

deplorable that this situation is allowed to continue and that the fuel agents can be unjustly accused of jeopardising people's jobs. That is not the case, and there is no reason to continue the ban, apart from the fact that there is a group of union officials with only one aim in view, namely, power. They do not care how they obtain power. Since I have been a member of this House, I have heard the Minister for Labour and Industry criticised from the other side. I should also like to criticise the Minister for Labour and Industry but for a totally different reason: I consider that the Minister has been far too lenient in his attitude towards the unions concerned.

I support the motion.

[Interruption from the gallery.]

The SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the person in the public gallery to be silent.

MR GRILL (Yilgarn-Dundas) [8.11 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, I rise to take part in this Address-in-Reply debate and thereby make my maiden speech in Parliament. Firstly, I should like to congratulate you on your elevation to your high office, and I would sincerely like to thank you for the consideration and help you have given to me and my fellow new members since I have been here. I wish you success in your publicly expressed ideals in engendering more mutual respect in the debates which take place in this House, and more dignity and respect for the proceedings of Parliament.

Secondly, I should like to thank the officers of this Chamber and of Parliament generally in the way they have helped me, and the courteous and helpful manner in which they have gone about their work during the few weeks I have been here. It is something I really appreciate as a newcomer.

Thirdly, I should like to thank the members on this side of the House for the help, encouragement, and advice they have given me so far.

Lastly, I thank those few friends I have on the other side of the House who so unreservedly welcomed me here.

I understand it is traditional in the circumstances to make some comments about the honourable gentleman who preceded me in this place, and nothing gives me greater pleasure. I hold the seat of Yilgarn-Dundas but, as most members probably will appreciate, that seat is really the electorate of Boulder-Dundas with a little fiddling at one end, mainly the Boulder end, and the addition of the Yilgarn part of the electorate

at the other end. So, my predecessor in title is in fact the person who held the seat of the electorate of Boulder-Dundas up till the time it was redistributed. I refer, of course, to my old and very good friend and colleague with whom I have done battle both publicly and privately on many occasions, but nonetheless a man I respect—none other than Tom Hartrey.

For those people who are interested, Tom Hartrey is still up in Kalgoorlie, still practising law at the age of 76, and still taking on the police and winning his share of cases. As a matter of fact, he took one for me yesterday and I am sure he won. He is a man of distinction, a man of great wit and a man who I think was respected by most people during the six years he held office.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr GRILL: He has a very colourful turn of phrase and an ability with words of which most of us are envious. He has an ability to put people down and I certainly feel envious about that because I do not possess it. There is something about him which makes him much larger than life. He is certainly the sort of person one would like on one's side if one were in a scrap. He will fight until all the fight is out of him, and then fight some more.

His election to the seat of Boulder-Dundas was rather ironic. He, like I, stood unsuccessfully for Mr Coyne's seat of Murchison-Eyre. He then found that Arthur Moir's seat was becoming vacant. Mr Moir was resigning ostensibly because he wanted to make way for someone a little younger. Undeterred by that factor, Tom Hartrey stood for pre-selection and won it, and stood for the seat itself and—not remarkably because then it was a much stronger Labor seat than it is now—he won it. The ironic fact was that Tom Hartrey was some years older than Arthur Moir. It was a strange situation.

As I said, Tom Hartrey was a person of great wit. He is one of a long line of Irish lawyers of which the goldfields can be very proud. I remember on one occasion when the new courthouse was being opened by Mr Tom Evans, who was then the Attorney-General. There were a number of persons on the rostrum and amongst them was His Honour, the Chief Justice, a number of other judges, and dignitaries of all sorts. Tom Hartrey was asked to more or less give an address-in-reply to the speech of the Chief Justice. Tom Hartrey rose and said that while he had been practising in Kalgoorlie he had seen some very able prosecutors go through

the court and had also seen some particularly eminent counsel for the defence. There had also been some very honourable judges, including the Chief Justice who was present. He said—

In deference to you all, the most magnificent people who ever came here have been the juries.

Tom Hartrey has always had a way with him, and also with the juries.

I am in fact very proud to be representing the people of Yilgarn-Dundas, not merely because they are good Labor voters, but also because they are people who have contributed in a very real sense towards the productivity of the area and of the State. They have also contributed to the standard of living of the people of this State in general.

I refer to those who have worked in the goldmines and nickel mines in my electorate, and those on farms and other areas of productivity. I feel I should refer to the goldmines in particular.

Some of the greatest and richest goldmines in the world have been found within my electorate, and even today the bulk of the State's gold comes from that area. Similarly with nickel, the bulk of this State's nickel comes from within my electorate. Essentially it is a great mining area. It has large quantities of iron ore which are railed from Koolyanobbing and other areas. Huge quantities of salt are harvested from Lake Lefroy and other places.

The potential of the region, in the opinion of eminent geologists, is unlimited, if only it could be tapped.

The electorate is significant in the production of grain, wool, meat, and other primary products. The people of the Yilgarn and Salmon Gums districts have only scratched the surface of their potential.

It is because the people in those areas have been so obviously and honestly hard working and have so contributed to the productivity of the electorate that sometimes it astounds me to realise that so little of the wealth produced there has actually rubbed off on the people.

The goldmining industry has been a great source of wealth to the State and gave the State its first real push along the road in the 1890s. It also came to the rescue of the State in the 1930s.

The nickel industry, along with the mining industry generally, has been of paramount importance and of great value to the State. However, what legacies has this great wealth left the

people? The legacies are of a dubious value to the areas.

On the credit side we could say that places like Boulder have more hotels per head of population than any other area of the State. We can also say I suppose that it has gambling schools, brothels, and so on, depending of course upon whether one is visiting the goldfields on official or unofficial business. If on the former sort of business then the premises do not exist.

On the debit side we have a population of older and retired miners who are afflicted with a progressively worsening disease called silicosis. We also have a younger population of miners who are slowly contracting that disease. We have a big percentage of workers who have lived with their families in what are little more than shacks. We have vistas of rusty corrugated iron and tumbledown buildings. We have perennial dust storms in Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Bullfinch, and other towns because the mining companies have left dumps unattended. We have old-fashioned Government buildings badly in need of repair. They would not be tolerated or expect to be tolerated anywhere else in this State.

We also had, except for the brief period of the Tonkin Government, an attitude of permanent neglect by Governments to this vital area of the State. I can give some examples. Prior to the election of the Tonkin Government in March, 1970, there was not a Government school in the area which was not badly in need of repair. There was not a Government building not in the same condition. The Eastern Goldfields Technical School was a collection of huts and shacks. The Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital was not much better. The situation generally in respect of Government buildings was very bad, and those who have been to Kalgoorlie and have seen the neglect of these buildings can testify to this fact as well as I can.

To its credit the Tonkin Government immediately commenced renovating the schools. It began construction of a new courthouse. It drew up plans and allocated money for a new Mines Department building. It drew up plans for a new regional hospital. It drew up plans and allocated money for a new technical school, and it commenced construction on the new Eastern Goldfields High School.

What happened when the present Government came into office? Most of the renovations were, in fact, continued and completed. Those buildings under construction were also completed and put into use, and a new transportable medical centre was established at Kambalda. Also on the

credit side, after the terrible deaths on the Kambalda Road, the Government was forced into extending the high school at Kambalda to cater for the fourth and fifth-year students.

However, I emphasise that nearly every other project in the area came to a standstill. Work was stopped or money which was allocated for it was reallocated elsewhere. For one reason or another the construction did not go ahead. For example, the construction on the Eastern Goldfields High School stopped. The fourth stage of the school was never completed, and it is a split school. Most of the students are accommodated in the new building, while, nearly a mile away, other students languish in the old building. The children are bussed between the two areas for certain purposes. The situation is intolerable.

The plans for the Eastern Goldfields Technical School did not go ahead. The money which was allocated for the school was reallocated for work in a different part of the State. The modern five-storied regional hospital plan was scrapped altogether, but a few weeks ago it was announced that there would be a new hospital. However, it will not be a new five-storied structure, but will be like the old hospital; that is, a motley group of single-storied structures to be built over 10 years. If history is any guide, even those buildings will not eventuate.

Many of the school buildings are still in a deplorable condition. They require renovation, but should really be replaced. When pressed, Government officials say that plans are being drawn up and that buildings will be replaced in good time. When pressed even further and asked when they will be replaced the Government says, "We do not know".

Another example is the Boulder Junior Primary School. The building is simply falling down. It is almost decaying around the ears of the students and teachers. Classes are crammed into a small assembly room in the middle of the building, and there are classes in the corridors. The rooms are not heated, and there is no air-conditioning. The building is almost totally inadequate.

I have read Press cuttings in which my predecessor years ago complained about the intolerable situation in the school, but in spite of that the school has been on minimum maintenance for some years, and there is no relief in sight. It is hard to visualise what can be done about the place.

I refer to the school specifically because I asked the Minister when he was in the Boulder area a

few weeks ago especially to look at the school to see what he could do about it; and I trust that, as a fair-minded man, he will act urgently on the matter.

What else do we have in the eastern goldfields region? We seem to have an atmosphere which is not conducive to visiting politicians' sense of right and wrong. In fact, the atmosphere is one in which politicians become downright mendacious. I can assure members that if the two gentlemen, Lynch and Anthony, come to the area, Lynch will be lynched and so will Anthony.

What do we have in the eastern goldfields region in spite of its wealth and the great contribution it has made, not only to the wealth of the area itself, but also, as I have said before, to the personal wealth of others outside its boundaries?

What we have in a nutshell is chronic and ever-present economic instability. During the seven years that I lived in the eastern goldfields the area has staggered from one economic crisis to the next. Any one industry area is in fact at the mercy of the fickle winds of economic fate. If an area is dependent on the mining industry alone, as the eastern goldfields virtually is, it must have a fragile economy. History has proved this. The history of the area in an economic sense has been marked by three dramatic booms which have been followed by three long and drawn out times of depression or economic decline.

The fact that the area and the people who live in it have continued to weather these economic storms is a tribute to them rather than to anything any Government has ever done for them, or anybody else, or anything any company has ever done for them. The trauma of the effort of weathering these storms and staggering from one crisis to the next is in itself debilitating. It wears the people down. They lose their spirit. Eventually the people move off and live elsewhere. They live near the coast. People are frightened to invest in this area. The investment they do have in the area is always of a temporary nature. They do not build new houses there because they are afraid that tomorrow the houses will be worthless. They live in a frightening environment where they do not wish to invest at all and neither does anyone else wish to invest there. Apart from those people who are prepared to risk what we would call speculative capital, very little other capital comes into the area.

In consequence, people fear, when they live in an area such as this, that they are not going

to be able to give their children and their grandchildren the upbringing that they deserve. People point to the nickel industry and say, "There is your saviour. There is your stability." But those prophecies are not entirely true. Unfortunately the nickel industry is just another part of the mining industry and, in turn, is just as susceptible to the vagaries of the economic market place as history has shown gold and other minerals to be. The nickel industry is still susceptible to the booms and depressions that the market place seems to impose upon it.

I have been reliably informed that Western Mining nickel operations would have been in a very shaky position if it were not for the last Fraser devaluation. I have been reliably told that the nickel industry is going through very hard times. The industry faces a very low level of demand; it must face the fact that new mines are coming on stream in various other parts of the world. It faces the fact, as was announced only a few weeks ago, as members will be aware, that the giant Canadian nickel company, Inco, has now entered into very aggressive marketing tactics.

I am also reliably informed by people well placed in the nickel industry, that inevitably some of the nickel mines around the world must close down. It worries me, and many other people in this area, that small mines like Scotia and Carr Boyd, north of Kalgoorlie, will close down in the near future. It also worries people from my area that Kambalda will cut back operations and will not go ahead with further developments; that Kambalda will not be employing as many men as it has previously.

I am not saying these things to cast gloom on what I consider to be one of the great areas of this State, but I believe it is important that we appreciate just how fragile the economy of these mining areas is. It is essential that all members appreciate just how worried people are and how burdened life can become in these areas where one does not know from one day to the next whether one's house is worth what one paid for it, or whether it is worthless; whether one's children have a future in this area or whether they do not. All these things add up to a very unstable situation.

It is my humble opinion, that this Parliament, and the Parliaments that follow it, must take a fresh look at areas such as the eastern goldfields. It is also my humble opinion that it is quite intolerable in this day and age that an area which has survived for 80 years and has sustained the single largest metropolis outside the metropolitan area; that an area that has had so much

of the history of this State embodied in its own history, and an area that has given so much to this State should for ever be balanced on the economic razor's edge. It is not right; it is quite intolerable, and it has to stop.

It is the responsibility of Government to move into these areas and stabilise them. There are a number of ways in which this can be done. I would like to mention just a few of them. Firstly, and most obviously, the way that any Government must head if it intends to rationalise the area is to realise that it is a permanent one; that it does have a future in front of it. It must be the Government first of all and last of all that says and shows the people that the area does have a future. The best way that this can be done is by its actions.

The eastern goldfields region should not be one where new schools, new hospitals and new Government buildings are last thought of and last erected. These should be the areas where such things are first thought of and first erected because these are the places where they are most needed. If the Government is prepared to show the way by investing in these areas, then other people will follow. The Government should show the way to people who want to live there for the rest of their lives and have their children live there. When the Government does not spend money or erect buildings and allows its own buildings to fall down, as the Boulder courthouse did just three weeks ago without any announcement from this House; when the Government allows its own buildings to fall into disrepair, the people lose confidence. When the people look at an area such as Boulder and see it decaying, with Government buildings unpainted and in a state of disrepair, they lose confidence in the area. One cannot expect people to invest in it when the Government does not.

What are we here for anyway? We are here to help people and encourage them in this very special area of the State.

The second way in which I believe it is essential that the Government helps this area is that it must give to people in large regional areas like Kalgoorlie, Boulder, and Kambalda, some sort of recreational, social and cultural facilities, equal to those found in the city. I do not mean on the same scale as one would find in the metropolitan areas. I do not mean there should be a Concert Hall built in Boulder. But something should be built there and some facilities should be made available for recreational and cultural activities. It should not be necessary to send children to Perth to experience these things. It should be

possible to have them available in the large regional areas. One must appreciate that places like Kalgoorlie and Boulder serve large areas and smaller towns as well, which in turn need such facilities. I believe that some of the money and wealth which this State has gained from the huge gold, nickel and iron ore deposits should be returned to the goldfields in the form of recreational and cultural facilities.

Thirdly, it is essential that the Government should stop paying lip service to decentralisation. Why should it not be possible for a whole Government department to be set up in the goldfields? In this age of easy communications why should not the whole Mines Department be set up in Kalgoorlie or Boulder? Why should not even a small part of the Mines Department be set up there? We do not have even a small portion of the Mines Department in this region; and this is the problem of decentralisation.

Certain members on the Government side played merry hell with the centralist policies of Canberra, but quite honestly, Canberra is like a fairy godmother compared with the spectre of Perth centralisation. Perth centralists are sucking the country dry and have been doing so for years.

This Government could do one thing tonight, or tomorrow night to inspire confidence in the goldfields. It could say here and now, without qualification and without reservation, that the Western Australian School of Mines is going to stay in Kalgoorlie in the same way as the Labor Party said it would. That is not a very hard thing to do. I know it is cheaper and all members of this House know it is cheaper to educate a mining engineer, a geologist or metallurgist here in Perth: but is that the only criterion on which we judge our mining engineers? Is the only criterion one of cost?

What we have to look at in terms of our mining engineers, geologists and metallurgists is the quality of their training. If one talks to people in the mining industry, in Western Mining, for example, one will find that they prefer a man who has been brought up and educated in a mining environment to one who has been brought up and educated in a city environment; they would prefer him any day of the week. These people put their money where their mouth is by employing engineers with that type of experience.

It is essential in my view and in the view of a lot of people who live in this area, that the Government should make a positive decision in relation to the School of Mines, in favour of the eastern goldfields.

It is in these ways, Mr Speaker, that I feel the eastern goldfields area can be helped. There is one final way in which I believe the region can be assisted. It is not an easy matter, but I believe the Government must move towards a situation where metal prices are stabilised. Quite frankly I do not know how that can be achieved. However, I do know this: As long as metal prices stay at the whim of overseas markets, it will be almost impossible properly to stabilise areas such as the goldfields. I believe that any Government of whatever complexion must move towards a situation where this is done.

I know this sounds like socialism, and a number of people do not like socialism, but look at what we have done for the greatest and truest of socialists, the farmers. Look at the schemes we have set up for them whereby they are protected and insulated from the violent upswings and downswings of the market. Look at the schemes by which their products are sold in such a way as to ensure that they are not hurt in bad times. Why cannot that be done for the mining industry, and more particularly, why cannot it be done for the people who work in the mining industry? After all, they are the people who make their homes in these areas, live in these areas and stay in these areas. It is the international companies, by and large, which "up sticks and away" when a region becomes unprofitable or unproductive. So it is the people whom we need to look after and, quite honestly, I find the people in the eastern goldfields are not being looked after in the correct manner.

In conclusion, I should like to say that I have touched on only some of the points that I feel are really bothering the people in my electorate. At a later stage I should like to deal with more of these matters in greater length. For the time being at least I thank you, Mr Speaker, and members of the House, for bearing with me in this my first speech in the House.

MR CLARKO (Karrinyup) [8.44 p.m.]: Mr Speaker, I too wish to share with the other members of the House in offering you my heartiest congratulations on your appointment to your high office, and also to wish the very best to all the new members of the House.

Tonight I wish to speak about something which is beautiful, glamorous, and an object of everyone's affection; a status symbol—

Mr Jamieson: You want to keep away from those beach girls.