.

Do we need anything better to convince us of the wonderful effort Australia is making to defend our territory and properly equip the armies that are fighting for our existence?

There are one or two other points on which I wish to touch briefly. One is the traffic question. At the opening of Parliament I questioned the Minister about the Government's intentions regarding gas producer plants. Although the Chief Secretary's reply was hardly what I expected, the statement made by the Minister for Works was satisfactory. I congratulate the Government upon having acceded to the requests of the people using gas producers on their vehicles. The Industries Department has been very helpful to the industry, and I know of many instances in which assistance in various directions has been willingly given.

A word now about the Tourist Bureau. Here the State has a marvellous opportunity. Hundreds of youths from the Near East are being sent to this State to be educated. They are making early friendships, and members will agree that friendships made during school days are life-lasting. To have so many of these lads sent here for their schooling should open up wonderful advantages to the State. Every facility is being offered by the Tourist Bureau, and I commend the Government for doing everything in its power to ensure that these visitors have a happy and comfortable time during their sojourn

and are enabled to see the beauties of, and facilities offered by, the State.

I conclude with a reference that might not be very popular with most members, something I advocated long before I entered Parliament, something on which I have spoken whenever an opportunity has presented itself, namely, a reduction of the number of members of Parliament. Almost every day we hear something, not of what members are doing, but mostly of what they are not doing.

Hon. G. Fraser: By someone who does not know!

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I agree, mostly by someone who does not know. To-day seems to me to be the time when a reduction in numbers might be considered by the Government. The man in the street tells us that he is over-governed, that there are too many laws, and too many law-makers. I agree that if the numbers of another place and the numbers in this House were reduced by at least one-third, we would get results that would be equal to if not better than those achieved to-day.

Hon. H. Seddon: Which third?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I am not fussy.

Hon. G. Fraser: You go out next year, do you not?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I stand for election next year. If the other nine members who are similarly placed are prepared not to nominate again, and no one else nominates for those provinces, I will make one of the number. That principle has been near to my heart for a long time, long before I entered politics. I trust the day will come when it will be possible to reduce the cost of our Parliaments. I support the motion.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.17]: I congratulate Mr. Fraser upon his decision to join the Royal Australian Air Force. I am sure his experience in the postal department will be most useful when applied to the service he is about to join. Like other members, I wish him a speedy and safe return. On opening day, I was pleased to notice that Mr. Parker was in his seat after his recent experiences. I hope, if it falls to his lot again to visit one of the theatres of war, his experiences will not be any worse than those through which he recently passed.

I fully endorse the sentiments of His Excellency, as expressed in the Speech, when he said that the bravery of our men in the Army, Navy and Air Force filled us all with a sense of profound gratitude. I would go further and say that not only do those three branches of the service deserve our undying gratitude, but that also the Army Medical Corps, the doctors, the nurses, the stretcher bearer and all the fellows connected with that service, put us under a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid. When the history of Crete comes to be written, I am sure those men and women will go down in the memory of people of the British Empire as heroes and heroines.

The Government is to be congratulated on having achieved its first credit balance. I hope that will be the forerunner of many surpluses. The Speech goes on to congratulate the Railway Department on its having secured contracts for the manufacture of munitions. In common with Mr. Bolton, I recently had an opportunity to visit the Midland Junction workshops, and was pleasantly surprised to see the marvellous development that has taken place there. Two years had elapsed since my previous visit, and I found the development astounding. The quality and the quantity of the munitions being turned out in the old portion of the workshops are truly amazing. The new annex which is now completed and is being tooled up, will, when finished, stand comparison with workshops anywhere in Australia. The machine tools now being manufactured by the department for installation in the new annex are a credit to the Commissioner, the chief mechanical engineer and the whole of the staff. I am sure that when all is finished there, a great service will be rendered in the development of our munitions industry. The progress of secondary industries in Western Australia generally comprises a not very inspiring story. I feel that that is due largely to the lack of initiative on the part of the Government, to lack of foresight and also to the lack of courage. Recently I visited Adelaide, and when in that city found development that was hardly believable. That development has taken place mostly since the beginning of the war, and has largely been brought about by the courage and foresight of a progressive Government, which was not afraid to purchase

machine tools, to manufacture such tools, and to build its annex when the war started, and not, as in Western Australia, some 12 months afterwards. Besides equipping its workshops, the South Australian Government encouraged private enterprise to found its own factories and establish them in Adelaide and suburbs. It provided cheap sites, cheap electricity, cheap water, and I believe went so far as to make taxation concessions.

From Press reports, we learn that Queensland and South Australia are showing Western Australia the way in industrial development. Their activities in shipbuilding provide clear evidence of this. The blame that no ships have up to date been built in Western Australia I think can be laid largely at the door of the Administration. I ask the Government what better natural conditions Queensland and South Australia enjoy compared with Western Australia in the matter of shipbuilding. The answer is that they enjoy none, except that the Governments of those two States have been more progressive and have had a longer vision than has the Government of this State. What has this Government done to establish the iron and steel industry here?

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Nothing at all.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: It has done something. It established a panel to examine the possibilities of manufacturing iron and steel products in this State. That panel indicated to the Government that this State possessed some natural advantages, in that it had some particular types of high-grade ore that were peculiarly suited to the manufacture of tin plates. Although the information was announced to the Government about five months ago, so far as I can ascertain, nothing has yet been done. We in Western Australia rail, moan and groan and fuss about the Commonwealth Government, and its neglect, when half the time a good many of our troubles are of our own making, and due to our own neglect of opportunity.

The Government is to be congratulated on a pronouncement in regard to the easing of licensing fees so that it could meet the situation created by petrol restrictions. I agree with Mr. Wood that it is a matter for regret that the announcement was not made earlier. I should like to see the Government suggest to the Federal authorities

that the distribution of charcoal should be the prerogative of petrol service stations, which have been so hard hit by the petrol restrictions, and are struggling to keep their doors open. If the suggestion is made by the Government, it might meet with a ready response from the Federal authorities.

Hon. L. Craig: They can distribute it now if they want to.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I was referring to their having the exclusive right.

The Chief Secretary: Another monopoly!

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: The next item in the Speech refers to agriculture. I hope those engaged in the agricultural and pastoral industries will soon find an improvement in their conditions. I query whether the plan as set out by Mr. Wood and further advocated by Mr. Thomson, is the right one. I am satisfied that after the war—please God the end will come soon—many centres of population will be on the verge of starvation.

Hon. G. B. Wood: There will be a surplus of many millions of bushels.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I know the surplus will be a large one.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: How much of that wheat will be eaten by weevils?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Not as much as some people would lead us to believe. In the main, weevils only work around the edge of the wheat, and do not penetrate far into it. Many large centres of population will be on the brink of starvation and desperately in need of our surplus wheat. Some effort will have to be made to provide credits for the needs of those starving countries. When the time comes, after the war, I think there will be an excellent market for our surplus wheat. Any discussion on that matter in this Chamber is only academic and not very practicable. I believe that the committees and conferences that are dealing with the matter in this and other countries, will eventually find a solution for the stabilisation of wheat. I agree with Mr. Wood that the sooner our farmers are advised regarding their future activities, the sooner will they become a contented community.

The Speech ambles aimlessly along on the subjects of mining, timber, employment, and then reaches a passage dealing with railways and tramways. At this point I wish particularly to refer to passenger transportation in the Metropolitan-Suburban

Province, of which I have the honour to be one of the representatives in this House. Last year I asked the Government whether it would consider removing the passenger-carrying restrictions on Stirling-highway, but the answer was a most emphatic negative. Unfortunately I fell ill at the time, and during my absence one of my colleagues asked a series of questions for me on the subject. I was not, however, able to follow up the matter. During the last month or so, I spent seven or eight mornings on the Stirling-highway at various bus stopping places. As a result of these investigations I found that privately-owned transport vehicles had little or no accommodation available at the peak hour of the morning.

Hon. G. Fraser: And they have less now.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I am speaking of last month. I agree that if passenger-carrying restrictions are lifted, any help we could get in the direction of delivering the people from their place of residence to their place of business would be of great assistance. There is only one way in which to remedy the position and that is to provide more vehicles. I should say that if the Government cannot provide them—we know it cannot do so and has had trolley buses on order for quite two years and is not likely to receive them until after the war—let us lift these passenger restrictions so as to enable private operators to purchase vehicles and put them on the road.

The Chief Secretary: Could it get them?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Only yesterday I was speaking to the proprietor of a bus service which, fortunately for him, does not travel along the same route as Government-owned vehicles. He assured me that he had two vehicles on order and that these were actually on the water on their way from England and America. The bodies are being built locally in anticipation of the arrival of the chassis. If that person is able to import two chassis, he can import four or six, or any number. There are other reasons why people ought to be able to avail themselves of transport facilities that are at present denied them. For instance, the people living in West Perth and Subiaco must, if they wish to visit parts of Nedlands, Hollywood or the eastern end of Claremont, either take a vehicle into the city and pick up a trolley bus there, or make their way to Hay-street and proceed by the tortuous

Subiaco route to the corner of Stirling Highway and Broadway, and pick up a trolley bus at that point. Either of these routes involves travelling for the better part of an hour; whereas if the people could pick up a vehicle in King's Park-road, they would reach their destination in 15 to 20 minutes.

Hon. V. Hamersley: That is too fast!

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Public works are dealt with at some length. We certainly must be grateful to the Government for having constructed the Canning Dam, because that has obviated a situation that might have developed along the lines of the water restrictions now taking place in New South Wales. The Canning Dam has certainly put the metropolitan area and the goldfields beyond the possibility of such water restrictions even in years of drought.

Reference is also made in the Speech to the Perth Hospital. That reminds me of an anomaly with regard to the employment of nurses in some of the hospitals in the metropolitan area, and I would like to see the position corrected. After nurses have completed three years' training at the Children's Hospital they must, before they can be certificated, take a further six months' course of adult nursing at any public hospital. Previously, this did not present any difficulty at all; but I understand that recently an award has been made which compels the Perth Hospital, should it employ such trainees, to pay them the salary payable to a "C" class sister. Again, Children's Hospital trainees employed at large country hospitals must be paid the same wages as are received by a "B" class sister. Therefore, during the period of six months during which they are completing their training, these sisters must be paid a salary one grade less than a ward sister receives. Naturally, the Health Department is not prepared to pay this salary to a trainee while it can obtain the services of a fully qualified and widely experienced sister for the same amount. The trainees are not concerned in the salary grab; what they desire is to proceed with their training, but to-day they are at a dead end because of this anomaly. Children's Hospital trainees are no longer absorbed by the public hospitals as was so before this award was made. At the end of three years' training they find themselves unable to be registered as trained nurses, for the reason that they cannot com-

plete their training to qualify for that registration. Consequently they are unable to earn their living at work in which they have been trained for three strenuous years. Today nurses can be found in Perth who have passed their examinations creditably at the Children's Hospital, but are still looking for work. Some of them, in desperation, have gone to the Eastern States to complete their training. This position should not be tolerated, and I appeal to the Government to see that it is changed.

The Chief Secretary: Do you want the Government to alter the award?

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: No. I suggest that a conference be called between the parties concerned with a view to overcoming the difficulty. It is a great pity that nurses, after having spent three years in training, should be unable to obtain their certificates because they cannot get the opportunity to obtain an additional six months' training. The present situation must be altered. Either the hospital authorities must pay the nurses the award rate, or the award must be altered to meet the situation.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: They can never get a complete training.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: No. They must go into the cold, hard, brutal world, and earn their living by other means.

The Chief Secretary: They have an Arbitration Court award.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: That is so, but it has created an impossible position.

The Chief Secretary: My recollection is that the hon. member objected strongly to what he said was interference with the Arbitration Court.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I have no desire to interfere with the Arbitration Court; but surely there is a means by which the position can be altered as the result of a conference between the parties. It is wrong that these nurses should be prevented from completing their training.

The Speech drags on to a miserable climax and very casually and briefly deals with legislation. A few items of legislation are foreshadowed and finally the Speech commits members to the care of a merciful Providence. In spite of the meagre information about the proposed legislation, I feel sure that all members of this Chamber are willing and anxious to help the Government in its legislative programme during this trying

year, provided that that legislation is not of a contentious nature. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [8.38]: Unworthy though I be, I desire my first words on this debate—which gives members the right, I understand, to travel from Dan to Beersheba, as it were—to be an expression of my deep gratitude to our fellow Australians, both men and women, who have gone overseas to fight the ruthless enemy attacking our civilisation. But no words of mine can adequately express our feelings towards those brave men and women. It is not by words that we should express our gratitude; something more than words is necessary.

I shall ask members to be patient with me to-night while I try to give them some views that I hold which affect not only Western Australia, but also the Commonwealth, and which I hope will enable us to play our part in the great international conflict in which we are engaged. To-night I have heard it said that we should not indulge in criticism. I am pleased the previous speaker either did not hear what was said or did not choose to take the slightest notice of the advice given to him by the member sitting next to him. They have both left the Chamber now. If we rank and file members cannot indulge in a little criticism, what on earth are we to do? The same hon. member said he thought that the number of members of Parliament could be reduced by one-third. If we cannot offer any criticism—nothing personal—then I say we have no right to be in this Chamber. I can say, "It gives me great pleasure to say this or that," but what we should do is to say things which do not give us pleasure, but which we feel it our duty to say. It is because we have lacked the courage necessary to say unpleasant things that we occupy the unfortunate position we find ourselves in to-day, economically and otherwise. I have been told by one member that if I spoke till 10 o'clock he would go on till midnight. Possibly we can finish the debate to-night and perhaps adjourn for a few weeks' holiday.

I propose to deal with the primary producer, but not at great length. As has been often said by many people, both in and out of this Chamber, primary indus-

tries are the foundation of our economic system. The producer sells his products in the free and open markets of the world. He raises them under one of the most highly protective tariffs in the world. How can we expect, while this state of lunacy exists, that Western Australia will be faced with anything but the economic position in which we find it? We cannot blame the war. Further, the producer must put up with hardships and isolation in the raising of his products. He is subject to the elements, which Man so far has not learned to master. He has no guarantee of wages. What other section of the community is excluded from the enjoyment of a guaranteed wage?

Hon. L. Craig: What about the farm labourer?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am including him. The hon. member surprises me! Recently I asked a question about marginal areas and was informed they were being dealt with. They are, however, being dealt with too slowly. Many farmers are anxiously awaiting finality regarding their position. I draw attention to another item which was mentioned by Mr. Cornell. He informed members that arrangements have been made whereby every civil servant of this State who draws a salary up to £699 per annum shares in the increases of the basic wage. If ever there was an injustice inflicted upon a docile people, that is one. If that information were circulated throughout the length and breadth of the State, I consider we would have an agitation for the abolition of Parliament.

The Chief Secretary: It was done by Act of Parliament.

Hon. G. Fraser: Which the hon. member assisted to pass.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I did not. The hon. member is speaking from memory. Someone new to the State whose opinion is worth having because he happens to occupy the position of Vice-Chancellor of the University of Western Australia, although he has not been in the State very long, has recently taken up the cudgels on behalf of the primary producers. He said—

That farming was a depressed industry; that equality of opportunity was a cardinal principle in democratic countries, but that farmers did not enjoy that equality with urban dwellers; and that farmers were an under-

privileged class and that in an under-privileged community there was a danger of "poor white trash" developing as in America.

Yet certain members of this Chamber who have endeavoured to secure legislative relief for the primary producers, have been harshly criticised. We have heard some talk about the sanctity of contracts. References have been made to a very fine report by that very fine officer, the Surveyor-General, Mr. Fyfe. I refer to the report he submitted, as a Royal Commissioner, upon the pastoral industry. It was my good fortune to travel with Mr. Fyfe some time back and I had an opportunity personally to appreciate his gentlemanly attitude and his tactful handling of men who, over a period of years, have suffered injustices and hardships. I know just the type of man the Government has at its disposal in its Surveyor-General. Realising, as I do, the many difficulties that confront the Government at present, I nevertheless hope that every effort will be made to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Only last week, when passing down St. George's-terrace, I met a pastoralist whose location is north of Meekatharra. Twelve months ago he visited me in my home at Geraldton and asked if I could tell him what was to be done regarding the report of the Royal Commission. I said I could not tell him. He is a young married man with a family who voluntarily, not with the help of the State, went north and took up a pastoral holding. He told me he would wait for a while but if nothing was done he would have to enlist. When I saw that man in the Terrace he was in uniform as a private. When the State loses men of that type, it must cause us to think. It is time the Government did its utmost to give effect to the recommendations of Mr. Fyfe. I know the Government is sincere in its desire to help the industry but I must emphasise that the problem is not one affecting the pastoralists of the North-West only. It concerns those operating in the Murchison as well. Rain that fell in the North-West missed parts of the Murchison.

As my province extends to Wiluna and beyond, I would not be doing my duty to my constituents if I did not refer to the goldmining industry, seeing that we have some fine mines in the Murchison district. With all due respect to those who think otherwise—I belong to a party that permits

its members a great deal of independence of thought and were it otherwise I could not remain in the party—I cannot understand how the Federal Government could contemplate, let alone impose, a tax on the production of gold. Let the Government tax profits if it likes, but where is the sense in imposing a levy on the production of an article that is hard and expensive to mine and the production of which means so much to Western Australia in particular and to Australia in general? I note that Mr. Dimmitt and Mr. Bolton have now returned to the Chamber. Mr. Dimmitt said some rather hard things tonight, and I wished to interject. Remembering, however, your frequent admonitions, Mr. President, I kept quiet. He said that in many cases it was our own fault.

Hon. G. B. Wood: What was our own fault?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: He said we blamed the Federal Government for this and for that, whereas it was really our own fault. Mr. Dimmitt may have had something in mind when he made that remark, but here I have something that tends to prove his statement. One of the oldest members of this Chamber who is held in the highest esteem, but who does not very often give us the benefit of his ripe experience, is Mr. Drew. He knows better than I do what the position really is, because he is older and has himself lived in Northampton. Members would take more notice of his remarks than they do of mine. He could tell them of the mining situation there. One of the professional officers of the Mines Department has reported that in the Northampton district lead and copper are to be found. Many of the younger members of this Chamber, as well as people outside, claim that the mines are lead propositions. Before they were born, copper was being produced at Northampton! Yet consider what South Australia is doing. In the "West Australian" of the 27th June last the following appeared—

A telegram from Adelaide states that requests for an advance of £50,000 to start copper production in the Wallaroo district and for a pegged price of £90 a ton for refined copper, a rise of £3 10s. on the present level, has been made to the Federal Government by the Leader of the South Australian Opposition, Mr. Richards.

So the Leader of the Opposition in South Australia is taking a hand in this matter.

I must pass this on to the Leader of the Opposition here.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: He belongs to your Party.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: What a wonderful interjection! Call the hon. member to order, Mr. President, or I shall have something nasty to say. It is the duty of members of Parliament holding the positions I have indicated, to take steps along the lines I have set out.

Hon. G. Fraser: The Leader of the Opposition in South Australia is a Labour man.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Wonderful! I have written to the Mines Department and to the Press.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You do a lot of that.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: And I sign my name to anything I write! We should see to it that the copper mines in the Northampton district are worked, and, with a little assistance from the Government, it could be done. The copper is there. The present State Mining Engineer (Mr. Wilson) has reported on the mining prospects in the district, and yet nothing has been accomplished. Here is an extract from a letter that I received this morning asking me to get something done—

I notice by the "West Australian" that Parliament is called together once again. I would like to draw your notice to one of the most urgent wants of the district, that is a mill to treat our ores. We have thousands of tons of copper, lead and zinc ores waiting for a mill. What is required is a mill. We have heard spirited defences of the largest industrial organisation in Australia. I do not know, however, that the Broken Hill Proprietary Company is larger or more wealthy than is the Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

Hon. H. Seddon: Yes, it is.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: One member said it made his blood boil when he heard criticism of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, and he spoke as though he really meant what he said! I can tell him of something that should have made his blood boil years ago. It does not concern a wealthy concern like the Broken Hill Proprietary Company. It has made my blood boil on many occasions. I have in mind something that we might have had the benefit of, had we a Broken Hill Proprietary Company in this State. When I have read one particular newspaper published in Australia, one that has been referred to as a "scur-

rilous rag," I have noted some references to the Broken Hill Proprietary in that journal—I refer to "Smith's Weekly." Both that paper and the Sydney "Bulletin" have praised that organisation. It is easy to be pleasant when life goes with a song and all is roseate in hue. It is pleasant when you are on the side of the big shots, but it is a little bit different when the concern in question is small and struggling. If the Broken Hill Proprietary Company has done all that the papers I mention have claimed for it—Mr. Seddon said much to the same effect the other night—then I say it is deserving of that praise. But is it not a pity that this great country of Australia should leave it to one firm to so establish itself as practically to hold the nation in its hands?

Hon. L. B. Bolton: No one else had the enterprise to do what the company has effected.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I do not care what political colour may attach to the Government, but I think it is a pity that the Broken Hill Proprietary Company has been able to establish itself in such a strong position. Had it not done so, someone else would have taken up the work and, in fact, we might have had other companies sharing the task. Here is a letter dated the 7th March addressed to me with regard to what has been happening concerning the lead and copper mines in the Northampton district. Here is still another from a man in the same area telling me of action that is being taken. Dealing with the development of our industries the "West Australian" of the 26th June reported—

About £1,500,000 would be spent on plant and equipment to establish the ingot aluminium industry, Senator MacBride said.

Thus, apparently, we are being outdistanced by the big concerns in the Eastern States. If we have the raw materials here, surely the State Government would be justified in asking the Federal Government for financial assistance to enable us to work our deposits. If Mr. Cornell were present, I would have been reminded long ago that copper occurs in the Ravensthorpe district. I know that the deposit at Northampton is not the only one in the State. For all I know, the Government may have taken this matter in hand. The Premier himself represents a constituency that includes Northampton and Galena, where these copper deposits also

occur. Mr. Willcock has the interests of the State at heart and no doubt he has made representations about this matter.

Next as to education! The Speech briefly tells us that the State is spending a lot of money on education; and so it is. I have it, however, on the best of authority that the old adage is very apposite just here—we are spoiling the ship for a ha'porth of tar. I mean that we cannot expect the results, which we have a right to anticipate, from our very enthusiastic, very worthy, and well-paid teachers, simply because in many of our schools the classes are too large. We have the Minister for Education in this Chamber, and I notice that the hon. gentleman, when some remarks were being made earlier, sat up and took notice. Here is another thing. The Minister finds it difficult to get things done because it is all a question of this wretched money. But the Federal Government has to find money for the war, as we are continually being reminded. We are told that if we want the results from democracy that we have a right to expect, we must have an informed and educated democracy. Therefore I say that, great as the cost may be, we should reduce these classes and give the teachers a chance to deal with the kind of pupil that we want attended to—not the smart, brainy pupil who will go along on his or her own, but the backward child. That is the child we want educated, and the teacher has no chance, with fifty children in his class, to give special attention to the backward child. Here and now—in case I should be charged with being unfair, which is my last wish—I want to pay a tribute to the male teachers of the Education Department who have volunteered for active service. I understand that some 25 per cent, or 250 of the male teachers of the department, have gone on active service—but with what result? The Education Department is like many of the others of our departments; so we must be careful to remember that there is a war on and that many staffs are greatly reduced.

It is not often that we hear a woman quoted in this Chamber. To-night I wish to quote a lady who happens to be the president of the women's section of the Primary Producers Association on the highly important subject of education as it affects our country children. She is Mrs. H. G. Hamersley. I do not know the lady, but all the Hamersleys are related to each other, and are good stock,

and I suppose she is some relative of our worthy colleague. Mrs. Hamersley expressed herself as follows:—

There is also the matter of education in the country. If the present Government wants to know what is wrong with it, it has only to study the report of its own select committee. Every word of it remains as true as the day it was written, and not a single recommendation seems to have been followed. Every Western Australian must feel ashamed at the woefully inadequate facilities provided by the State for the education of children in the country. In general, the buildings are either too small or too dilapidated, or there is no shelter provided; the accommodation for the teachers is poor; the equipment is deficient or non-existent. Often even the primary necessities of water and firewood are insufficient. When you add to this the ridiculously small number of scholarships available to country children, and the difficulty of getting secondary education for any but the more brilliant students, you wonder if it is not the policy of the Government to turn the next generation of our primary producers into an ignorant peasantry. If this situation is not relieved, how are we to keep our people on the land? For how many of those who have recently left the land has the thought of the children's education been the determining factor? This question has always been one of serious moment to our association, and we will not rest until the position has been improved.

I am glad to quote those words, because they are the words of a woman speaking about something of which she has personal knowledge.

There is a subject concerning which a select committee was moved for in another place, but I do not offer any apology for enlarging on the excellent remarks bearing on the same subject made by Mr. Thomson to-night. I shall not labour the matter, which is a favourite one with that hon. member. I have referred to it previously. It is the technical education of our young people. Reference was made to an agreement to-night, and some bouquets were thrown about. I am not too sure, but I have it from the management of a large motor garage in Geraldton, that the agreement in question applies only to the metropolitan area. Mr. Thomson cannot have known that fact, or he would not have been so enthusiastic about the agreement.

People sometimes say, "It makes my blood boil." I do not like to use the expression, though I will say that it makes my blood boil to witness the disgraceful manner in which we, as decent citizens, are treating a minority of people in this State. I refer to the aborigines, and more particularly those

who are brought into being by the frailty of some of our white brothers. It is a disgraceful state of affairs. The half-caste question has not been so evident in my district or even in the Murrhison district, as it is along the Great Southern railway. Each man speaks for himself here, and I declare that the extent to which half-castes are increasing around the town of Geraldton is, to me, nothing short of alarming. If I could only get the Government to realise how terrible is the state of affairs! We are fighting for the Empire and for minorities, but we have a depressed minority here in this State. I am aware that many men know much more about the matter than I do and they tell me that I can do nothing, that the half-castes are "a good-for-nothing crowd." I do not believe it. Let many of us be placed in the environment and surroundings in which many of these half-caste children are reared, and where would we be? I shall not say any more about the subject, but it makes my blood boil. It is something we should all feel it our duty to remedy. We cannot pass the matter over. The Chief Secretary was formerly the Minister controlling the Aborigines Department and he knows much more about the subject than I do. The full-blooded black is solving the problem; he is fast dying out. But the half-caste is increasing. Do not let us run away with the idea that half-castes are only the children of whites and natives. Half-castes marry half-castes. I know of three half-caste families within two miles of Geraldton who have 20 children. Half-castes are increasing fast. I do not desire that they should be banished to the bush, although I think that is where they should go. The idea of sending them to work for farmers makes me cross. A half-caste young man, to be of any use to a farmer, needs training, as does a girl for work in the home. Neither half-caste girls nor boys are receiving this training. They are attending school and receiving instruction in reading and writing. Even the churches are awake to the position. In the "West Australian" of the 31st January, 1941, appeared the following:—

Aborigines' Sunday: To bring before churchgoers the needs and claims of the aborigines, the National Missionary Council of Australia has invited clergymen throughout Australia to make special references next Sunday to native welfare. The date has been chosen because of its proximity to Australia Day. The council, which represents 15 missionary bodies, desires to gain intelligent sympathy and practical help

for native people, and it is proposed to make Aborigines' Sunday an annual event. The council states that though much progress has been made in regard to the aboriginal problem, public opinion must be strengthened if further advances are to be made.

It should not require an "Aborigines' Sunday" to bring under the notice of churchgoers the claims of the aborigines. Something more than that is needed to awaken our people to a sense of their duty to the natives. I received a letter, dated the 27th February, 1941, from the secretary of the Meekatharra Road Board, in which he said—

I have been directed by my board to seek your valuable assistance in the matter of more efficient segregation of half-castes and natives as far as townships on the Murchison are concerned and the township of Meekatharra in particular.

I shall not trouble to read to members the other matters of which the board complained.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Cannot you give us some recommendations about these complaints?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I thank the hon. member. I was overlooking that point. I understand there has been established recently at Carrollup a native reserve.

The Chief Secretary: A native settlement.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have not visited it. There is no such settlement in the Central Province, but I put it to the people there to try to get one. I was invited to attend a function at the New Norcia settlement; the Minister did not invite me, but I got the invitation. A few days afterwards it was discovered that New Norcia was not in the Central Province, so my invitation was cancelled. The suggestion I make, thanks to Mr. Heenan, is that we should have more training centres for the natives and half-castes where they can be taught to be of some use, instead of being allowed to grow up untrained. I do not suppose they are worse in my town than elsewhere, but on Saturday morning I saw some of them wandering into a starting-price betting shop. I wonder if members have ever taken enough interest to ascertain the rations that are allowed to natives? I shall now give the particulars and members will then be unable to plead ignorance. The rations for a father and mother (the man aged 32 and his wife 26) and five children are—

Flour	....	....	....	10 lbs. each.
Sugar	....	....	....	13 lbs. each.
Tea	....	....	....	4 ounces each.
Baking powder	....	....	....	1 tin.

One boy is aged seven years, another six, one three, and a girl four, the baby being six months old. The rations for these are as follows:—

Flour	....	....	....	5 lbs.
Sugar	....	....	....	4 lb.
Tea	....	....	....	2 ozs.
Sago	....	....	....	2 lbs.
Milk	....	....	....	2 tins

} for baby.

I have here a printed list of the rations, which was issued in the days when tobacco was also supplied. The rations are quite inadequate. Some of these children are attending school with white children, and some superior people say, "These white people are turning their noses up at native children sitting alongside their children." But are members aware of the trouble that some mothers take over children attending school? They do not wish their children to pick up certain things from these natives and half-castes. There is no need to enlarge on that subject.

I now come to the case for the forgotten child. There was one occasion, and only one occasion that I can remember, when all the churches got together—as in the time when the Founder of Christianity said, "A little child shall lead them"—to urge the Government to increase the meagre and inadequate allowance made for State children, namely 7s. per head per week. This is what the Archbishop of Perth (Dr. Prendiville) said when speaking at Castledare Junior Orphanage on the 27th July, as reported in the "West Australian" of the 29th July—

Last year representatives of all churches controlling institutions caring for State wards had decided, in conference, that they would ask the Government to increase the allowance to 10s. a week for each State ward for the duration of the war. This request was surely reasonable, all the more so because of the ever-increasing cost of living due to war conditions. There had been indications that the Government was sympathetic, for according to a Press report of December 5 last year, the Legislative Assembly had agreed to a motion that the Government should consider increasing the allowance made to the institutions for the care and maintenance of State wards. There was, it was reported, no dissentient voice when the motion was put. That was nearly eight months ago, and nothing had yet been done.

Further comment was unnecessary. He sincerely hoped that something would be done in the very near future to redress this legitimate grievance.

People talk about a brave new world and a new order, but we want something more than talk. We want action. Actions speak louder than words. I quote another instance.

The son of a woman, who was drawing the invalid pension, enlisted. When she got her allowance from the Military Department, instead of receiving 3s. per day she was paid 1s. 6d. She has asked me to take the matter up with the military authorities. Members will recall having read in the Press that the old age pension of the parent of a son who had enlisted would not be interfered with, but there are more ways than one of interfering with a pension. Evidently the military allowance is dealt with. That is not a very creditable state of affairs. As I reminded Mr. Wood when he was speaking the other evening, this is a Commonwealth matter. I reminded him of that for a certain purpose. We should be able to mention these things here, and if they are worthy of being brought before the Federal Government by the State authorities, that should be done. This is nothing more or less than a miserable evasion. It is wrong that a parent in receipt of the invalid pension should receive only half the ordinary military allowance.

Hon. G. Fraser: What allowance is made to the mother by her son?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Three shillings.

The Chief Secretary: Would it not be better to get the whole facts of the case?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have this note—

Mother invalid pensioner. Son enlists, Pension not affected but Defence Dept. make inquiries into financial position of dependant and find she is receiving old age or invalid pension and instead of making a payment of 3s. per day, only pay 1s. 6d.

That does not apply just to this one person; it applies generally.

The Chief Secretary: On the face of it, that seems like an interference with the soldier's allowance.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I want the Chief Secretary to realise the difference between the allotment that a soldier makes and the amount paid by the department. One is an allotment made by the soldier to a dependant and the other is a separation allowance guaranteed by the Government to every parent or dependant. This lady complained to me that she had been kept waiting for a long time. When I inquired the reason for the delay, I was informed that certain inquiries had to be made into the financial standing of the person concerned. When these were made and it was found she received the invalid pension, her allowance was reduced.

I think something should be done about it.

This leads me to make certain comparisons, and comparisons are said to be odious. Civil servants when enlisting are entitled to any long-service leave accruing to them. They do not forfeit that, but are entitled to it when they return from active service. However, they are not paid salaries by the State. They receive their pay from the military authorities. Before I draw attention to a certain anomaly, I wish to refer to a statement made by a member of this Chamber who has had years of experience in the State and Federal Parliaments and has served Western Australia as Agent-General in London. In all that time he must have gained a good deal of experience. He said the other night that he thought one way in which we could bring Parliament closer to the people was by having more frequent sittings. I may be wrong, but I disagree with the hon. member. I do not care how many sittings we have; unless we can alter this kind of thing we are not going to bring Parliament closer to the people. I do not consider there should be one law for the people and another for members of Parliament, but I read this in the "West Australian"—"Politicians in Forces," "Names and Payments." There follows a list of the members of Parliament who joined the Commonwealth Forces for service and the amounts of pay and allowances received by them since the outbreak of war. I do not care on what side of the House hon. members sit. Why should members of Parliament hold out both hands and receive one rate of pay from the public as a member of Parliament and another rate of pay from the same public as members of the military forces, especially when they are not serving oversea, when they are not on the deep water but in offices. I do not care to whom that refers, whether it be Major-General Rankin, Major Cameron, Temporary Major Parker, Sergeant Styants or anyone else.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Major Parker has been on the deep sea.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am speaking about the time before he went on the deep sea. I do not care whether it be any of the men I have mentioned. Before Major Parker ventured out of this city, while he was still attending Parliament regularly, he drew no less a sum from the Defence

Department than £888 16s. 9d. and Sergeant Styants collected £38 4s. He was fed, too. Major Parker did not get food. Messrs. Styants, Holman and Tonkin received board and lodging, whereas Major Parker did at least live at home. Corporal Holman received £65 8s. and Gunner Tonkin £37 19s. No wonder I got myself disliked a few years ago when I said members of Parliament should be reduced by one-third! Is this the blood and sweat and tears we were promised by the Prime Minister of Great Britain? Is this the all-in war effort our own Prime Minister has asked for, when these privileged persons can hold out both hands and receive from the same set of people—because it does not matter whether the payments are made by the Commonwealth or the State; the people provide the money—two lots of pay for doing one job? It does not appeal to me. If these men were overseas or on the sea, running the risk of attack by a submarine, well and good; but when they are merely in an office in Perth or in Melbourne, or are spending some time in camp, then I am entitled to say that I do not approve. The health of the community is a very important subject. I have said before that it is unfair to compare a State with the Commonwealth or with the Dominion of New Zealand, but I have a newspaper clipping here showing what the Government of New Zealand is doing and also a newspaper cutting referring to the fact that Sir Ralph Cilento, Director General of Health in Queensland, gave evidence before a select committee on social security, in which he advocated that the State should undertake the care of the people's health. Do hon. members realise what it means to a man on the basic wage and with a family of four, five or six children, to go into hospital? For it is such men who have families. I may be pardoned for saying that I hold a position that takes me to the public hospital in Geraldton every week. I am consequently brought in close contact with such men, and I know that when a man on the basic wage goes into hospital for five or six weeks he requires years to recover from the consequent financial strain.

I was very pleased when the Mitchell-Latham Government introduced the Hospital Fund Bill, which was opposed by the

Government of which Mr. Munsie was a member. The returns from that source do not go into the Treasury, but are held for hospital purposes only. The Honorary Minister has always been interested in hospitals and I know that Mr. Bolton was at one time, although I do not know if his interest continues in these days. Those who are associated with the work of our public hospitals must admit that the creation of that particular fund has proved of incalculable benefit to the section of the community served by our public hospitals. I was interested to note that those who are interested in country hospital work recently asked the Government to increase the tax, and the Minister said that he would place the matter before Cabinet but could not hold out any hope that the request would be acceded to. Such a course would be in the interests of the people the Government is supposed to represent. True, those people would be asked to pay a little extra, but they would derive the benefit. The remaining sections of the community do not participate in the free treatment available at public hospitals, as they mostly go to private institutions. The latter course is beyond the reach of the ordinary working man. Apparently, because the workers would be forced to pay a little more, their leaders do not seem to view the proposal favourably. That is a mistaken attitude.

Dealing now with housing schemes, I notice that in New Zealand homes are being provided for farm workers and in New South Wales, according to a report appearing in the "West Australian" recently, £10,000,000 has been made available for the erection of workers' homes. In this State I know that such homes are being constructed at Geraldton faster than ever before. Parliament gave legislative sanction to increase the capital of the Workers' Homes Board and that body is now endeavouring to cope with the situation. I hope the board will continue its active work and in that task I trust a most important section of the Government employees will not be overlooked. I refer to the permanent way men employed on our railways. Let members proceed along any of our railways and notice the type of dwelling in which the permanent way men are required to live and bring up their families. Members may ask themselves if they are proud of the State which requires

a section of its employees to live in such miserable shacks. I read with interest in the "West Australian" reports regarding the water that has flown into the Mundaring and Canning reservoirs from which the metropolitan and goldfields supplies are drawn. The supply for Geraldton is drawn from a reservoir at Wiecherina. I inquired whether any rain water had drained into the reservoir and was disappointed to learn that there had been no inflow. Much of the trouble arises because of the situation of the reservoir, which is surrounded by sand plains. I think that it actually filled on one occasion many years ago. In point of fact the residents of Geraldton would have been without a water supply from time to time had it not been for the fact that at Eradu we are supposed to have deposits of coal. In the course of boring operations at that centre water was struck, and as a result pumps were installed and bore water has been availed of for Geraldton requirements.

When I tell members that in that town we have installed a septic tank system they can imagine what would happen if our water supply ran out. In addition, a camp for our armed forces has been established in the district and a direct water supply has been provided there. Anything to improve the conditions regarding the reservoir in the district should be attended to without fail. The Government has greatly increased the intake in connection with the Perenjori dam, from which railway supplies are drawn. As a result of bitumenising the catchment area the intake has been increased appreciably. If steps could be taken to increase the rain water supply for the Geraldton district, the position there would be greatly improved. Last year my attention was drawn to an amazing weakness in our legislation affecting the position of stock-owners. A friend of mine had employed a man to look after a certain farm, and later he told me he had reason to believe that some of his cattle had been sent to Perth and sold without his consent. In other words, he complained of cattle stealing. I wrote to the Under Secretary for Law drawing his attention to the position, and under date the 4th February last I received from him the following reply:—

I have your letter of the 27th January. As the Brands Act is administered by the Department of Agriculture, I have referred your letter to the Under Secretary of that depart-

ment who will, no doubt, advise you as to the position in due course.

On the 11th February I received from the Under Secretary for Agriculture the following communication—

With reference to your letter dated the 27th January, I wish to inform you that no provision is made in the Brands Act under which the sender or consignee of stock forwarded or received for sale shall make and keep a list or description of such stock or brands imprinted thereon. The Drovers Act also does not make this provision as far as stock in the South-Western division is concerned. However, consideration is at present being given to amending the Drovers Act, and this matter will receive attention.

If that does not place a premium on dishonesty I do not know what does. I hope the Government will take the steps to amend the Act and thus put a stop to what is tantamount to cattle duffing.

Dealing now with the question of law and order, I say all power to those people who are endeavouring to awaken the conscience of the people residing in the metropolitan area—such a step is unnecessary in the country districts—in order to impress upon the Government the necessity to enforce our laws. We should regard it as a truism that a law that is passed should be enforced. How can we be expected to instil a sense of obedience to the law in our children when they are able to see the law being openly flouted? I put that question to members in all seriousness. I ask the Government to do as it has been requested. Let members consider the shocking example of the administration of the law in Fremantle where the "packing" of the bench is disgraceful. I commend the Minister for Industries for the interest he has shown. Of course we expect Ministers to take an interest in their departments. On the 7th December last the following letter was written by the secretary of the Liquid Fuel Control Board to a man who had a truck on the road:—

Further to your letter to the Hon. E. H. Hall, M.L.C., which has been handed to us, we advise that any petrol in excess of your ration of 91 gallons necessary for your work as a main road contractor can be secured from that department.

He was allowed 91 gallons, and when he had used that quantity, he was expected to go to the Main Roads Department for the balance. The department, in view of the information in its possession, has been lax in not doing something to assist those

people who are working in the interests of the State to instal gas producers. I pay a tribute to the University authorities for their help. We expect a lead from that institution, seeing that it is supported by the taxpayers. If a man wishes to obtain reliable information about a gas producer, he is able to get advice from the University. In "Smith's Weekly" of the 28th June last I read with regret the following paragraph:

Working at Eighty-four.

William Frederick Sayer, K.C., was born in London in 1857, educated at University College School, and became a Law Society Prizeman.

He has recently been attacked by the Chief Justice of Western Australia, Sir John Northmore, for assisting poor persons with advice in the Divorce Court. His treatment has aroused resentment in Western Australia.

Then it proceeded to give an account of Mr. Sayer's career. If I have not paid a tribute to the assistance given by Mr. Sayer to indigent persons in many matters that would have involved heavy legal costs, I do so now. On numerous occasions he has rendered very valuable help.

The Honorary Minister: He has always been helpful.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes. Those remarks came with very bad grace from a gentleman occupying the position of Chief Justice. If there were a few more William Sayers, the world would be a better place. I commend Mr. Fraser for his reference to the miserable accommodation provided at Fremantle for aged women. We cannot feel happy about it. When I say it is not creditable to us, I am expressing myself mildly. Doubtless the Government is anxious to make some improvement, and it should endeavour to provide a little more comfort for those people.

The Honorary Minister: Have you ever been there?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: No. Last Wednesday night you, Mr. President, were very patient with me when I spoke on the motion for the appointment of sessional committees, but not until Mr. Seddon raised a point did you explain the position. If we cannot discuss the personnel of those committees when the motion is moved, when can we? This is not a very serious matter, but little things of this kind tend to estrange Parliament from the public. I am not greatly concerned whether the personnel of these committees remains unchanged year after year, but I thought I would raise the ques-

tion and I found, according to your ruling, that it was inopportune to do so. To show how ignorant are some people of the conduct of Parliament, let me quote an instance. Recently I invited a couple of friends to have lunch with me at Parliament House. The waiter left the docket and I handed over the money. One of my guests asked what I was doing and I told him. He said, "Do you pay for meals here?" I replied, "Yes." He asked, "Where do you sleep?" I told him I slept at home. He said, "Not here?" I replied, "No." He said, "Do not they bed and board you here? I have thought of standing for Parliament, but if you do not get everything free, it is no good to me." Many people seem to be under the impression that this is a huge boardinghouse where everything is provided free of cost to members.

According to the public accounts, certain moneys are granted to the House Committee each year. The House Committee consists of several members of both Houses; money is provided by the Government and the committee is responsible for the cleaning of and arrangements in the building. In any other organisation such a committee would report back to the body that appointed it. We do not receive any report. If there is a loss on the dining-room, presumably the Government makes up the deficiency. If there is a profit, who gets it? I have occupied a seat in the House for a long time and I am asking for information. If we elect a committee to do certain work and the committee is entrusted with public moneys to spend, to whom is an account rendered? I have never seen a balance sheet from the committee. I was told by a member who ought to know that one committee of which he was a member had not held a meeting since 1926. What is the use of having a committee that does not meet in years? This sort of thing causes comment outside. I take no notice of people who write to the papers and do not sign their names. We hear talk of members going to sleep between sessions, but I am satisfied that a member cannot go to sleep if he wishes to retain his seat. I have more to do during the recess than I have while Parliament is sitting. But what sacrifices do we make? Or what sacrifices do I make? At Geraldton we hold our little weekly meetings with various workers, but is that enough? We call on working men and women to sacrifice their lives. What are

we doing as a Parliament, anyhow? If we go to large establishments we find that they are making organised efforts. I would like Parliament to do the same. If the dining room does not pay, why not close it down? It is of more use to me than to some city members who can easily go home. I would go down to town for my meals and thus assist to save money to the State. What about forming a Parliamentary war savings group, each member authorising the Treasury to deduct so much from each pay? Again, there is the Red Cross.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: But every member is already associated with efforts of that kind.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: There is no occasion for nastiness. The hon. member interjecting could have said, "I think every member is already doing something of the kind." We know what is being done by Foy & Gibson, Boans Ltd., and other firms. What about Parliament as a whole? I bear in mind the efforts of the individual member, which I have no doubt amount to something. Of course he cannot escape the effects of taxation; still, we as members of Parliament could do something to show that we are all of a mind to make some effort towards terminating the terrible business in which the Empire is engaged.

I have a highly important matter which because of its importance I left to the last. I hold in my hand a little book entitled "The Money Mystery" by Sir Norman Angell, and I quote from it—

The purpose of this little book is not to enable you to become a banker or a stock-broker, but a good citizen, able to take your part usefully in the management of a society so dependent upon sound monetary policy for its smooth working that continued and widespread ignorance of the subject has become a grave public danger. . . .

And incidentally, some knowledge of money is equally necessary whether we favour a Capitalist or a Socialist form of society. Under any form of Socialism we should have to have a money system, and must be familiar with the problems here discussed. And if we desire radically to alter the money system itself, then it is important to know how it works at present. Otherwise we cannot know what we are talking about.

Indeed, one of the strongest reasons for knowing something about money is that our money system is defective, and changes will have to be made. If we are completely ignorant we are just as likely as not to oppose vitally necessary reforms, and favour ignorant experimentation that may have grave results.

Without some knowledge upon which to base such decisions, democracy itself is impossible. To know what we are doing, what we are talk-

ing about when we discuss these matters, we must know something of the nature of money. Our whole civilisation rests upon insecure foundations so long as most of us are completely ignorant of such a subject as this. . . .

An ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer and a great financier and business man, Mr. Reginald McKenna, Chairman of the Midland Bank, has said: "History has shown that apart from perhaps wars and religious intolerance no single factor has been more productive of misery and misfortune than the high degree of variability in the general price-level. This may sound like an extravagant statement, but so far from being of the nature of a demagogic outburst, it is clearly demonstrable from the course of events in the various countries ever since money became an important element in the life of civilised communities. A stable price-level is a thing to be desired, second only to international and domestic peace."

This book has been borrowed by me from a student of the Geraldton High School who is studying for his leaving certificate. I interviewed the Education authorities to-day and learnt that only children qualifying for the leaving certificate are expected to study the book. But we have it on the authority of a man whose opinion is worthwhile that unless the people are educated in this very, very difficult system, on which some persons write so glibly and misleadingly, there is little hope for our experiencing the new world which so many people are promising us. We have been told by Macaulay and by McKenna, and by hundreds of other experts who have made a lifelong study of the subject, that this money, with other factors, is one of the most important things affecting the life of nations to-day. And so I get back to my intelligent democracy. If we cannot have an intelligent democracy, there is very little hope for us.

In conclusion, I desire to join with other members in commending our friend, Mr. Fraser, for enlisting in the R.A.A.F., and, like other members, I hope that if he goes on active service he will be spared to return to us, and that it will not be very long before we are out of this frightful war and the world is again restored to peace. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

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

House adjourned at 9.58 p.m.