

fectly clear and frank and honest about it all. I reiterate once again that we ought to join in the fight against the Federal authorities where their proposals are against the interests of Western Australia. We must fight for the right to live as a sovereign people. We are the more important Government of the two, with more important things to do. When we federated it was intended that this should be so, that we should be the important partner and have the greater responsibility. There was a time, before we federated, when we were in the enjoyment of responsible government, when we really governed ourselves. How different was the old time in this land from this time under Federation! All of us remember to-day that once we had responsible government and knew only one other Government, namely the British Government. I am reminded of those days, and I wish they were back with us. Then we could say with Kipling—and I think his words most appropriate—

Daughter am I in my mother's house, but
mistress in my own;
The gates are mine to open, the gates are
mine to close.

On motion by Mr. Thomson debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.30 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 4th August, 1926.

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

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £1,913,500.

First Reading.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan, [4.40]: Before addressing myself to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I desire to express to Mr. Ewing my personal thanks for the references he was kind enough to make regarding newly re-elected members. I join with him in extending a welcome to those members amongst us who have come here for the first time. Coming as they do to fresh fields of labour, I feel sure that they will render the same signal service in the assistance they will give to the work of this House that they rendered in the past in different spheres. In common, I know, with feelings that will be expressed by all other hon. members, I naturally regret the non-reappearance of those members who were formerly occupants of seats here. New members will appreciate the fact that such an expression of feeling conveys no reflection upon them in any sense. It is merely the expression of natural feelings one entertains when parted from friends formerly members of the Legislative Council. The motion under discussion is couched in terms which many members will think deserving of their ready acquiescence and adoption. There may be others, however, who may consider subjects are dealt with in the Speech of His Excellency the Governor that deserve some criticism. It may even suggest to them the necessity for some amendment. Various questions, of which notice has already been given, would rather presuppose the fact that there is room for criticism relating to various subjects dealt with in His Excellency's Speech. I concur in the desire that has been expressed for celerity in disposing of the Address-in-reply debate, but it must be recognised, by no one more than by you, Mr. President, that this is the only occasion when hon. members have an opportunity to ventilate various subjects during the course of the one debate. As a rule, members do not lose the opportunity that presents itself at this period of the session. The Speech is replete with many subjects, with some of which we are already familiar, but it will be conceded that the Speech indicates clearly a desire on the part of the Government to assist the prosperity of the State. Though saying that of the pres-

ent Government, I could say it equally well of any other party occupying the Government benches, whether Nationalist or Country Party. Indeed, I would go further and say that every member here and in another place is inspired with the same desire to see the State prosper. Still, there is one difference between the Speech before us and the Speech which might have been delivered had a Nationalist Government been in power.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Then there would have been a bigger deficit.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: A Nationalist Government would certainly not have had to report a continuance of the deficit.

Hon. J. R. Brown: They would have done nothing; they would have made no progress.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The hon. member suggests that a Nationalist Government would have done nothing. Had such a Government been in power, they would have carried out what Sir James Mitchell promised to do, namely, the wiping out of the deficit more than a year ago.

Hon. E. H. Gray: He did not do it when he was in power.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Mitchell Government accomplished more and in the face of greater difficulties than one could almost have hoped for, and it would not have been too much to expect that the ex-Premier, had he remained in office, would have realised his anticipation of clearing off the deficit before this year. No explanation is given of the cause of the continued deficit.

Hon. J. R. Brown: It was not necessary to give that in the Speech.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: But it is stated emphatically in the opening paragraph that care must be exercised in relation to the finances.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: Everybody is of that opinion.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes, we all agree on that, but I suggest that if more care had been exercised and wise financial administration had been adopted, the Government would not have found themselves in the unfortunate position they occupy to-day of having to report a further deficit. I refer to this matter because a continuance of deficits under any Government heralds the continuation of existing taxation, if not the imposition of additional taxation. That is one of the things we do not wish to see. Already we are heavily taxed, and within recent years taxation has been increased. What

we desire now is not an increase but a decrease of taxation, in order to assist the people who are trying to build up the industries of this great State. In view of the enormous revenue of £8,868,166 reported to have been received, some explanation should have been offered by the Government as to why a deficit appears. Members, however, are left to find out for themselves the cause of the deficit. If we compare the revenue received last year with that received in pre-deficit years, we find a marked difference, and yet in those years it was possible for the Treasurer to report a handsome surplus. In 1900 the revenue was very small as compared with that of last year. It amounted to only £2,875,396—nearly six millions less than that of last year. In 1910, the year immediately preceding the years of deficits, the revenue amounted to only £4,274,424.

Hon. J. R. Brown: That was foreign capital. Now we are on our own resources.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It was capital, regardless of whether it was foreign or any other kind. In 1910, therefore, the revenue was less than half of what it is at present. Still, in each of the years I have quoted there was a surplus of revenue over expenditure, amounting in 1900 to £260,000, and in 1910 to £210,000. Surely that affords food for reflection. Surely it indicates a lack of that good administration which we expected from the present Government. Ordinarily, one would refer to the expenditure side of the public accounts to ascertain the cause of the latest deficit. Without scrutinising every item of expenditure, however, a cause for the deficit may be found in one or other of those unwise acts of administration to which I intend to refer. During last year the Government introduced into various departments of the service what is known as the 44-hour week. This resulted in increased costs and running expenses. I wish to state emphatically that I make no objection to certain increases in wages granted during the year. They were probably quite justified. The cost of living has increased greatly, and probably the increases were warranted to enable workers and their families to maintain themselves in that degree of comfort which we all desire. I am not a believer in low wages. I believe in a man enjoying reasonable and proper comfort, but as I have said on former occasions, the State, as well as a private employer, should see that it gets a fair return for the wages paid. In view of the financial position of the State, the reduction of hours

was not justified. The effect of this unwise act is reflected in the results of the Railway Department. The Railways closed the year with a loss of nearly £32,000, as against a surplus of £190,000 in the preceding year. There was another bad effect from the reduction of hours; it apparently necessitated the Commissioner of Railways employing an increased staff to do less work. The statistics show that the traffic handled was actually less than that of the previous year. Such things as these explain the cause of the deficit. It would have been much better had the Government, and the workers concerned, realised the position and continued the 48-hour week. The introduction of the 44 hours has a detrimental effect on the establishment of industries in this State. We have to contend with the competition of the outside world, and until the system of the 44-hour week is adopted by other countries, we are only penalising ourselves by adopting it here, and in place of advancing the interests of the State, the result is precisely the reverse. The opening statement in the Speech reads, "The financial position of the State can be considered satisfactory." No doubt the Government believe it is satisfactory, but I ask members and the people of the State who are capable of judging these matters for themselves, whether they consider that, in the light of existing circumstances, the financial position is really satisfactory. If the accounts in connection with the expenditure were closely examined, then in place of satisfaction being expressed I feel there would be grave cause indeed for dissatisfaction. The only consolation is the hope expressed in the Speech that the year we have now entered upon will terminate the long period of deficits. May I join in expressing the hope that that will be realised, that we may in reality see the end of those deficits, that the prosperity of the State may not be impaired, and that the Government will realise that by wise administration and careful handling of our finances it will be possible to reduce taxation instead of, as at present seems possible, there being a continuation of the burdens we have to carry. Involved in the question of finance is the per capita payments. That is a subject that has raised considerable controversy. I have no doubt members have followed the question very closely. The Federal Government propose to withdraw from certain fields of taxation. It might not be inappropriate for hon. members to refresh their memories as to the genesis of the per capita

grants. Under the Federal Constitution Act, Section 87, commonly known as the Braddon clause, it was provided that for ten years from the 1st January, 1901, to the 31st December, 1910, and thereafter until the Commonwealth Parliament should otherwise determine, the Commonwealth was required to apply towards their own expenditure one-fourth of the net revenue from Customs and Excise, whilst the other three-fourths was to be apportioned amongst the various States. Western Australia, owing to its special circumstances, was allowed for five years the right to continue to impose interstate duties. These were to be diminished gradually by one-fifth each year so that at the end of five years that right would disappear. With regard to the three-fourths of the revenue that had to be distributed amongst the various States, later on what was known as the book-keeping clause came into vogue. Under that clause the respective States were credited with a proportion of the Customs and Excise revenue, according to population, and on a certain basis, and the States were debited with a proportion of the expenditure. But as we know, the book-keeping clauses proved to be cumbersome and impracticable, with the result that this method was passed over and in place of the provision previously obtaining, the Surplus Revenue Act was passed. This Act provides that for a period of ten years from the 1st July, 1910, to the 30th June, 1920, and thereafter until Parliament otherwise provides, the Commonwealth shall pay to each State by monthly instalments, or apply to the payment of interest on debts of the State taken over by the Commonwealth, an annual sum amounting to 25s. per head of the number of people in those States. There was also provision for a special grant of £250,000 to be made to Western Australia and also a special grant to Tasmania. The grant to Western Australia was to diminish at the rate of £10,000 per annum. At the present time the sum received by the State from that source is something like £110,000. Provision was also made by Section 6 of that Act for all surplus revenue to be paid to the States, but strange to say the Commonwealth has found the means of avoiding the necessity for paying the surplus revenue to the States. The result is we have not had from the Commonwealth that full measure of the surplus revenue we should have received. The sum of 25s. per head does not represent the total

revenue, and the surplus revenue obtained by the Commonwealth during the various years that have intervened since the passage of that Act has been appropriated to other purposes. By the passing of the Surplus Revenue Act our rights such as they were under the Constitution Act disappeared. We have to bear in mind what those rights were. They were granted to us for a period of ten years and thereafter until the Commonwealth Parliament should otherwise determine. They did determine otherwise by the passing of the Surplus Revenue Act. Accordingly we, in common with other States, have no legal claim under the Constitution Act, but I contend that we have a moral right to some of the revenue from Customs and Excise from which we derived in former years the means that enabled us to carry on our ordinary functions. That was quite understood. Even the words which I read from Section 4 of the Surplus Revenue Act would indicate that there was an intention to preserve to the States some kind of right, because whilst in the Constitution Act it was mentioned that the right should continue until the Commonwealth Parliament otherwise decides, the words in the Surplus Revenue Act are "until the Parliament otherwise provides." There is a great deal of difference between the words "decides" and "provides." So that in the Surplus Revenue Act it is clearly intended and implied that some provision should be made by the Commonwealth Government for the States to share in the revenue coming from Customs and Excise. It was clearly implied that the State should continue to have some right in those duties. The system of per capita payments, I submit, is wrong in principle. It means that the smaller the population of a State, the smaller is their return. We in this State are in the unhappy position of having the largest territory within the Commonwealth and the second smallest population. In place of receiving merely 25s. per head, based on the population, I contend that we should receive a grant adequate for our needs to enable us to develop this great State. Under the existing system we are at a disadvantage as compared with such States as Victoria and New South Wales. They have a population that is so much greater that they benefit in every way by the per capita payments. We on the other hand with our greater obligation in connection with the development of our vast territory, find ourselves handicapped by the per capita

payments. They are not adequate for the purpose and therefore we are entitled to better consideration. The Disabilities Commission abundantly proved that fact, and the evidence given before that body clearly showed that we were at a great disadvantage indeed as compared with the other States, and that we were suffering under Federation. Our remoteness from the Federal capital is also a disadvantage, and only in to-day's paper we find some evidence of that. I refer to the information that was supplied to Mr. Gregory in the House of Representatives. It was there disclosed that bonuses and subsidies were received by the other States greatly in advance of what Western Australia obtained. That indicates that our remoteness from the seat of Government is a distinct disadvantage to us and that those who are nearer to the capital, possessing greater numbers and greater influence, are able to get benefits that are denied to us. There it was stated that the largest amount was received by New South Wales, £879,000, the greater proportion being on iron and steel products bounty. Victoria was credited with £672,000, the principal items being canned and dried fruits. There was, however, an item "losses on 1922-23 canned fruit pool" which increases Victoria's receipts from this source by approximately £200,000. Queensland received £360,000, the principal item being subsidy on beef export, £227,000. South Australia received £270,000, the principal item being £150,000 for wine export. Western Australia received £127,000, the chief items being rabbit netting, £64,000, which has to be repaid by the settler and therefore is not a subsidy. Then there was the rinderpest outbreak, herein classified by the Treasurer as a subsidy to an industry, £41,000.

Hon. G. Potter: That was only a quarter of what we should have got.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: It was a national matter, not a State matter.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Precisely, and it should have been recognised by the Commonwealth Government as a national matter.

Hon. G. Potter: It was a scandal.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Tasmania's share was £191,000, the chief item being losses on the fruit and flax pools, £99,900. Had it not been for the wine subsidy, South Australia's return, like Western Australia's, would have been negligible. The three States that have benefited mostly are New South

Wales, Victoria and Queensland, which also benefit almost wholly by the high tariff policy. We know the disadvantageous position in which we are placed through this tariff. As a State very largely interested in primary production we are the big sufferers.

Hon. V. Hamersley: That return does not include the sugar bonus?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: No, because that is on a different basis, I think under a Special Act. The figures given here relate to bonuses. Whilst I believe that the Bruce Government are sympathetic to us as a State, undoubtedly the Treasurer of that Government has somehow overlooked our needs. Special grants have been made at various times, but I contend that those grants should have been made to us as a right, and that we should not have had to beg for them. If the per capita payments are to be discontinued, there should be a definite arrangement for Western Australia to receive certain fixed sums for definite periods in order to help us extricate ourselves from the difficulties from which we are suffering and which are largely attributable to Federation. Also I say the Federal Government should not retain the power to re-impose taxation in a field from which they may withdraw; and furthermore that they should safeguard the position of this State to the utmost. There has been some talk of secession.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And there will be more later on.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The information has been published that a league has been formed.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There are good reasons for it.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There are many good reasons why some movement of the sort should be launched, but at the same time I ask members to weigh very seriously the question whether secession is a proper measure for dealing with our difficulties. I doubt it very seriously.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Can you find a better?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Let us try to imagine what would be the result of secession. Every State would be back in the position in which it was in pre-Federation days.

Hon. G. Potter: We might be better off.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: But we might be breeding for ourselves and our children some

sort of internecine troubles such as are common on the Continent of Europe. There we see countries divided one from another, and we find that rivalries and jealousies spring up because the several peoples are divided instead of being united.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: But they are peoples foreign one to another.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Possibly if we were to search back far enough into history we should find that actually they are not foreign one to another any more than are the peoples of the various Australian States. However, eliminating all possibility of violent rivalries and jealousies in Australia, and considering the position from the peaceful standpoint, we see that each State would require to establish its own Customs. In these days, when we have motor transport, men could carry contraband goods over our boundaries by motor vehicle. Would not that involve Western Australia having along the whole of her border line an army of Customs officials?

Hon. A. Burvill: That did not obtain before Federation.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The hon. member will remember that in pre-Federation days there were no motor cars, neither was there a railway across Australia. In those days the great expanse of waterless country sufficiently guarded us from inroads of contraband.

Hon. H. Stewart: But there were roads and railways and even rivers between the other states.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes, they had to make certain provision and exert some vigilance to prevent goods being taken in in a way to escape the payment of Customs duties.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: They had a Customs barrier at every crossing.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: One can easily imagine what it would all end in. Whatever our wrongs may be, let us have them constitutionally redressed. Now that we have entered into Federation we should maintain that unity as an incissoluble bond, trying to cement it, to make it better and greater, but also seeing to it that Western Australia is properly safeguarded.

Hon. V. Hamersley: How much longer are we to stand the present state of affairs?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We must try first to redress it. If our wrongs are not redressed, the day may come when I shall occupy a different platform and express entirely different views. But before we at-

tempt secession at this time, we should make every effort to see to it that our wrongs are redressed.

Hon. J. R. Brown: There will be no Bills about secession coming before the House this session.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If such a Bill were presented, it would not be presented here, for it would require to be dealt with by the Federal Government. In the Speech, under the heading of "Arbitration," we find this paragraph:—

The amending Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation Act passed last session is now in operation. The appointment of Mr. Walter Dwyer as the first permanent President of the Arbitration Court, and the appointment of industrial magistrates, have greatly expedited the work of the court and relieved long standing congestion.

It is pleasing to note that. Every member will agree in the desire to see industrial peace established. If there be one thing calculated to promote prosperity in any country, undoubtedly it is industrial peace. One's thoughts naturally go back to the recent very serious crisis in the Motherland. That crisis serves to show in a marked way that if the welfare and prosperity of a country is to be assured, there is one way by which it may be done, and that is through industrial peace. But that can only be accomplished by a certain recognition on the part of both the employer and the employee. It is to be hoped that a new spirit will, as a result of these happenings, be born throughout the Empire, and that we may see a new era created. I sincerely hope that success will attend the appointment of Mr. Dwyer in his capacity as President of the Court. I hope the Court as now established will be successful in maintaining that measure of industrial peace that will help to ensure the prosperity and development of the State. No reference is made in the paragraph to the Federal Government's proposals. I do not intend at this stage to deal with that question. It would be unfair to do so. I believe that it will be more fully explained by those members who have been delegated for that purpose. I have a great belief in this, that Mr. Bruce, the Prime Minister, is sincere in his proposals. That must be recognised even from the division of opinion that has taken place amongst various members of the Commonwealth Parliament. Until members have had an opportunity of studying these proposals more fully, and seeing whether they are calculated

to bring about that new era, I think we should suspend judgment. Just as I believe that Mr. Bruce is sincere I think it will be admitted that no man is more sincere in this matter than the Prime Minister of England, Mr. Baldwin. This is admitted by men on every side of the British Parliament.

Hon. J. R. Brown: The miners do not think so.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Anyone reading his speeches must recognise that he is an intensely human man, a man who has the best wishes at heart, not only of the men, but of everyone connected with the industrial life of the country. I will read a paragraph from one of his speeches which was delivered by him in the House of Commons on 6th March, 1925. It was in connection with the introduction of the Trade Union (Political Fund) Bill. There was a motion before the House that "this House while approving the principle of political liberty embodied in the Trade Union (Political Fund) Bill is of opinion that a measure of such far reaching importance should not be introduced as a private members' Bill." In speaking to the motion before the House Mr. Baldwin traced his own experience. He had been associated in former years with a certain industry with which his father and his grandfather, and probably other generations before him had been connected. It was an old-fashioned business, according to what he tells us, and not only he but others who had been connected with it, had grown up in it. Those who were employed in the industry had been engaged in the work for many years, and in many cases their fathers, and even their grandfathers before them had worked in it. Mr. Baldwin went on to say—

I remember very well the impact of the outside world that came upon us, that showed how industry was changing in this country. Nothing had interrupted the even tenor of our ways for many years, until one day there came a great strike in the coalfields; it was one of the earlier strikes, and it became a national strike. We tried to carry on as long as we could, but, of course, it became more and more difficult to carry on, and gradually furnace after furnace was damped down and the chimneys ceased to smoke, and about 1,000 men, who had no interest in the dispute that was going on, were thrown out of work, through no fault of their own, at a time when there was no unemployment benefit. I confess that that event set me thinking very hard. It seemed to me at that time a monstrous injustice to these men, because I looked upon them as my own family, and it hit me very hard—I would not have mentioned this only it got into the Press two or three years ago—and I made an allowance to them, not a large

one, but something, for six weeks to carry them along, because I felt they were being so unfairly treated. But there was more in it really than that. There was no conscious unfair treatment of these men by the masters. It simply was that we were gradually passing into a new state of industry when the small firms and the small industries were being squeezed out, and business was all tending towards great amalgamation, on the one side of employers, and on the other side of the men, and when we came in any form between these two forces, God help those who stood outside. That has been the tendency of industry. There is nothing that could change it, because it comes largely, if not principally, from that driving force of necessity in the world that makes people combine together for competition and for the protection they need against that competition. Those two forces with which we have to reckon are enormously strong, and they are the two forces in this country to which now to a great extent, and it will be to a greater extent in the future, we are committed. We have to see what wise statesmanship can do to steer the country through this time of evolution until we can get to the next stage of our industrial civilisation. It is obvious from what I have said that the organisations of both masters and men—or, if you like the more modern phrase invented by economists, who always invent beastly words, employers and employees—these organisations throw an immense responsibility on the organisations themselves and on those who elect them and, although big men have been thrown out on both sides, there are a great many on both sides who have not got the requisite qualities of head and heart for business. There are many men with good heads and no hearts, and many men with good hearts and no heads. What the country wants to-day from the men who sit on this side of the House and on that is to exercise the same care as the men who have to conduct those great organisations from inside. I should like to try to clear our minds of cant on this subject, and recognise that the growth of these associations is not necessarily a bad thing in itself, but that, whatever associations may call themselves, it is the same human nature in both, and exactly the same problems have to be met, although we hear a great deal more of some of those problems than of others. Now, if you look at an employers' organisation for a moment—and we will assume that it has come into being to protect the industry in the world market—we cannot lose sight of the fact that in that organisation, just as much as in the men's organisation, the mere fact of organising involves a certain amount of sacrifice of personal liberty. That cannot be helped. Everybody knows that perfectly well, both employers and employees. To a certain extent both these organisations must on one side be uneconomic. A trade union is uneconomic in one sense of the word when it restricts output and when it levels down the work to a lower level. It is an association for the protection of the weaker men which has often proved uneconomic. Exactly the same thing happens in the employers' organisation. Primarily it is protective, but in effect it is very often uneconomic, because it keeps in existence work which,

if left to the process of competition, would be squeezed out, and whose prolonged existence is really only a weakness to the country. Also it has another very curious effect, not at all dissimilar from that of the trade union reaction which shows that both these organisations are instinct with English traditions. The workmen's organisation is formed to see that under the conditions a workman cannot get his living in a particular trade for the protection of the trade, and it has the result of effectively preventing any new man starting in that trade.

The PRESIDENT: Does this come within the scope of the Governor's Speech?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It deals with industrial matters.

Hon. H. Stewart: It is interesting at all events.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It is dealing with a phase of industrialism.

The PRESIDENT: I hope it is not long.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Mr. Baldwin continues—

In this great problem which is facing the country in years to come, it may be from one side or the other that disaster may come, but surely it shows that the only progress that can be obtained in this country is by those two bodies of men—so similar in their strength and so similar in their weaknesses—learning to understand each other and not to fight each other.

The sooner we realise the need for joining hands instead of seeking to see what we can do to destroy one another, the better it will be for us all.

Hon. J. R. Brown: We are not the destroyers.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: On the one side the master says he is not the destroyer, and on the other side the worker says he is not the destroyer.

Hon. J. R. Brown: The man who gets away with the boodle is the destroyer.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The thing is to find the proper man to solve all these difficulties. The hope I have expressed in regard to this part of the Speech is that the industrial court, as now established under the Act passed by this House last session, may ensure that lasting peace and prosperity we all desire to see. If that should not accomplish the desired result let us endeavour to use our best influence in bringing about the end we most earnestly desire. I now wish to refer to the question of State insurance. The Government have practically undertaken an insurance department, and I question the right of the Government to do that without first having obtained legislative authority. I

question their right to use the funds of the State for the purpose of such an enterprise without legislative authority. If Parliament, in its wisdom, should consider that a new State enterprise, or State business concern, of this nature ought to be established, we must accept that decision. However, I refrain from making any further remarks on this subject pending the introduction of the Bill which the Government propose to bring before Parliament. In the meantime I may repeat the view which I have always expressed in regard to State trading concerns. I am opposed to the establishment of State trading concerns. I see no reason for altering that determination, even in regard to a matter such as this. In my opinion, it would have been possible for the Government to discover a way out of the difficulty in which they found themselves. At all events, the Government should not have taken the action they did take until they had legislative authority for embarking on such a class of business.

Hon. J. R. Brown: That is all nonsense.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: With regard to migration, I welcome everything that has been said, and everything that has been done, by the Government. I believe the Government have used their best endeavours to forward the migration scheme and are fully alive to the importance of the subject. A mighty big question is involved, and there is much that one could dilate upon. However, I will not detain hon. members on this occasion. I hope that the scheme will extend, and that the settlers generally will be successful. If they are, it will be a great gratification to every Government associated with the migration scheme. There is one other matter I must allude to. I wish to applaud the Premier for the stand he took in replying to the A.W.U. of Sydney relative to unwarranted interference on the part of that union in the carrying out of the duties of Government here. As the Premier in his reply rightly pointed out, the Ministry have taken upon themselves the responsibilities of office. It is indeed pleasing to know that the Premier, as head of the Government of this State, recognises those responsibilities and refuses to be swayed by any interference from outside bodies. That is the proper attitude to adopt, and I hope it will be adopted by every other Government here. The responsibility for the carrying out of the laws of this land lies, not upon the A.W.U., but upon Ministers. I repeat, the Premier is

to be congratulated and applauded for the stand he took. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. G. Potter, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.52 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 4th August, 1926.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—FREMANTLE RAILWAY BRIDGE.

Fruit for Export.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, In view of requirements of additional harbour space at Fremantle, for the pre-cooling of fruit and other produce for shipment abroad, is it the intention of the Government in their consideration of the construction of a new railway bridge, to remove the present location in an easterly direction, thereby providing the required room? 2, Will consideration also be given to the need for additional louvered railway vans for the conveyance of fruit?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The whole question of the construction of a new railway bridge is, and has been for some time, receiving the attention