

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 7th August, 1940.

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

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK.*Manager's Enlistment.*

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: With regard to the departure of Mr. Abey, manager of the Agricultural Bank, on active service, 1, Has Mr. Abey resigned from the position? 2, If not, (a) Has he been assured of reinstatement in his position on his return from active service? (b) While on active service will Mr. Abey be in receipt of any remuneration whatever from the State Government?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, No. 2, (a) Yes; (b) Contributions to superannuation fund only.

QUESTION—CATTLE, NORTHERN SHIPMENTS.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: What ships have brought cattle from the North and North-West during the months of June and July, 1940, to Fremantle and other southern ports? (a) What were the carrying capacities of such ships as regards cattle? (b) How many cattle were actually carried in each of such ships?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The following vessels have brought cattle from the North and North-West during the months of June and July, 1940, to Fremantle. No cattle have been discharged at other southern ports:—

	(a)	(b)
	Capac- ity.	No. arrived Fremantle.
Koolinda (2/6/40)	400	424
Charon (9/6/40)	420	415
Koolinda (15/6/40)	400	407
Centaur (23/6/40)	450	399

(Mortality 28; loaded 427.)

	(a)	(b)
	Capac- ity.	No. arrived Fremantle.

Koolama (25/6/40)	500	496
Gorgon (9/7/40)	450	436
Koolinda (13/7/40)	400	399
Koolama (14/7/40)	500	506
Charon (22/7/40)	420	415
Koolama (31/7/40)	500	501

QUESTION—BASIC WAGE.*Application to Government Employees.*

Hon. E. H. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: Do the adjustments made to the basic wage by the Arbitration Court affect the salaries of all officers employed by the Government?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Yes, subject to the provisions of the Civil Service agreements and classifications.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. C. B. Williams (South) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.*Sixth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.37]: Before speaking in favour of the motion for the presentation of the Address-in-reply, I desire to add my congratulations to those already proffered to the seven members of this Chamber who have again secured the confidence of the electors of their respective Provinces. I also wish to congratulate the three new members on their election and to venture the opinion that, as a result of their entry into this House, our debating strength has been definitely improved. Like previous speakers, I express my desire to do what I personally can to aid Australia in her war efforts. I assure the Government that my earnest wish is to help it to play the part it is playing and the part it will be called upon to play in Australia's all-in war effort. I sincerely hope that effort will be more complete in the near future than it appears to be at the present moment.

I congratulate the Government and the Commissioner of Railways upon the success which has at last crowned their endeavours to make the Federal authorities realise the potential value of our Government railway workshops and of other engineering establishments in the State as manufacturing units in Australia's attempt at self-sufficiency in the supply of munitions and armaments. Whilst congratulating the Government on its success in that direction, I am frankly disappointed at the lack of success which has attended the Department of Industry in securing the sympathy and support of Eastern States manufacturers to the point where they would decide to come to Western Australia and establish branch factories. It appears to me that there is something fundamentally wrong with the industrial set-up of Western Australia that acts as a bar to our progress. Evidently the time is ripe for some effort to be made to secure an alteration to our Workers' Compensation Act, some liberalisation of our apprenticeship arrangements and some easement of the statutory proportions of junior to senior labour in some of our industries.

Several members who have spoken on this motion have referred to the closing down of a small but quite important manufacturing industry in this State. This matter has been mentioned at some length in the Press and the Minister for Industrial Development has made some comments—rather unconvincing comments. However, the loss of this industry and the failure of practically every attempt to induce Eastern States manufacturers to establish branch factories in Western Australia should give the department some very definite lines of research; and, if, as a result of that research, the department is able to put its finger on the real causes, then I consider its task is to urge that those real causes be removed. Unless and until those causes are removed, Western Australia cannot hope to reach the industrial position that every member of this House and of the public, be he unionist or employer, desires to reach. If the Minister is not prepared to remove those causes, then it is futile for him to try to deceive himself and the public that this State can be developed industrially. If this State cannot be developed industrially because of disabilities which could be removed

but which the Government apparently is not prepared to remove, then let us be honest about the whole position. Let us forget our ineffectual efforts to develop along industrial lines and get back to the position we occupied when we realised that this State was one of primary production, and let us get behind the primary producer and have an all-in effort to help him to prosperity.

Actually our industrial engineer, Mr. Fernie, could be very profitably employed in some other direction. I wish to assure the Minister that I make this statement with a wish to be helpful and not in any spirit of carping criticism. I consider that Mr. Fernie, who is an industrial engineer—and there is no person better fitted to make inquiries into industry than is an industrial engineer—could be well employed investigating the operations of the State Trading Concerns. As a result of such investigation he could more than likely effect savings and economies, and step-up the production of such concerns as the State Sawmills and the State Brickworks. He could also examine the operations of other State activities such as the railways, tramways and the electricity supply. All those undertakings could be investigated, and I am sure that the managers of the manufacturing concerns and the departmental heads would be anxious and willing to co-operate in such an investigation. I feel convinced that economies could be effected and that much good would come of it.

There is another useful work that our industrial engineer could conveniently and well undertake, and that is the co-ordination of all the transport activity of the many Government departments. Thereby he could save quite a lot of overlapping and quite a lot of waste. I feel disturbed about the unemployed position, and I realise that the Government is disturbed. It is depressing to find that there are so many men depending upon the Government, in spite of the number who have enlisted and the smaller number of internees. I believe that the Government's difficulties are going to increase rather than lessen because, when petrol rationing has completed the deadly task of crippling the motor industry, there will be thousands of men thrown out of work. This reminds me that Sir Hal Colebatch referred last night to the motor industry and said there were many people uselessly employed in the selling end of the petrol and

motor business. Similar criticism could be levelled against any industry. Admittedly there are too many petrol pumps. Equally true is it that there are too many milkmen, too many butchers, too many grocers, and maybe too many parliamentarians.

Hon. J. Cornell: There are too many people with motor cars that cannot afford them.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Many of the people I have enumerated are uselessly employed, but I ask Sir Hal whether it is better that those hundreds of people referred to should be uselessly employed or that they should be uselessly unemployed. The petrol rationing will affect the income of the Government. Not only will the Government have as its responsibility thousands of unemployed people who to-day are engaged in the industry, but its revenue will suffer through the loss that will be occasioned by the lesser amount of petrol tax collected by the Commonwealth and distributed through the Federal Aid Roads Grant. It means that this Government's revenue will be greatly reduced, and that the activities of the Main Roads Board, which is a large employing agency, will be seriously curtailed.

As we have not made an outstanding success of our industrial development, I suggested a few moments ago that we should get behind our primary industries and try to develop them. In referring to primary industries, I do not mean only the pastoral, agricultural and dairying industries, although I certainly include them. I do not know just how the prospecting scheme is going along to-day, whether it is still an active organisation; but it did excellent work in the past, and I would suggest that the Government might consider either reviving or further developing that scheme. For it does appear to me that mining represents a highly valuable employing agency. I would also suggest to the Government to consider the possibility of re-entering that scheme in which we were associated from 1934 to 1938 with the Queensland Government and the Commonwealth Government. It will be remembered that during those four years Western Australia had one-quarter share of the financial responsibility, Queensland a quarter share, and the Commonwealth a half share in financing an aerial geophysical and geological survey of all that country north of the 22nd parallel. Whilst we must admit that the richest belt of Western Australian

country lies south of that parallel, it must equally be admitted that there are known deposits of valuable minerals north of that line. When the Government withdrew from that scheme at the end of 1938, it stated as its reason a belief that the whole of that area had been fully investigated. However, it is hard to credit that a vast belt of country 400,000 square miles in extent could have been completely investigated during that period. Still, the scene has changed and war has now intruded on our calculations. The need of certain minerals for war purposes is to-day both pressing and urgent; and if justification did exist for this Government's withdrawal from the scheme in 1938, there are to-day strong reasons, in face of the war, for a resumption of the co-operation of this Government with the Governments of the Commonwealth and Queensland. Some two or three months ago I had the pleasure of travelling from Albury to Melbourne with Sir Herbert Gepp, the father of the scheme; and he indicated to me that if the Western Australian Government was prepared to re-enter the scheme, he believed it would be able to do so on a much smaller annual payment than it was involved in previously. I discussed the matter with the Premier, who was strongly sympathetic, and who referred the matter to the Minister for Mines; but I do urge upon our Government a complete and thorough investigation into the possibilities I have suggested; because, as I stated previously, the present requirements are for war purposes. But the post-war period will bring its own problems, and not the least of them will be that of unemployment; and goodness knows unemployment is a big enough problem to-day! Mining, however, seems to me to present real employing possibilities, equal, if not superior, to the possibilities in many other industries. There is another point. When this war is over, there will be thousands of land-hungry people; and whilst we, or some of us, may spurn the North, some of those thousands of people will look to our open spaces as a possible haven of refuge from the battle-torn countries of Europe; and if we do not develop this land, then we in Western Australia are likely to stand arraigned before the bar of international opinion as people completely unworthy to continue holding it.

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.58]: I wish to join other speakers in congratulating those old members who have been returned, after having faced the electors, endorsed as perfectly qualified to carry on the duties of this Chamber. I welcome two hon. members who have come into the House with legislative experience. There is firstly Sir Hal Colebatch, whom we may look upon as somewhat in the nature of a prodigal returned; for he tells us that he has come back without a motor car, but rich in experience. In these days motor cars are apparently a necessity for everyone; so that if Sir Hal is not possessed of a motor car, he really is something in the nature of a prodigal son. Mr. Welsh, who has had experience in another place, will find this Chamber quite suited to his temperament; and I have no doubt that here he will render, as he has already rendered elsewhere, good service to the North-West. Mr. Roche I wish to congratulate, and I welcome him as a new member. I assure Mr. Roche that my own experience over the years I have been here enables me to state with every confidence that he can count upon the kindest of consideration from fellow-members, and that they will assist him in every way, as is done in the case of all new members. The two members who have fallen by the wayside did their utmost while here, and rendered valuable service to their constituents. Moreover, they were honourable gentlemen in every sense of the term; and we extend to them our sympathy on not having been again returned for their constituencies. To Mr. Angelo, who has left us on account of ill-health, the cordial hope may be expressed that he will be restored as the result of his retirement, and that we shall see him here again at some future time.

With regard to the Government's programme for the present session, I am prepared to support the action that an array of Bills is not presented to members. The Government has been taken to task for not foreshadowing its programme of legislation, but I support the method that has been followed. The idea is that we should all concentrate on winning the war and I feel sure that if we carry out that objective we shall be successful in bringing the conflict to a successful ending from our point of view. We should do our

best to assist Great Britain in the direction of enabling the Empire to give the king hit to the gentlemen across the channel.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Why gentlemen?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The hon. member can call them anything else he pleases. The Empire stands alone in this task at the present time but with our energy and resources I have no fear of the result. It is my intention to support the Government to the fullest extent in anything that is suggested or brought forward for our support to achieve the end that we all desire. A successful issue will bring us the great reward of continuation of that freedom we so highly prize. To lose is unthinkable; so let us be one people with one cause, dropping the ins-and-outs tactics of peace time and the recrimination of party politics. Our men will have to be ready for the hour when Great Britain will call upon them to do their share in the final battle, and it has always been that final battle that has brought victory to the Empire.

In the Federal sphere Labour has refused to join in the formation of a National Government. There may be just as much to be said for Labour's side of the case because we know what has happened in the last few months. The actions of Sir Earle Page, Mr. Cameron, and Mr. Thorby have led members of the Labour Party to supply the retort obvious. On the other hand, there has been a genuine gesture from the industrialists all over Australia. This cannot be overlooked. Industrial unions and individual members of the unions have given liberal financial support to free-of-interest loans. There has also been a voluntary extension of working hours on the part of Federal and State Government officials, and in Western Australia there has been the acceptance of the suggestion by the heads of the Trades Hall to form a joint committee with the Employers' Federation to review complaints or difficulties that may arise, with a view to establishing industrial peace during the period of the war. The arrangement that has been entered into does not seek to alter awards or oppose any approach to the court; it extends and retains good will on both sides through the medium of round-table discussions. The arrangement is working satisfactorily and I am sure that what has been done will be bound to lead to better results in the future.

Members will have seen the declaration by the Minister for Commerce with regard to Britain's requirements of primary produce in the coming year. What we were told was, in a sense, doleful. It was that wheat, beef, lambs and fruit may not find a market. Should that be so, our primary products will be badly hit. It will certainly react badly on the State because those commodities might be said to be the principal exports of our primary products. I suggest to the Chief Secretary that he should assure the House that active assistance and advice will be given to our farmers in the direction of growing those products that will prove profitable to them, namely, pork, eggs and butter. While on the subject of exports I might be permitted to particularise in the matter of butter. We have a considerable area under wheat and in many instances the farmer has endeavoured to bring in additional revenue by assisting himself in the direction of keeping a few cows, pigs and poultry. The difficulty, however, has been that there has been an absence of co-operation between these people and the Department of Agriculture, a co-operation that might have been instrumental in the farmers receiving instruction to the extent of raising them to a state of efficiency from which they would derive considerably better results. I feel almost ashamed to have to say that the butter manufactured from the cream that is sent to the factory is such that it cannot be exported to England. Recently the suggestion was made that any butter exported below 83 was a bad advertisement for the State. That class of butter should not be exported at all. All the same it has been exported for some years. The point I wish to make is that farmers throughout the wheat areas are in the unfortunate position that they have never had that instruction or help from the department to which they were entitled. If butter is produced under the required grade, there can be no market for it, because the lower priced margarine will take its place. Farmers are now looking towards the coming spring which they hope will be the means of financing them over the year. There is also the question of transport from the farmer's home to the railway and again transport by rail to the factory. In some instances cream has to be conveyed over a distance of 200 miles. Some men are now being employed to give

instruction, but it must be a year before any result can follow from that instruction. In any case the instructors cannot cover all the areas in the time at their disposal. This year Geraldton, Northampton, Nabawa and Walkaway have experienced good seasons and feed there is very good. A year or two ago they were in a rather bad way and no help by way of instruction was available for them. I have letters in my office from people there complaining of the treatment they are receiving from the factories when, as a matter of fact, the factories are not to blame. The farmers are supplying cream of an inferior quality when they should be sending to the factory cream of a grade that would yield butter worthy of the name of butter. I trust the Chief Secretary will refer the matter to the Minister for Agriculture with a view to immediate steps being taken to establish contact with dairy farmers so that the economic loss that has occurred from year to year will be ended and the butter being asked for by Great Britain will be supplied in greater quantity than has hitherto been the case.

Ordinarily there are a few matters concerning the Metropolitan-Suburban Province with which I would deal, but in view of the need for our getting to work on important legislation as early as possible, and for our placing no difficulties in the way of the Government, I will refrain from touching upon those subjects. I conclude by expressing the hope that we will all do our part to help in bringing a silver lining to the dark cloud caused by the war and that shortly we shall be able to congratulate ourselves upon an outcome of the European conflict favourable to the British Empire.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [5.17]: I do not desire to detain the House for long but would like to make one or two remarks, particularly as I happen to be one of those members who had to face the electors recently and was included amongst those who received congratulations on their re-election. I wish to join other speakers in welcoming new members who have succeeded those who have fallen by the wayside. We regret that some who stood for re-election failed to secure the necessary majority, but we must extend a hearty welcome to those who have taken their places, and particularly to our old friend, Sir Hal Colebatch, whom we are glad to see with us once more. Not

only has he already given us an interesting outline of the great benefit his travels in other parts of the globe have been to him, but I feel sure that from time to time his readiness in debate and his experience will be of great advantage to this Chamber and to the Government of Western Australia.

The Lieut.-Governor's Speech dealt principally with war matters and gave no outline of the measures that are to receive our consideration. I hope we shall not have a repetition of what we experienced last session when measures of a contentious kind were brought down in spite of the assurance we received that no legislation of an irritating character would be introduced. One Bill we passed was to prevent profiteering and I think that measure has caused more mischief than any other that has been passed since I have been in this House. Many instances could be quoted where that class of legislation has tended to create profiteering rather than prevent it. The fixation of the price of meat which has been referred to by several members had the effect of almost ruining various men with whom I am acquainted. Men who have been engaged in industry for many years have learned that there are particular periods when seasons are bad and it has been necessary for them to make provision against times when there was no natural food available. Those engaged in the butchering trade well know that there are certain times of the year when they can go on the market and freely buy meat at 2d. and 3d. a pound, subsequently making handsome profits out of the deal. But when growers are struggling to find feed just to keep their flocks alive, butchers have to pay rather a big price for the meat and are thus unable to make the very handsome profits they were previously enjoying. The action taken by the Commissioner as a result of the powers granted to him last session, however, enabled profiteering to take place. The price was fixed, I understand, following a certain threat, but while those in the trade made substantial gains, the folk who happened to be putting their stock on the market at that time experienced severe losses. Many have withheld their stock from the market altogether, having been advised to do so. In consequence, they have had to forego the chance of making any return at present in the hope that they will be able to make up the leeway in the coming 12 months.

Far greater worries are involved in the raising of stock to-day than were experienced in the past. Foxes have constituted the greatest menace and some of those who undertook the production of early lambs for the market had to discontinue their operations on account of the onslaughts of this pest. By arrangement with the bankers or stock firms under whose advice they acted, they ceased dealing with ewes for the raising of lambs and concentrated upon what are called "dry sheep," wethers, for the market. They were accustomed, at the end of the year, to buy a good class of forward stores or fat sheep and in the summer feed them well on preserved fodder, put aside specially for the purpose. There has always been a big increase in prices at that most critical time of the year when so few people can place fat stock on the market, for what I have said applies to animals other than sheep. But on this occasion, those who relinquished lamb-raising for the other activity I have mentioned are the very people who suffered at the hands of the profiteers under the recent price-fixing. They lost not only all the fodder they had put into their stock but also any chance of profit, thus being worse off than before. In one year they were almost ruined. They now have to cast round for some other source of income. To undertake general pastoral business is not possible for they lack sufficient land. Those men have been absolutely taken down. They were not consulted in the matter and have suffered severely as a result of the Commissioner's action. I understood, when the measure was debated in this Chamber, that the Commissioner would have to give consideration to all the side issues connected with price fixing and confer with people directly concerned. But I am quite confident from what I have heard from those who have been affected that the decision was to them a bolt from the blue. They had not been consulted and knew nothing of what was happening. As a result of what occurred, their market was knocked out.

In travelling around I have come in contact with a number of people who have expressed concern about the existing condition of affairs in the wheat industry. They are in serious difficulties, having had a series of very bad years. Some of them showed me letters they have received from the Government threatening to cut off their

water supplies unless they pay their rates. They assured me that all they could do was to write to the authorities pointing out that all their wheat, and consequently the whole of their year's income, had been taken from them. Because of the control exercised by the Government over wheat, their crops have been handed over and in many instances the bank has taken the whole of the proceeds and charged them not only for the money advanced for the year but also with expenses incurred during the two or three previous bad years. In some instances the men are left with very little cash. One person had only £20 on which to maintain his family for the whole year, and another had only £50, on which to finance another crop. Unless the water rates were paid the settlers were told that water would be cut off. They had stock running on their holdings. If the water were cut off some of them felt they would have to sell their stock rather than run the risk of having a forced sale at a moment's notice. Many of the farmers, therefore, made up their minds to get the stock off their properties rather than await the expiration of the fortnight's notice. The Government is constantly saying it is sympathetic towards the man on the land, and that it treats every case on its merits. Many of the settlers have been so worried by their experiences that they have been driven almost insane. We find, however, that the Government is not giving consideration in many instances to these people. I know of settlers who three years ago could not pay their rates. In some cases the rates were written off, but in others it was thought that the settlers could pay and every effort was made to induce them to do so. Some of these people did not get any water although they were expected to pay the rates. Because of the dry season the Government was unable to send any water through the pipes. Water had, therefore, to be brought by train. The settlers concerned were still being rated for the water, and then the Government demanded that they should also pay for the water they received by rail. The matter is a serious one.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Are the settlers expected to pay twice?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They do.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: They are expected to pay for services they do not get and have been charged for water that is not

supplied. It was bad enough that they had to get the water by means of the railway service, because the trains are so often late that the farmers had to wait sometimes far into the night before they could get delivery of the water.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The same procedure is followed in all country towns.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I am sure if the community realised the enormity of these proceedings they would not return to office a Government that would do such things.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Do the people pay for the water that comes by rail as well as the rates that are charged up to them?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Yes. They pay for the water that comes by rail and they have to pay a water rate of 6d. per acre per annum. They also have the expense of carting the water for several miles from the point of delivery. Although there was no water available to come through the pipes from the dams they still had to pay their water rates. These are some of the circumstances that place men on the land in such difficulties and harass them to such an extent. They are not mere pinpricks but are of a really serious nature. These people have been fighting against the existing system for several years. I feel I cannot speak too often on this matter or stress it too vehemently. Some real consideration should be given to the settlers concerned.

Sometimes I think it is a pity that officials should be set over their fellows when those officials know nothing about the trials and troubles that are encountered by the man on the land. I am not referring particularly to the Agricultural Bank, but to the private banks as well. The officials who have not been made to go through the mill themselves, endeavour to conduct a farm faced with all the difficulties that are experienced by the settlers. If they had that experience they would be more tolerant and more likely to consider the position of the farmer. It is all very well for the Government to embark upon the policy of endeavouring to put people back on the land. I doubt whether it would be possible to induce anyone who had once turned down a farming property to go back to it. Most of the farmers and their families have struggled very hard against adversity. Some of them have put all their money into the ventures and have certainly done a great deal of work. They

have been living on hope. The storekeepers have trusted them and done all that was possible for them. When the Government has made available money for people on the land the storekeeper has generally been left high and dry. In times of stress people who have had a first mortgage have probably realised 17s. to 20s. in the pound, but the storekeeper who has carried the farmers along has frequently received no more than 2s. 6d. in the pound. I cannot understand why, when the Agricultural Bank Commissioners are dividing the moneys they receive for these purposes, they should be so hard upon the storekeeper. Their action has made things much more difficult for the man on the land to get any credit. These were some of the matters that were brought before me during my recent campaign. I travelled about the country where the settlers were having a difficult time because of the bad season. We know how bad the season has been, and how low are commodity prices. In one year the prices were a little better, but in most instances on that occasion the crops were relatively short. Although the price improved the farmers did not harvest a sufficiently large crop to enable them to get out of the troubles that had come upon them in previous years. It is remarkable that we should have had another dry year such as that which was struck when war broke out in 1914. The season that marked the outbreak of the present war is practically the same as that which marked the outbreak of the Great War. All over Australia a dreadful drought has been experienced. No doubt there are patches where the effects of the drought have not been so severely felt, but in most districts throughout the Commonwealth people associated with the land have been greatly affected. Not only has that been so in the case of wheat farmers, but in the case of those engaged in pastoral pursuits. I speak feelingly when I think of the worries and troubles that all concerned are experiencing. They are suffering losses in every form; if these are not due to foxes they are due to some other cause.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Poor old farmer!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Yes, the farmer has to carry the load for the rest of the community. Those who are endeavouring to grow sheep in the wheat areas are suffering from one trouble or another. I have been concerned to notice the enormous sums

of money that are being borrowed by various Australian Governments.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: The manufacturer has not had the same help as that which has been given to the farmer.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: He has had a wonderful spin. He has put upon the farmer's back all kinds of extraordinary charges for everything that is required in connection with the land. The farmer has been unable to pass on those charges. He has to produce his wheat without any assistance, and the same thing applies to the grower of wool.

The greatest competitor wool has ever had is cotton. The Federal Government very readily gave a bonus for the growing of cotton. In other words, it was prepared to assist the foreigner, who is the only man who can successfully grow that commodity, and who generally produces big families, whereas the average Australian family is not a big one. The population of Australia is not increasing as it should. I doubt whether much headway will be made as a result of the bonus given for the production of cotton. What the Government should do is to give a bonus to encourage people to produce more wool. I notice that the Arbitration Court has put another burden upon wool by increasing the cost of shearing. Mr. Dimmitt asked, "How can we expect this State to progress?" The position affects the manufacturer and everyone else. The costs of production continue to mount higher and higher. What progress can a person make if he has to produce goods at a higher cost and cannot get from the sale of those goods something in addition to enable him to support himself and his family? I regret the season has not been an improvement over those of previous years. The outlook is serious. I had hoped that the Government would decide that in these times we should go on without further borrowing of money. The Commonwealth Government has been spending enormous sums in its war efforts, and there should be sufficient work to absorb all the unemployed. I hope it will be possible to put our house in order and achieve better results than have been obtained in the last few years. As the season advances I trust it will be possible to inform the wheatgrowers where they stand. From what I gather the outlook is such that it is not worth their while to put in greater

areas of wheat. They want to know whether to turn their crops into hay or use them for some other purpose.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Heenan, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.44]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 13th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 7th August, 1940.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. North, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. J. H. Smith (Nelson) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

MR. MANN (Beverley) [4.34]: Since we met last year, events in Europe have moved rapidly, and we find Australia nearer to the possibility of invasion than it has ever been. There has been much criticism of the attitude of the Commonwealth Government towards defence measures, but I am satisfied that we are not sufficiently conversant with the position to pass judgment. One thing is clear and that is that whereas one could expect that to-day of all times there should be uniformity of ideas,

particularly amongst members of the Government, there is actually a conflict of opinion. I think the majority of members of this House will regret that both parties in the Federal sphere have not seen fit to form a war Cabinet, as was done in England. We are fighting a big battle and it is for the people of Australia to realise the position. To me the most extraordinary fact is that such a comparatively small number of men is to be mobilised for the defence of Australia. In my opinion there should be at least a million men under arms. Every man between the ages of 18 and 50 should have a full course of two months in camp. Old soldiers who are members of this Chamber will recall that those of us who served in the last war were not knocked into shape in five minutes. We were in camp a long time before going into action; and we are still playing our part, together with other returned soldiers in Australia. The question is asked as to where we should put all the men if additional numbers were mobilised. My reply is that there are many racecourses that could be used. The Show Grounds at Claremont are used as a training area, and racecourses could be similarly utilised. If the whole of the youth of this State were put into camp for two months' training, even though their services might never be required, the training they received would prove the finest benefit we could bestow upon them. Unfortunately there is a tendency on the part of our young men to-day to lack the discipline to which we of an older generation were subjected. Undoubtedly many men will be required for the defence of this country in the future, and I hope that a more extensive scheme for the protection of Australia will be established. I trust that instead of having so much congestion in the cities, men will be taken into the country and trained there. Some people ask where we would find non-commissioned officers to train recruits. I think that many of the old soldiers would willingly give their services in that direction. To the credit of the country areas it must be said that the returned soldiers and rifle clubs are prepared to give help, and trainees could receive instruction from those sources. I am afraid that the rifle clubs have not received from the military authorities the full re-