

got control of its own finances. That was the claim of the primary producers, those who are responsible for returning to this House the members now sitting on the Opposition benches. The Country Party has given considerable thought to the policy which Labour has advocated for many years, but which unfortunately it has never had the opportunity to put completely into operation. Only once, during a brief period of five years, was Labour in the position of putting its financial policy into operation, and that was during the years 1910-1916 when it established the Commonwealth Bank—the people's bank, an institution which was the forerunner of Labour's policy of finance. It is true that a Labour Government was also in power in the Commonwealth from 1929 to 1931 but that Government was only in office, not in power. It was opposed by the anti-Labour majority in the Senate led by George Foster Pearce. I say advisedly now that if there is an appeal to the people and Labour comes into power, it will again put into operation its financial policy. It will be the long-range policy the member for West Perth preaches about and in connection with which he has not submitted anything in practical form. I would refer him to the conference recently held by the primary producers, which realised the necessity for the alteration of the monetary system. I only hope that the struggle in which we are now engaged will not be as long as we now fear it may be. We must, however, do all we can to bring it to a successful and victorious conclusion.

MR. BERRY (Irwin-Moore) [5.58]: I was particularly interested in that part of the Lieut.-Governor's Speech which referred to the manufacture of munitions. I do not think that ever in our history or in the history of the British Empire have we had to face a position such as that with which we are confronted to-day. Eleven months ago, when I was first elected to this House, I did not expect nor was it possible for anyone to forecast, that the German nation would sweep over the European world as it has done. It did not occur to me that in a matter of a few weeks' action a nation like Germany would destroy countries such as Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland and France. Two years before the war began I lived among German people in a German colony and I assure the House that a pecu-

liarity of those people was their nervous restless energy and that everything they did was done in ruthlessly efficient and military manner. Everything was disciplined and I assure the House that the discipline I actually saw was such that I should not care to live under it. This question of munitions is of such paramount importance that a duty devolves on every man in the country to do his share morally, physically and financially to see that our sons are sent overseas equipped in such a manner that they will come back to us. Australia's greatest heritage is her sons. There is not much more to be said on this matter except that I trust the Government will realise that the efficiency of the enemy is such that we must do more than match it; we must surpass it. There is no doubt in my mind that the English-speaking people can do that. There is such a thing as the Englishman's spirit and I am convinced from what I have seen of English-speaking people the world over that Hitler cannot beat us because we do not know when we are beaten. That is a characteristic of which we might well be proud.

Passing from the subject of munitions, I wish to draw attention to the wonderful effort made in this State and in Australia as a whole in subscribing funds to prosecute the war. I recently attended a war rally in the country. To my amazement I found that although members of the farming community were not in a position to give money, some of them submitted crates of fowls. That is a very hard pill for Hitler to swallow, and it demonstrates the spirit of the English-speaking people to which I have referred. I thought that was a wonderful effort. At the same time I cannot help feeling that with all these rallies and patriotic efforts we are making, we may lose sight of what might be called the refugees of our own country. There are institutions in this land that are suffering, I am told, because of the enthusiasm that is being displayed for patriotic funds. I trust nothing will be done to prejudice the interests of the many poor unfortunate folk who are in need of assistance here.

In his able speech, the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) said he hoped that more secondary industries would be established in this State. I think that has the full agreement of every member of the House. My considered opinion is that secondary industries will come to Western

Australia when, and only when, the producers of Western Australia are producing at a profit. When that state of affairs exists, there will be no doubt about the establishing of secondary industries and the growth of population. There is an old adage which says that success brings success, and if the primary producers of Australia meet with success, I am convinced that the people of other countries, people of a type we wish to have, will come to the Commonwealth. The fact has been demonstrated in several other countries and especially in the Far East where I lived for some years, that when the primary producer enjoys prosperity, there is immense prosperity in the country as a whole. I would suggest that perhaps we have not yet formulated a four-square policy for the men on the land. We all admit that they are perhaps one of the hardest worked sections without pay in the community, but the Federal Government so far has not come forward with any definite plan to alleviate the distress that they suffer. We were told to grow more wheat; then we were told to grow less wheat. We have actually been told to cut our wheat for hay, presumably to feed tractors! The time has come when we must, as a war effort, see that the primary producer has a fair crack of the whip, because I consider that the primary producer, in the order of things existing to-day, is no less a soldier than the member of the Army Service Corps who delivers the finished article to the men in the line. When that fact is realised and that man catered for we shall find we have gone a long way towards making Australia a great nation. I am convinced that no stone should be left unturned to put the primary producer fairly and squarely on the economic map. I have all the sympathy in the world for the man who secures an increase in the basic wage. If I had my way and was a fabulously wealthy man I would give every individual in Australia all the money I could to enable him to enjoy a decent standard of living. As the member for Perth (Mr. Needham) pointed out, this could be done if we wanted to do it. Before the end of last session in December, 1939, a motion was introduced in this House by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) urging that the resources of the Commonwealth Bank should be used for the purposes of defence and other things. I refer particularly to the defence aspect because that is the sub-

ject paramount in our minds now. The motion was passed as far as I can recollect without a dissentient voice and it then passed out of the House apparently into the grave, because we have gone on in exactly the same way and seemingly will continue to do so. Our finances are becoming more and more muddled, so much so that perhaps our very war effort is being prejudiced through strict adherence to an economic system which is not only rotten but which many of us prophesied would lead to the tragedy we are facing to-day.

Hon. members probably saw a reference in the Press yesterday to the fact that power alcohol was being produced from molasses. That is a very important point because it has a bearing on the question of petrol restriction, restriction that none of us is going to dispute provided it is equitable. It is pleasing to note that in the Eastern States the question of power alcohol has been given consideration. Unfortunately the attention of scientists is to be directed mostly towards molasses. I trust that is not because of the influence of the Colonial Sugar Refining Co. Power alcohol can also be produced from barley and wheat. We have been told that the production of power alcohol from barley and wheat is more expensive than from molasses, but the fact remains that we have unsaleable stocks of wheat and some of that tremendous surplus could be converted into power alcohol, thereby saving the wheat from destruction by mice and weevils. Such an activity would be of advantage to the primary producers. Before the downfall of France, thousands of bushels of wheat were used for that particular purpose in that country, and a high power motor spirit was made. Probably the Minister for Industrial Development will tell us later that he has gone into this matter, and I hope he will stress to the fullest extent the importance of the subject. Years ago when I was in Singapore we went into this question of power alcohol and produced from Nipah palm a spirit that drove a motor car. I admit that we had to start on petrol, but the product of the Nipah palm definitely drove the car. The same result could be obtained from the use of wheat. As far back as 1871 this fact was recognised, but we have never bothered about it, be-

cause we have never had to do so. To-day, however, with war all around us, we have to explore every avenue and do the very best we can to ensure that we emerge on the right side of the fence. None of us will quarrel with necessary restrictions on the use of petrol, but if it is possible to alleviate the position as the result of investigations into the possibility of producing power alcohol from wheat, the Government should undertake those investigations and do the job thoroughly. I agree with the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) that the Government should ask some of us to co-operate on committees appointed to inquire into problems of this kind. A little while ago my mind was in a turmoil over existing conditions, and I went around this State to see if I could do something to help. I found, however, that I could do nothing, that I was bumping my head against a brick wall. That is not right. They even told me when I went to the military that my "tummy" was too large. The fact remains that we all want to do something. People everywhere are crying out to be allowed to help. In their enthusiasm, the returned soldiers—and I pay them tribute for it—have almost got in the road, but they are at last being recognised, and the home defence units they have succeeded in forming will, I consider, prove a fine additional asset to the war contribution of Australia. If any funny little yellow Jap comes poking his nose here, he will be well and truly punched on that nose by some returned soldier. Returned soldiers are asking, in fact, demanding, that they should be armed and given equipment, and I think their request should be granted.

Reverting to the matter of power alcohol from wheat, I would point out that, apart altogether from the spirit that can be produced, there is a residue of 25 per cent. of the wheat which is a very valuable product. If the matter is closely examined, I do not think any further loose statements will be made about its being cheaper to produce power alcohol from molasses than from wheat.

Concerning the problems of farmers, a little while ago the price of super was raised by 30s. a ton. The reason for that increase was that the cost of production had risen.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. BERRY: I was speaking about the enhanced cost to the farmer of superphosphate. It is only logical to assume that if the cost of production rises against the manufacturers, it must also rise against the primary producer who is growing crops. The Federal Government might well bring this matter under the notice of the Wool Purchasing Committee in England. It should be pointed out to that committee that it fixed the price of wool before any rise in the price of superphosphate occurred or before the price of other commodities went up. During war time as well as at other times, justice must be shown to every section of the community whether the primary producing section, the labouring section or any other. I shall be glad to know whether anything can be done in this direction. When the Imperial Government fixed the price of wool the Chairman of the committee remarked, in reply to a question, that he had not taken into consideration, when fixing the price, the cost of production. That was an astounding and stupid statement to make and indicated a good deal of ignorance on his part. If it was made clear to the Home authorities that costs were rising, probably they would be glad to pay a higher price for our wool. The same remarks practically apply to wheat. Every effort should be made to see that justice is meted out all round so that there may be no more abandonments of farming properties in Australia.

Unfortunately the season in this State has not been a good one, and already hundreds of people have come to the conclusion that it is impossible for them to carry on. Many of them have interviewed me on the subject. They say they do not want to carry on, that the struggle is too uneven, that they have been battling against inequalities for some years, and feel that they can no longer shoulder the burden. They would, therefore, rather leave their farms, and endeavour to find work in the city. It would be very unfortunate for the State if that occurred. Apparently 6,000 men are already unemployed, and we do not want the number increased. Perhaps it would be more in the interests of Western Australia, and the Commonwealth, if we could devise a scheme whereby men on the land, who through adverse circumstances were practically being forced off it, were given an adequate sum of money on which to live so that their

assets might be preserved. Undoubtedly the properties will be an asset some day. Farm lands are the greatest assets we have, and there could be no secondary industries without them. If we can keep these people on the land by giving them only the equivalent of the dole they would probably get if they came to the city, that would be of advantage to the country as well as to them. For that consideration the farmers concerned would keep down the vermin on the properties, keep suckers down, and maintain the assets. When the period of rehabilitation arrives and the lot of the primary producer is less unhappy than it is today, those people will be able to take up their tools of work and once more become a definite asset to the State. I assume that in conjunction with the munitions drive many of the 6,000 unemployed will be absorbed. I hope that in the course of that drive every business and firm capable of making something to help win the war will be brought into the scheme, just as was done in England during the last war. I am confident that the Government will have that in mind.

No reference was made in the Speech to education. To this the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) drew attention. He suggested that we should have some new form of education, though I confess I did not understand to what he was referring. Education is of paramount importance to the children who are growing up in the State, war or no war. I hope it will not be necessary in any way to economise so that the children will be handicapped through lack of adequate educational facilities. Technical education under the defence scheme will receive a considerable impetus in this State. That is a fine thing. I hope that in no circumstances will the education of children in the country be any less efficient than it has been in the past. Up to date country children have not had all the opportunities for education to which they are entitled. The Federal Government could well make an annual grant to assist the State in rendering this necessary service, the value of which I am sure it recognises. It is a pity the Education Department is not able to control its own Vote. When one visits the department to get some concession for the country one learns that whilst the officials and probably the Minister are in favour of certain things being done, some other department is able to veto them. In one

instance recently I reached the stage when I did not know where to go or how to set about doing what I wished to do. War or no war we should carry on education progressively, as I am sure the Government will do if possible. The same remarks apply to the dental treatment of children. More dental vans are necessary. Another request from the country is for wire doors and windows so that flies may be kept out of the schoolrooms during the summer. That request should be kept well to the fore.

Another thing about the Speech that struck me was its conciseness and brevity. I take that as an intimation that members also are expected to be concise and brief in their remarks. At a time like this we can do no more than assure the Government of our willingness to do all in our power to help win the war, which is the main objective of the moment. Earlier in my speech I paid a tribute to the returned soldiers, as well as to the people for the wonderful manner in which they had responded to the war effort. I should now like to pay a tribute to the British Navy. Not only has the British Navy shown that it is a match for the Germans in efficiency, but it has gone far beyond that. The operations at Dunkerque make one proud to belong to the British Commonwealth of Nations. It showed that the Germans are going to find it extremely difficult to cross the Channel. We are also very proud of H.M.A.S. "Sydney" and its action in the Mediterranean a few days ago. These two achievements are a lesson to us and show that we have to get more efficiency into our fighting forces on land to make them comparable with the efficiency of our forces at sea. Our flying men, too, have done work that makes us intensely proud of them.

An increasing number of people is coming to this State from the Near East. By every vessel dozens of visitors are reaching these shores. I wish to pay a tribute to the Tourist Department. I know many of the visitors and those with whom I have come into contact have told me that their treatment in Western Australia has been excellent. Those who have been here a few months have informed me they are getting the same feeling towards Western Australia that I had when I first arrived. They like

the State. I assure the Government that I personally will do all I can to help in any direction whatsoever.

MR. TRIAT (Mt. Magnet) [7.42]: I congratulate the member for Pilbara (Mr. W. Hegney) on his address last week. Knowing him as I do I was not surprised at the manner in which he handled his subject. There is no doubt the Speech of the Lieut.-Governor contains very little that one can deal with. In a time of war that is perhaps excusable. Everyone seems to be in a fog. I am in a fog myself. The decisions and announced intentions of the Commonwealth Government are causing people to become more befogged than they were in the past. Let me refer to the petrol rationing proposals. No one seems to know what is going to be done. We are told that the rationing is to consist of sufficient petrol to take a vehicle 40 miles in a week. In my electorate it is common for people to have to travel long distances. At Sandstone for instance, there is only one train a week and residents in the district come long distances to meet the train and obtain their supplies. People are forced to get their supplies at the railhead, and many of them travel from 80 to 120 miles with that object in view. Those who come long distances sometimes subscribe for the cost of a motor truck. There is one place 86 miles away from the railhead where 40 people are living. If the proposals are carried into effect and only sufficient petrol is available to take a car 40 miles in a week, those persons will be unable to secure their supplies. At another place 120 miles away from the railhead there are 200 residents all of whom will be greatly inconvenienced. Everything in the district has been done by motor transport, and those people will be unable to exist if they are restricted to enough petrol to carry them 40 miles per week. It is all very well to say that motorists can instal a gas producer plant on the vehicles, but such devices cost money. Many of the people to whom I have referred are prospectors, and they could not afford £60 or £70 for the purchase of a gas producer. If petrol is rationed as is proposed, the State Government will have to stand behind many of the taxpayers to enable them to purchase gas producers. In my opinion it is not beyond the capacity of the authorities at the Midland Junction Workshops or at some other foundry in

Western Australia, to turn out a gas producer plant at a cost less than £60 or £70. The patent rights may be held by some concern, but I do not know that that covers every form of gas producer. I believe patent rights are held by people who make their profits on the sales.

Hon. C. G. Latham: At any rate, the plant could be improved.

Mr. TRIAT: Yes, and I believe the Government could encourage investigations along those lines and perhaps have a gas producer put on the market at a cost of £30. Possibly terms could be arranged so that a farmer who had not much money available, could secure the plant to enable him to work his property. Such a move would be of importance and in the interests of the State. In the meantime the people in the outer areas are confronted with the prospect of serious difficulty in regard to petrol supplies. They have to travel over long distances to the rail head in order to secure their requirements. In addition to the other centres I have mentioned, there is Field's Find and again Payne's Find, which is 98 miles from the rail-head. The people there depend on motor traction for supplies. There are 70 people at Field's Find, including 25 who are married. They secure their supplies from Wubin, but I admit that in that instance a gas producer is available, so that these people are not so seriously affected. Station properties in my electorate are in many instances situated 110 miles from the rail-head and that necessitates a journey every two weeks or so to secure supplies. Further than that, motor bicycles are used to travel over the station properties. There is no feed available in the country for stock, so that if horses were to be used for that work, the necessity would arise to provide feed for the animals. In those circumstances, obviously the use of motor bicycles is much the cheaper proposition. I trust the Premier will make representations to the Commonwealth Government when the next conference is held, so that special consideration will be given to the fuel requirements of those residing in the outer parts of Western Australia. I regard the manufacture of gas producers by the Government as a good suggestion, and I hope the Government will investigate the possibilities. I heard the Leader of the Opposition or the Leader of the National Party disagree to the manufacture being undertaken by the State. I did not think