

questions, but I hope that before then something will have been done by the Government for the settlers. There are many soldier settlers along the route of the proposed railway. At Quelling the settlers have been almost starved out because they cannot make economic propositions out of their holdings. It is pleasing to know that the Ejanding Northwards railway is to be extended to Lake Mollerin, and that other railways are to be attended to. While that is all very well, it is rather hard on these people who have been waiting for their railway for over 20 years. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) complained about his railway that had been authorised for two years only. The people who are vitally concerned with the Yarramony railway have been the victims of the political life of years past, for it has been such that one party after another has evaded promises that were made, and to-day they seem to be as far off the realisation of their desires as ever. I was told by one of the settlers who had spoken to someone who was apparently in the know that he had received the advice, "Be patient and you will get your railway." As that settler said, the people there have been patient for 20 years. That particular settler said he did not suppose it mattered much to him if the railway did not come for another 20 years, but the young people were getting fed up and were leaving the farms. I hope the Government will see if something cannot be done very soon for these people. The answers I received to my questions during the last session of Parliament were not at all satisfactory. I do not think that some of the latest proposals for light transport facilities have been inquired into thoroughly. I hope the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Stileman, will let us know if some means of transport cannot be provided for the people I am so concerned about. Mr. Timms and another gentleman are expected to arrive here shortly to discuss some new system of putting down rails alongside roads, and I hope the Government will investigate that proposal.

Mr. Teesdale: How far have those settlers been carting?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Upwards of 21 and 22 miles.

Mr. Teesdale: Carting water, too?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No, I think most of the settlers there have their dams. However, I am almost afraid to ask further questions, particularly when I am told by the Premier that every time I ask a question

I put the railway back for another 12 months. Former members representing my constituency said nothing about it and they got nothing; I have been asking questions and trying to get something, and now I am blamed for putting the railway off 12 months at a time! Fortunately, my electors know whose fault it is. It is not the fault of one individual, but of many individuals.

Mr. Teesdale: They will have another chance at the next elections.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I did not come prepared to make a speech this evening, but thought I would like to deal with one or two points. The Leader of the Country Party spoke fully on many subjects and I agree with his sentiments. The spirit of his speech must have appealed to the House. I hope the session will prove to be a useful one and that the next harvest will be excellent. I travelled out as far as Southern Cross the other day and was delighted to find how splendid the crops were looking. The prospects are indeed satisfactory, and I trust the returns will go far towards realising our desire to secure 50,000,000 bushels during the centenary year.

On motion by Mr. Davy, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.43 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 14th August, 1928.*

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

### QUESTION—ENTERTAINMENTS TAX.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Chief Secretary: What revenue have the Government derived from the Entertainments Tax Act passed in 1925, for each respective year ended the 30th June?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The Government have derived no revenue from the Entertainments Tax. Proceeds of the tax, paid to a trust fund at the Treasury, were as follows:—1925-26 (eight months), £19,160; 1926-27, £29,238; 1927-28, £32,886. The balance in the trust fund at 30th June last was £30. The remainder of the proceeds have been expended for the benefit of hospitals throughout the State.

### QUESTION—RAILWAY, WILUNA CONSTRUCTION.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Has the survey of the route of the Wiluna railway line been completed? 2, What expenditure has been incurred in this survey? 3, When is it estimated that the construction of the railway will be commenced?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, No, it is about 50 per cent. complete. 2, Up to 31st July, £1,564. 3, Depends on completion of other lines already under construction. A start will probably be made early in the new year.

### BILL—EDUCATION, 1928.

Introduced by the Chief Secretary, and read a first time.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann (for Hon. J. Ewing), leave of absence for twelve consecutive sittings granted to Hon. E. Reese (South-West) on the ground of urgent private business.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Fifth Day.*

Debate resumed from the 9th August.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [4.37]: Before contributing a few remarks to the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I wish to associate myself with references that have been made to the advent of new members of the House, and to the passing of those who are no longer with us. If the experience of the new members coincides with that of myself, they will quickly arrive at the conclusion that the

atmosphere of the Legislative Council is a very desirable one, in which they can feel at home, and that they will derive considerable benefit from their association with it. As to those who have passed from us, I have happy recollections of those gentlemen and of them I can say that just as in the ordinary course of events we come and some go, we must all regret their passing. I intend to refer to three or four matters only in relation to the motion before the House. Foremost of those matters is that relating to group settlement. In the Governor's Speech very brief reference is made to this important question, and even the reference that is made is not clear and does not convey much to hon. members. It says—

A reclassification of Group Settlement Areas has been practically concluded.

I hardly think there was any necessity to mention that, because the reclassification of the group settlement areas has not been a tremendous task, and there are many other phases of greater importance that might have been mentioned. Then again it is stated—

It is the intention of the Government at an early date to institute a policy which, it is hoped, will result in an improved position and definitely fix the period during which Government farming assistance will be extended to settlers.

I am one of those who are glad that at last the Government intend to institute such a policy. I recollect that prior to an election four and a half years ago, the group settlers were asked to cast their votes in a certain direction because, they were promised, if they did, they would receive a sound and progressive policy which, it was then alleged, had not existed in the past. Many of the settlers took that advice.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It was a high-sounding phrase.

Hon. W. J. MANN: But that promised policy never materialised. Group settlement matters have continued much the same as under the regime of the preceding Government. For a long period I have held that it was high time something more tangible was known regarding the Government's intentions in connection with the group settlement scheme. Naturally members of this House, and, I presume, the people of the State generally, have felt some anxiety regarding the cost of group settlement. The figures have been steadily mounting and the most that the people have heard on the

subject has been that the scheme was costing a lot of money without any corresponding benefits. The latter portion of that statement is not correct. We have been receiving corresponding benefits, as I propose to demonstrate later on. I agree with those who say there have been serious waste and losses in connection with group settlement, but I do not associate myself with the utterances of people who are inclined to father the responsibility for the whole of the losses upon those who instituted the scheme. I am sorry that the Public Accounts for the year ended the 30th June, 1928, are not available. In the absence of that document, I have had to utilise the figures available for the previous financial year.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You want them to be too up to date!

Hon. W. J. MANN: I find that up to the 30th June, 1927, £4,695,418 had actually been spent and the Estimates for the year 1927-28 amounted to £1,300,000. Thus a total of £5,995,418 has been provided for group settlements, and of that amount, £1,500,000 only was spent by the previous Government. That means to say that £4,500,000 has been spent by the Collier Government.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They were committed to the expenditure by the previous Government.

Hon. W. J. MANN: They may have been committed to expenditure, but not to that extent!

Hon. C. F. Baxter: How could it have been avoided?

Hon. W. J. MANN: The Government could have cut a tremendous lot of the losses and taken the scheme in hand and moulded it as they say they now intend to do. That would have cut out much of the waste that occurred.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That should have been done at the inception.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I agree that in some directions there was some waste in the administration of the scheme during the first year and a half, but I also contend that there have been equal, if not more serious waste and maladministration during the past 4½ years. It is quite unfair to try to father all the blame on any particular Government. The two Governments that have had the handling of the scheme are, in my opinion, equally culpable. Taking the figures in the Auditor General's re-

port for the year ended the 30th June, 1927, the aggregate expenditure on group settlement, divided by the number of settlers, works out at about £700 per settler; to be accurate £698. Those who know the scheme are aware that it is impossible for any settler to receive from the Government more than £246 in one year. The settlers are permitted to earn up to £20 10s. per month.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: What was the actual number of settlers?

Hon. W. J. MANN: There were 2,087 blocks at that date. Not a great many settlers earn £246 per annum because, as the number of cows they carry increases, so the earnings are decreased by 30s. per head per month.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: After the first three.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I think it is after the first two. The question I want to ask is what has become of the difference between the £250 and the £700, to take round figures. Where has it gone? I have not been able to discover and I have not found anyone else who has. Some explanation is due to Parliament. The cottages have long been built; some fencing might have been done, but very little of that could be charged outside the settlers' earnings, because it is usually included in the £246. If a member went on to any group settler's location and told him he had received £200 in excess of the amount he was permitted to earn, that member would be chased off the holding as one who was mentally deficient. During the last three years, very little money indeed has been expended on group locations other than what has been earned by the settlers. The question is a serious one to me and it is equally serious to the grouper who finds that roughly £700 has been debited to his block for the year, while the utmost he may receive from the Government is £246. The amount allocated in the Estimates of expenditure for the present year worked out at £563 per settler. Even so, there is a big discrepancy between the amount a settler could possibly earn and the amount that the scheme is costing the country. A good deal of discontent is felt by settlers and naturally so, because they are unable to receive from the Government any statement of accounts regarding the holdings on which they are located. For the last three or four years group settlers have been asking for a statement as to how

they stand, but up to date, with one exception, I do not know of any settler who has received a statement. I shall quote the exception. Let me be perfectly candid. I have not seen the statement, but a gentleman in whose veracity I have full confidence and two members of another place told me they had seen it. I understand that that settler's capitalisation is slightly over £2,000 and that two of the items are overhead charges £308 14s. 1d. and interest £438 6s. 9d., making a total of £747 0s. 10d. If those figures are correct, the group settlers are being saddled with a tremendous burden. There is an amount of £747 that has never been expended on the property, and yet the man is to be called upon to pay it.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He will never pay it.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It will settle the scheme.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes. The sooner the Government let the settlers know the facts, the better it will be for all concerned. Not long ago the Minister for Lands made a statement that one location had cost as much as £5,000. I should like to know what amounts were debited as overhead charges and interest against that block. It is a serious question and one upon which Parliament should be enlightened. The capitalisation of the blocks is a very live one with group settlers and is occasioning considerable worry even to those who are making good. The time is fast approaching when group settlement expenditure, except to a limited extent, should become unnecessary. For a long time I have felt that some of the public utterances about group settlement are not altogether fair and do not convey the true position. The facts have frequently been exaggerated, and I am sorry to say this has been done by people from whom we might have expected something better. The result is that public attention has been focussed on a comparatively few of the troublesome cases. There are still a number of men on the blocks who have no right to be group settlers. They are square pegs in round holes or vice versa. There are misfits and always will be misfits. Those cases cause considerable anxiety, but there is no necessity to go into heroics because a few such cases have to be dealt with. It was only to be expected that such cases would arise. What I complain about is that little or no mention is made of the successful men.

I think I can safely say that of the 2,000 group settlers the great majority are steadily working out their own salvation and making progress towards distinct success. Yesterday I took an opportunity to visit the Busselton butter factory and I was agreeably surprised and delighted to learn that to the end of last week 420 group settlers were supplying cream to that factory alone. I also took the precaution to send a telegram to the Manjimup factory with the idea of getting its figures, and this is the reply I received from the manager—

Group settlers now supplying number 232; the increase in production for the year 100 per cent.

Those are facts that the public have not been told. From official sources we hear a lot about the great efforts being exerted to make the group settlements a success, but we are not told that two factories alone are receiving cream from nearly 700 group settlers. I regret that I was unable to secure the figures for the Bunbury factory. Had I been able to get them, this House would have been interested to learn that the number of group settlers now supplying cream to factories was probably approaching 1,000. That is very gratifying and cheering for those who are looking to the successful development of that part of the State.

Hon. J. Ewing: But we never hear of it.

Hon. W. J. MANN: No.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What was the increase in the production of the Busselton factory?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I shall come to that later. While we deplore the high cost of the scheme, we cannot blame the South-West because of mal-administration. Apart from the cost, group settlement is progressing satisfactorily. If members will bear with me, I shall read portion of the annual report of the South-West Dairy Products, Ltd., presented to shareholders last week. Let me preface the quotation by saying that that company controls the Busselton and Bunbury factories. The report states—

The increase in turnover for the year was 22 per cent. in excess of that of the year 1926-27—

Twenty-two per cent. increase is a very substantial increase indeed.

—and this discloses that another record has been established. The turnover on the Bunbury and Busselton accounts amounted to the splendid sum of £145,455—

I think that should be very gratifying; it is a substantial amount.

—an increase over last year of £35,007. The quantity of cream purchased at the two factories amounted to 8,969,207 lbs. (over 1,325 tons), for which £108,334 15s. 6d. was paid to suppliers, and 1,651,001 lbs. of commercial butter involving the handling of 77,500 cans of cream was manufactured. After allowing for depreciation a net profit of £10,288 has been made.

Hon. members will admit that that is a very substantial advance.

Out of this amount it is proposed to pay a dividend at the rate of 5 per cent. on the paid up capital at the 30th April and a bonus of 1d. per lb. on butter fat supplied by shareholders.

I will show later that the suppliers to those factories received last year for their cream an amount equal to, if not more than, that received by suppliers to any other factory in the Commonwealth. In addition to that they received 1d. per lb. bonus. That, too, is very gratifying and should be made widely known. Since purchasing the Busselton factory from the State, under whose management I am sorry it was a losing proposition—

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: It is the same with all State concerns.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The South-West Dairying Products, Ltd., have incurred very large capital expenditure in putting in a modern equipment. I was told quite recently by experts who visited the district that the machinery installed by the company is the last word in butter-making plant. It will be seen, therefore, that we have in this State a plant, which, for its size, is equal to anything in the Southern Hemisphere. This happy state of affairs has been brought about by group settlement.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: By private enterprise.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Group settlement is primarily responsible. Private enterprise has realised that there is a big future for this particular industry, and while, in the past, bigger factories have not been required, the company are spending their money in the direction of getting ready for the big business that will assuredly follow as the years go on. With the permission of the House I will read a brief extract from the company's report. It says—

During the past 12 months we have paid high prices for butter fat. There are no dairymen in any part of the Commonwealth to-day who are receiving the same return for their

cream as are the suppliers to our factory, and on top of this we are paying 1d. per lb. bonus, which makes our actual average return to the farmers 1s. 9¼d. per lb., or 1¼d. per lb. more for butter fat than we receive for commercial butter.

It may be asked how the company manage to pay more for butter fat than they receive for their butter. That is explained by the fact that the factory has been able to go in for side lines such as the manufacture of ice, and to control to some extent the importation of butter that was necessary to permit of the fulfilment of contracts. Here is a list of prices paid for butter fat during the 12 months ended April last:—May, 1s. 9d.; June, 1s. 8d.; July, 1s. 8d.; August, 1s. 8½d.; September, 1s. 9d.; October, 1s. 9d.; November, 1s. 7½d.; December, 1s. 7½d.; January, 1s. 8d.; February, 1s. 7½d.; March, 1s. 8d.; April, 1s. 9d. If any hon. member is sufficiently interested and cares to compare those figures with the amounts received by dairymen in the Eastern States, he will find that those engaged in the industry here are receiving a better return than is the case in the other States. The report concludes—

Since the imposing of 6d. per lb. duty on New Zealand butter entering Australia, the prospects of securing good prices for butter fat in the future are very bright; especially will this be so in Western Australia where we have already a local market and a product eagerly sought after by the consumers.

That, I think, should inspire the Government to make every effort to keep group settlement going on sound lines and to cut out all the anomalies that are so plain to those who are following the scheme very closely. The Government should help the settlers all they possibly can, not so much financially but in the direction of increasing the production. With all the money that has been spent on group settlements—and there is no denying the fact that the sum is very large indeed—nothing like any corresponding effort has been made in the way of teaching the settlers to farm correctly. Those settlers who are making the most headway are people who have had agricultural experience in the past. Those who have come from overseas, brought here from the cities or from other places where they had no chance of learning anything about any form of agriculture, have been slower in their results. It is somewhat of a reproach to those who have had charge of the scheme that no sound policy of tuition or encouragement has been given to the settlers. I hope it is not too late even now

to adopt such a course. The wonderful progress made by the company to which I have referred is largely the result of group settlement. Thus we have unmistakable proof of what can be accomplished in a short time, and what it ought to be possible to do to make the State self-supporting and entirely independent of the Eastern States in respect of dairy produce. I am going to quote briefly from several letters I have in my possession, letters written by people who are engaged in this industry, an industry too, which is often held up to ridicule. I could quote many more but for my purpose it will be sufficient to read to members extracts from three. Two of the letters are from old settlers who are outside the group scheme. One has been established in the South-West for many years and the other went on the land practically without money about nine years ago. My object in referring to these letters is to show what can be done in the South-West. The first letter I will read was written by one of these settlers to the other. This man went to the Abba River country nine years ago without practically any money but with grit and determination to succeed. He writes—

I was very pleased to hear that you are milking 70 cows. It is a good advertisement for the Sussex district. We are at present milking 93 head, and seven more to come in. Still there are people who say that the Abba River land is no good. I claim to have one of the very best dairy farms in the whole of Western Australia, and I wrote and told that to the Minister for Lands. I am pleased to tell you that the Minister sent the Advisory Board to inspect my property, and I can assure it rather surprised the members of the board to see what it was possible to accomplish in nine years in this heavy forest country by the adoption of the proper methods.

A month later the same man wrote again to his friend. These people, I might mention, were comparing notes and incidentally doing their best to show the people of the State that the Abba River had been given a name that it did not deserve. In the second letter he wrote—

I was very pleased to hear that your cream cheque was £138 for last month.

Some hon. members will doubtless know that the neighbours to whom this man was writing are three sisters who are carrying on the farm. There are no men folk left in that family, and the three women do the whole of the management. The writer goes on—

My cream account was £161 odd without reckoning the butter account, as we sell a fair

amount of butter. We also have 1½ days' cream on hand on account of the train service. We are having a wretchedly hot summer, too hot for anything to grow. All the cows in the South-West have gone off their milk, and I fancy we will all have to go in for silos if we intend to make dairying a success.

This letter was written at the end of December last. The point I wish to make is that here we have a man on country identical with that on which group settlers were placed. His boundaries adjoin those of the group settlers, and the conditions are precisely similar; yet he who took up this land nine years ago without capital and without Government assistance is now receiving a substantial return for his enterprise. If that is not something to make us believe that the industry is worth while, then I do not know what is. I shall now tell the House something of the experiences of two other settlers—group settlers. I might add that the settler whose letters I am about to read is a type of rugged Irishman who is almost invariably “agin” everything and “agin” the Government. He insists on having an argument not only with the Government but sometimes with his best friends as well. But he is a splendid settler, who writes—

Ever since I came on my location it has been in a producing state. Since the cows were supplied to me 18 months ago I have been sending cream to the factory continuously. Knowing that I could feed more cows, I asked for them, but was told to hang on. Consequently I have luxuriant clover wasting on my block which I will be obliged to burn off. I have over 200 head of poultry all first-class, and receive an income of about £16 per month from eggs and poultry throughout the year. I have never been without pigs, and make a good profit from them. I have had experience in dairying farming in Ireland where the conditions are not so favourable as they are in the South-West of this State, and I am sure that any man can make a reasonable living on a small holding, provided he has a knowledge of the business, or provided he can be guided by an experienced officer.

He underlines the word “experienced.” His letter concludes—

I firmly believe that if handled on proper lines group settlement will prove the State's best asset.

And he sends a copy in full detail of his return for cream, showing that in January he received £12 12s. 1d. for his butter fat. That, of course, is a time of the year when the milk yield has fallen off. So there is a man unquestionably making good.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: How many cows is he milking?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I think about four.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What is the use of those to him?

Hon. W. J. MANN: He is just getting a start. That is why I selected him as an illustration. In another case—unfortunately I have mislaid the letter—a further group settler states that he is receiving £20 a month all the year round. I mention these instances to show there is no necessity for anxiety about the ultimate success of group settlement. It has been an expensive process, but I am sure the benefits that will accrue to the State will more than compensate the expenditure. Now I wish to make brief reference to the question of ports. Very heavy expenditure is proposed for the Fremantle harbour. As one who believes this State is destined to play a great part in the affairs of Australia, I am not quibbling about that. It is a wise policy to make provision for the great wheat yield we are going to handle. No doubt in a few years' time our wheat production will be enormously greater than it is to-day. Consequently it is only right that provision should be made to extend our harbours, so that the wheat business can be fully coped with. But I hope the Government will not forget the outer ports. Bunbury, with which I am closely identified, has been waiting a long time for some definite harbour scheme. Now that the Fremantle and Geraldton harbour schemes are well under way, I urge the Government to give serious consideration to the position of Bunbury. The wheat shipment at that port last year increased over the previous year's figures by 20,000 tons. That, perhaps, is not an enormous increase, but still it is one that a few years ago would have been thought very large indeed. For the sake of comparison, the other day I looked into some figures and found that up to date £1,984,435 has been spent on the Fremantle harbour. In the proposed new scheme for the bridge and the extensions it is estimated to spend an additional £2,300,000, which will bring up the cost of the Fremantle harbour to well over five millions of money. Against that, £390,975 has been spent at Bunbury, £332,659 at Geraldton, and £154,192 at Albany. In order to see that every port gets the trade that is its just due, I trust the Government will not forget that there are other ports than Fremantle that should have attention in the way of increased facilities. Bunbury's

trade warrants immediate improvement. There is one small matter regarding which I feel the Premier has somewhat let us down. It has to do with the promised expenditure of £5,000 on the Busselton jetty. I got into serious trouble on one occasion for defending the Premier over it. The Premier, at a public meeting held in Busselton prior to the elections, said that £5,000 would be expended on the Busselton jetty at the earliest possible moment. Those people who are not politically enthusiastic about the Premier have frequently called my attention to the statement. I have always said I believed the Premier is a man of his word, and that consequently the money would be forthcoming. But that was nearly 18 months ago. I now feel that as the money has not been spent I have a perfect right to remind the Premier of his promise and to ask him to keep it. After all, the money is required for the safety of the wharf workers and others engaged on the jetty. The structure is not sufficiently wide, and the boats now using it are rather too long to be berthed in safety. So it has become necessary to extend and widen the end of the jetty. I want once again to refer to the tourist traffic. Each time I have spoken on the Address-in-reply I have mentioned the necessity for creating a tourist atmosphere in the State. I do not intend to labour the question this afternoon, but undoubtedly the position is worse now than it was last year. When the booking of the Cave House accommodation for the coming Christmas holidays was opened in July, the whole of it was taken up within 25 minutes.

Hon. J. Cornell: You require a sort of land board to make allocations.

Hon. W. J. MANN: No, what is required is another Cave House at the Margaret River, where there is a very pretty and most desirable site available.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The frequent visits of Ministers engaged in inspecting the Cave House should result in some relief.

Hon. W. J. MANN: It has not done so in the past, but no doubt it will in the future. Only last week the new Honorary Minister came down there, and I had the privilege of coming back in his company. In consequence of what he said, I feel sure that if he has his way tenders for the necessary increased accommodation will soon be invited. Cave House is an excellent business proposition, and I cannot understand any Government hanging back when there is increased busi-

ness to be done. In 1926-27 the turnover at Cave House was £12,388 and in 1927-28 it increased to £13,456. If that is not good business for the State, I do not know what is. I am not very keen on State enterprises generally, but this is the one exception that I can conscientiously support. There is great necessity for increased accommodation at Cave House. I would remind the new Honorary Minister that such accommodation is not required exclusively for the public. Last year I referred to the very poor quarters provided for the male staff, who were expected to live in a hessian shanty that, had it been provided for members of the shearers' union, would have created a tremendous uproar. The position at Cave House a little while ago was not very much better, for I found the men housed in tents, at some distance from the main building. Those tents may be comfortable enough, but I do not think they can be said to conform to the standard the present Administration are always telling us should be provided for working men. I commend this subject to the attention of the new Honorary Minister. As for the tourist bureau, the time has arrived when we should have some improved office or business place in the city. The Government should secure premises as near as possible to the central railway station, Perth. Then the tourist passing in and out of the city, the man walking around at a loose end wondering how to spend his time and money, would know where to go for guidance. As the result of having a shop or office in such a position, the department and the State would be benefited and we should keep within the State a great deal of money that at present goes to the Eastern States. I have a word of congratulation for the Government upon the assistance they have given to the tin-mining industry at Greenbushes. On two occasions we asked the Government to expend in that field some of the money earmarked for the assistance of mining. At present the diamond drills are being put down, and I trust the Government will see to it that the drilling is continued until the field is thoroughly proved. However, for what they have done so far we sincerely thank the Government. Mr. Fraser made brief reference to the State Implement Works. Had it not been for his reference to the matter, I do not think I would have made any allusion to it. Mr. Fraser deplored the fact that some years ago 600 men were employed at the works, but that to-day the number had dwindled down to something

like 200. He very rightly said he hoped some action would be taken to ascertain the cause of this. I am sorry to say I think I can tell him the cause. Whilst the workmen may be quite as good as he said they are, I believe the works are not delivering the goods. Anyone who visits the group settlement depots and sees the number of State-made implements lying there derelict and broken beyond repair, and the tremendous scrap-heap represented by them, cannot help seeing that the implements which have come from the State works have not stood up to the job. I have discussed this matter with many group settlers who were on the land before they joined the groups. One of their chief complaints is that they have been forced to use implements made by the State, well knowing that they could have obtained better implements for the money elsewhere.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: You cannot blame the rank and file for that.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I notice from the Press recently that the executive committee of the Labour Council have recommended to the Premier that all machinery purchased with money borrowed from the Agricultural Bank should be obtained from the State Implement Works. If I read that aright, it will apply to the wheat country represented by Mr. Glasheen, as well as to the big scheme that is about to be launched. In view of the experience that the group settlers have had of the machinery manufactured by the State Implement Works, I hope the Government will not accede to the request, and that those who are borrowing money from the Agricultural Bank will not be instructed that they must spend it on State implements. It is an extraordinary thing for the Labour Party to say that the man who borrows money must be told how he is to spend it. It is not a very democratic idea, and does not appeal to me in any way.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: Any wheat grower can obtain any machine he likes.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Possibly that is so now. I believe this matter will be discussed at the Primary Producers' conference this week. It is one of more than passing importance, and I hope the conference will take the strongest exception to any man who borrows money from the Agricultural Bank being told where he must spend it. I had intended to say something about main roads, but the public have had such a surfeit of that question, that I will refrain from any reference to it. I support the motion.



**HON. G. A. KEMPTON** (Central) [5.35]: I wish to deal with one or two matters that more particularly concern the residents in my district. Before doing so I welcome most heartily the new members of the Chamber, and express my regret that we have lost some of our old friends. I wish to refer particularly to land to the north of Geraldton. During the last two sessions I have given particulars regarding this land, and have informed the House of the great hardships that the settlers there, who are struggling on their farms, have to undergo, more particularly those on the Murchison River, out at Dartmoor, Balla, Bindu, and other localities round there. I have listened with interest to Mr. Mann's remarks upon the Cave House. Whilst I agree it is necessary that holiday people should enjoy facilities and comforts when they are away on tour, I think it is far more important that we should help those who are struggling in the out-back centres to get a living and to develop the State. We should provide railways for them. It is many years since any railways were built in the northern areas, and fully 16 years have elapsed since there was an extension of the Yuna line. At that time it was thought by the Agricultural Bank that the Yuna land was not all it should be. Since then it has shown itself to be the best wheat-growing land in the State. The averages there have been very fine. The extension of the railway from Yuna out through Balla, Dartmoor, Bindu, and out towards Mullewa would mean the opening up of some very fine land, that would be helpful in the development of the State. Last year Geraldton shipped over 1,000,000 bags of wheat. According to the reports of practical farmers, men who know the district, Geraldton will be shipping this year, provided the season holds out, fully 5,000,000 bushels of wheat. I say this to show how the district is developing. In the Dartmoor area three or four years ago there was nothing to be seen but scrub and trees, whereas to-day there are many fine holdings in the district. One party alone has in two years cleared and cropped 1,000 acres, and that sort of thing is going on all round the district. Those who are trying to develop the country in this way should be given better facilities to do so. Many railways are being built in the southern parts of the South-

West, but a certain amount of interest should be taken in the North. I do not say the South-Western railways should not be built, for I think it is wise that they should be, but we cannot afford to neglect the north altogether. It is impossible for men to grow wheat profitably and cart it for 30 miles. The Government should take this into consideration. If it is not possible at present to build the necessary railways in these areas, something in the way of dumps should be formed. This matter was referred to some two or three years ago. The practice is carried out in some of the other States. Different farmers convey their wheat 10 or 15 miles and at one spot make a huge dump, from which place six-wheeled Government wagons take the wheat into the nearest siding. This means a saving in many ways. It is a decided saving to the farmer, and a very great help to the roads. It means that one wagon is using the road whereas perhaps some dozens of small motor trucks would be doing so. The Chief Secretary knows this country well. He is interested in it, and has often spoken of this matter. I hope he will induce Cabinet to take steps to send the Railway Advisory Board through the area and advise the Government as to whether the land is suitable for the further extension of the railway. I now wish to refer to the Geraldton harbour. This is a serious matter, because trade generally in the northern areas is being held up. More particularly are the manganese deposits being held up. The Government have assisted the company by building a railway from Meekatharra to Horseshoe. The company has spent a lot of money there, and now everything is ready for the commencement of shipping operations. It is necessary that the harbour should be completed, or that one or two berths should be provided, and big bins erected so that the manganese can profitably be shipped away. At present all the money is held up, and is likely to be held up until the harbour is improved. I know the difficulty the engineers have. It is also difficult for a layman to discuss such matters as the building of a harbour. There is a general feeling amongst shippers and captains of vessels that the whole thing is dragging. Time after time I have visited the works, but no progress seems to be made. We were told that probably two berths would be ready for the

ships last season, but the engineer tells me now that it is not likely any berths will be ready for ships even next year. This will mean the hanging up of the manganese company. Then there is the question of the material which must come through Geraldton for the construction of the Wiluna line. It will be very difficult for big ships to tie up at the present jetty. As the Wiluna mine develops, a great deal of heavy machinery will be passing through the port, and again the difficulty will occur of handling it. I hope the Chief Secretary will cause some inquiry to be made concerning the harbour improvements, and see whether it is not possible to hurry the work along. It is cheaper to employ more men so long as they are not in one another's way, and so carry out the work properly and expeditiously. The overhead expenses are still going on. I should like to say a few words in connection with the main roads question. Mr. Mann passed it over, but after reading the criticism of the Premier upon the conference held in Perth recently, I feel it my duty to bring the matter before the House. The Premier thought fit to describe a conference held in the Assembly Hall as a wild and woolly gathering. It was certainly not that. At all events, such a description shows poor courtesy to a body of men who come from out back, men connected with local authorities throughout the State, who are assisting the Government to carry out various works and without whose aid it would be impossible for the Government to develop the State as it should be developed.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Did he not call you scallywags?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I do not think so.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I think I read that.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: When metropolitan visitors, more particularly Ministers of the Crown, go to the country, they are always treated with courtesy, and everything is done for them that can possibly be done. Surely when these conference members come to Perth over distances of hundreds of miles, some of them from the far North, to discuss affairs of interest and importance, it is absolutely wrong to tell them that they are simply a wild and woolly gathering. Surely those men, when visiting the capital of the State, can expect, from the head of the Government more particularly, the same decent courtesy as they would show him

were he to go to them. The Premier also said that certain members of Parliament who were present at the conference had wangled the right to be there.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What did he mean by "wangled"?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I was on the platform, and I suppose I am one of the members of Parliament to whom the Premier referred. However, I did not wangle the right to be there. For many years there has existed in Geraldton a federation of local authorities and industries, a federation that has done fine work. It was by that federation the Mayor of Perth was asked to call the State-wide conference in question. I have been chairman of the federation since its inception, and therefore I did not wangle a right to attend the conference. Mr. Hall, another member of this Chamber, also attended the conference. He is a member of the Geraldton Municipal Council, and has done municipal work there for many years, so I am sure he did not wangle the right to be present. Mr. Ferguson, M.L.A., was also present. He is a member of the local road board, and so I do not think he wangled his right to be present.

Hon. V. Hamersley: I was there by special invitation.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: One after another the members of Parliament who were present at the conference can be mentioned and shown to have had a perfect right to attend. Apparently the Premier thought fit to criticise the gathering as he did because, he said, it was purely a matter of political propaganda. The Leader of this Chamber knows the federation to which I have referred very well indeed. He has attended the meetings frequently. The same can be said of Mr. Willcock, the Minister for Railways and Justice. Both gentlemen know, and have commented upon, the splendid work done by the federation.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Did not some of the delegates to the conference question the right of members of Parliament to be there?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: They questioned that right until the reasons were stated, and thereupon those who raised the question were perfectly satisfied. The federation at Geraldton represents many local authorities. The statement with regard to political propaganda is absolutely false. There was no political propaganda about the conference.

Now I should like to read part of a letter sent by the federation to the Premier, Mr. Willecock, Mr. Drew and Mr. Hickey—

I have to advise that a very representative conference of the local governing bodies of the Victoria and Murchison districts was held in the Council Chamber, Geraldton, on Thursday, 11th April, primarily to discuss the question of the schedule of charges received from the Main Roads Board. The following local bodies were represented at the conference:—Municipality of Geraldton; road boards, Geraldton, Upper Chapman, Mingenew, Yandanooka, Greenough, Northampton, Perenjori-Morowa, Dongarra, Mt. Magnet, Cue-Day Dawn, Yalgoo, Carnamah. Each local authority received a schedule from the Main Roads Board, setting out the charges apportioned to each board, for work done in the northern districts, and each board takes very great exception to the way in which these charges have been apportioned, and by direction of the conference, I forward to you hereunder the following resolutions, which were carried unanimously by the conference.

I wonder whether it was political propaganda for men to come from the Murchison goldfields to discuss such matters—a lot of them Labour men, and all of them very fine men. It is utterly absurd to speak of such a meeting as in the nature of political propaganda. Now I wish to give the House some of the reasons why the conference was called. I did not intend to ventilate grievances against the Main Roads Board in this Chamber. The chairman and members and the staff of the Main Roads Board have always shown me the greatest courtesy, and have always been willing to discuss any project placed before them. At the same time, I wish to show the House why the conference referred to thought it necessary to have a general inquiry or a Royal Commission into the administration of the board. I shall give a few particulars of work done by the board in the northern districts. Hon. members from other districts can, I am sure, if they care to speak on this matter, show where just as much money has been squandered as in the northern districts. In a State like Western Australia, with its area of roughly a million square miles, we cannot afford to waste one penny of the expenditure on our public roads. If money has been wasted, it is up to some of the local authorities to show that waste. Here are some instances. In Greenough during the year ended June, 1927, the Main Roads Board did 209 chains of metalling, forming and gravelling. The allocation circular says the cost of this work was £6,272 5s. 8d. or £30 per chain. At the first glance this seems a reasonable cost.

Now, Section 30 of the Main Roads Act deals with the apportionment of amounts expended on permanent works and maintenance. Subsection 3 says—

Before finally making the apportionment, the board shall serve a notice upon each contributory local authority, setting forth the permanent works and maintenance, each separately stated, from which each of the said districts respectively is deemed to have benefited, and the amount expended thereon.

Those last words, "the amount expended thereon," are the words to which I desire to call special attention. The circular states that the cost of the 209 chains was £6,272 5s. 8d. It will be remembered that the arrangement between the Commonwealth and the States was that for every £1 15s. spent, the Commonwealth should provide £1 and the State 15s., and that half of the 15s. should be provided by the local authorities. The amount of £6,272 5s. 8d. deals only with the State's 15s. Therefore, the cost of the 209 chains was £14,635 6s. 7d., or £70 per chain. And yet the Premier calls it political propaganda to show up these things. I have before me a letter from the Mingenew Road Board showing comparative costs of work. The engineer of the Mingenew Road Board is a man who has gone through an engineering course and knows what he is talking about. He says that his board tendered for 30 chains of metal road at £665, equal to £22 per chain. The tender was accepted. The engineer goes on to say that Main Roads Board work of a similar character on the Moorra-Geraldton main road, in the Greenough district, works out on the Main Roads Board figures at £70 per chain. One can therefore understand Mingenew wanting a Royal Commission to inquire into Main Roads Board administration.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Was this work done on the same class of country?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Practically the same class of country.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And to the same specification?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I got this information from the engineer of the Mingenew Road Board, who knows what he is talking about.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Mind you do not get him the sack!

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I have no doubt the hon. member would love to give that man the sack if he possibly could. With regard to Road 13Q, Georgina, which is a gravel road, the Main Roads Board gave the

following particulars:—127 chains costing £356 8s. 7d., or £7 10s. per chain. When measured by the officer of the local board, however, the length of road was found to be only 78 chains, a difference of 49 chains, making the cost £12 5s. per chain instead of £7 10s.

Hon. W. J. Mann: What sort of measures are used up there?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Then, with regard to the McCartney-road, 13R, the Main Roads Board stated that they had done 74 chains, costing £1,027 5s. 4d., equal to £13 17s. 6d. per chain. The distance, on being measured, was found to be 55½ chains, a difference of 19½ chains, making the cost £18 7s. per chain instead of £13 17s. 6d. Because of floods in March, 1927, the Greenough Road Board asked for a grant for repairs. A grant of £500 was offered. This the local board considered insufficient. However, tenders were called and specifications sent up. I have here the specifications—22 type-written pages for 10,362 feet of maintenance.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Did the Commonwealth have anything to do with that specification?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I do not know anything about the Commonwealth. These people worked under the State Act. However, the specifications gave the Chairman of the Main Roads Board absolute power, power as absolute as any Czar of Russia ever possessed. I shall have pleasure in handing over the specifications to hon. members to read. When those who wished to tender for the work saw these wonderful specifications, they walked out of the office. They considered it would be absolutely necessary to take a full course in law to understand them!

The Chief Secretary: Those specifications are insisted upon by the Commonwealth Government.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I do not know why the Federal Government should insist upon the specifications. I do not know that they are insisted upon by the Main Roads Board, seeing that that body has now provided smaller specifications and there has been no alteration of the Act. That is the position to-day. Men who have been accustomed to tender for this class of work refused to tender as soon as they saw the specifications, which extend to 22 pages of typewritten matter, just for the maintenance of three miles of road!

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is another instance of Commonwealth interference!

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: There are one or two lovely clauses included in the specifications, and it would do hon. members good to read them if they have any faith in the future of the Main Roads Board. However, I was referring to the position that arose in connection with the Greenough Road Board. Subsequently £640 was allocated to the Greenough board on account of the damage by flood. That amount was afterwards re-allocated by the Main Roads Board's engineer, £340 for flood damage, and £300 for maintenance work on the Moora-Geraldton-road in the Greenough district. As there are only three miles of that road made in the Greenough district, that is equal to £100 per mile for maintenance on a road built but a few months ago! There are 17 miles of the Moora-Geraldton-road running through the Greenough district. Of that length, three miles have been constructed at a cost of £16,134 17s. 11d. There are still 14 miles to construct! Provided the remainder costs the same per mile as the three miles that have been constructed, that part of the main road, covering 17 miles in all, will cost £91,426. That applies to the portion of the road in one district only!

Hon. J. Nicholson: Could you not build a railway for that amount?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Yes, easily. If the present three miles cost £100 per mile for maintenance, after having been built for a few months only, this will mean a big maintenance bill when the road is finished, and that cost has to be borne by the local authority. Then there is the position in the Yalgoo district. I have many letters from different road boards, the members of which are keenly interested in this question.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Were these roads constructed just about the time of the last Legislative Assembly elections?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Respecting the 209 chains of road that cost £70 a chain, that was an instance in which the men were rushed on to the work so that they could be enrolled before the election was held. In Yalgoo the Main Roads Board cleared 2,080 chains of road at a cost of £402 7s. 3d., equal to £16 6s. per mile. The road was cleared to a width of 22 feet. The Yalgoo Road Board cleared a similar road through the same class of country and cleared it to a width of 33 feet for a distance of 21 miles at a cost of £8 per mile. The contractor was quite satisfied with his profit.

These figures show that if the Main Roads Board had cleared their length of road to the same width as the local board had cleared their road, the cost would have been £24 9s. per mile as against the local board's cost of £8 per mile. That shows that distinct waste of public money has been going on. I have a letter from the Yalgoo Road Board in which there is the following passage:—

I notice at a recent meeting you stated your Council was expected to pay for a road through the Dalwaslinu and Yalgoo districts. The portion through our district is about as useful to Yalgoo district as it is to Geraldton. This road was cleared for the benefit of traffic from north of Mt. Magnet going to the metropolis, and is from 80 to 100 miles from Yalgoo and runs parallel to a road we had from Payne's Find to Yowergabbie and Mt. Magnet, and which was in good order. The new road cleared is of no benefit to the ratepayers in that portion of our district, and in January no fences had been cut or gates erected and, as far as I know, have not yet been cut.

That road cost a tremendous lot of money. That letter was written in April and in the previous January the gates across the road that the Main Roads Board had constructed had not even been cut! The result was that the road could not be used and that constructed by the Yalgoo Road Board was recognised as good enough for the purposes of the people there and was used by them. In August the local board also dealt with the matter in a further communication, in which it was stated by the secretary—

A couple of months ago there were no fences then cut or gates erected.  
He goes on to say—

This board is not satisfied with allocations of the Main Roads Board. The district is presumed to benefit to the extent of £764 by the Midland Junction-Meekatharra main road which passes through the extreme eastern boundary, parallel with a road that was in good order. The main road is of no benefit to this district, or to the few ratepayers in that portion of it. As far as this board knows, the fences across the road have not been cut, or gates erected, to date.

I have already indicated that the letters I am quoting are official ones from the local authorities concerned. There is a communication from the Mt. Magnet Road Board giving some notes upon the Main Roads Board charges against the local authority at Mt. Magnet, which include a contribution of £291 6s. 10d. and an annual payment under

Subsection 5 of Section 30 of £18 18s. 9d. The notes read—

Amount received from Main Roads Board account, part of Wubin North-East Road 4f—

	£	s.	d.
	884	14	10
Maintenance ..	45	0	0
	£929	14	10

This road between Mt. Magnet and the boundary is a distance of 50 odd miles; the whole work was carried out to the satisfaction of the engineer and the travelling public. A heavy smoother pulled by 20 odd camels was dragged over the whole road twice, making a smooth track 20 feet wide free from all stumps, stones, etc., and giving perfect running to the motor traffic. New gates painted white were erected and mileage distances marked on same. This road is recognised as the best portion on the whole of the main trunk road. Gibberding to Ninghan: Something like £2,581 has been spent on this portion, and it is at present still unfit for traffic, and from all accounts is most dangerous. The old road is still used.

Yalgoo road: Expenditure £5,000; recently expended; considered a waste of money. Had half that amount been placed in the hands of the Magnet and Yalgoo boards, a new road could have been cut and the travelling public would have had no complaints. This board strongly protests against having to pay interest for a number of years on money which could have been expended to a much greater advantage, and in many instances local boards could have carried out the work in a better manner for about half the cost.

That shows how the public money is being wasted. I wish to deal briefly with the amounts assessed against the local authorities for work carried out by the Main Roads Board. When the allocations were placed before the different bodies, there was a distinct feeling of unrest. Great dissatisfaction was expressed by the members of the road boards concerned, who are men working in a purely honorary capacity for the welfare of the State in general. While many of them held varying political views, and despite the fact that an election was approaching, these members of road boards pressed for a conference. They felt that the work of the Main Roads Board, which, in the first place, was regarded as a blessing, was turning out to be a very real hardship to the people in the country. I will give hon. members some instances to show how the assessments affected some local authorities. In the circular that was set out, the assessments were shown. For instance, in Geraldton, where not a penny of Main Roads Board money

had been spent, just because 25 miles of road had been constructed on the Moora-Geraldton road, the people were called upon to pay £61 18s. 9d. a year for 30 years. The 25 miles of road already constructed have cost £34,934, and that means that when the road is fully constructed for a distance of 306 miles, and taking it that the balance will cost as much as the portion already built, the Geraldton district will have to bear as its share of the cost, £21,114. That will mean a payment of £703 16s. per annum for 30 years. That, of course, does not take into consideration the cost of maintenance, which, hon. members will realise, may have to be paid by the local authorities. The Act says that the authorities can force the local people to shoulder that burden. Mr. Gregory, M.H.R., wrote a letter dealing with that point. Many people connected with local authorities considered that they would not have to pay for maintenance, but in his letter Mr. Gregory said—

For main trunk roads, the Commonwealth provides 4/7ths of the cost and the State 3/7ths, but of this 3/7ths the State may levy upon the local authorities up to, but not exceeding, one-half of the State's portion of the cost. In this connection I may mention that Western Australia has exclusively been given the right to levy one-half of their share of the cost of arterial roads for a period of five years, similarly to the permanent right to levy one-half the cost of main roads. In the construction of developmental roads, Commonwealth 4/7ths, State 3/7ths in the construction, and the State may levy 3/14ths of the cost on the local authority; in addition, the State may compel the local authority to maintain these roads.

When dealing with the amount that Geraldton will have to pay, I have referred to one road only, that from Perth to Geraldton. There are many other roads that will have to be constructed. There is the road through from Geraldton to Meekatharra, the main road from Geraldton to Northampton, another one to Mullewa and others still to other centres. It means that if all these works are to be undertaken and Geraldton is to be expected to shoulder such proportionate financial burdens, the Geraldton local authorities will have no money whatever to spend within their own boundary. The outlook is very serious for the local authorities there. These facts show why the recent conference was convened, and how reasonable it was that the men should come from long distances to go into the question of costs. Another iniquitous

charge against the local authorities concerns the bridge over the Upper Swan, the cost of which it is stated at £18,507 11s. 8d. That, however, is only the State's proportion of the cost; the actual cost is something like £43,246.

Hon. V. Hammersley: For that tinpot structure!

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Yes. Each year local authorities will have charged against them larger and still larger amounts. I have merely instanced Geraldton as the biggest town in the North to show what the position will be under the Main Roads Board assessments. Subsection 2 of Section 30 of the Main Roads Act reads—

In exercising this authority the board shall take into account the revenue, valuation and rating of the local authority and also its financial obligations on account of liabilities for loan expenditure incurred in respect of permanent works under this Act.

I cannot see where the Main Roads Board has taken into consideration the smaller local authorities. Take the Irwin Road Board. The total revenue of that body amounts to £1,214. The board spends on works and maintenance £1,089. That does not take into consideration administrative expenditure and other charges. How can the road board pay for the Moora-Geraldton road, £61 18s. 9d., and for the Midland Junction-Meekatharra road, £18 18s. 9d. per annum for 30 years?

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Before tea I was discussing the amounts that were assessed against the different local authorities in the northern districts. Speaking of the Irwin Road Board I mentioned that the total revenue was £1,214, out of which the board spent on works and maintenance £1,089. That does not take into consideration administration expenditure and other charges. How can the board pay for the Moora-Geraldton road £61 18s. 9d. and for the Midland Junction-Meekatharra road £18 18s. 9d. per annum for 30 years? When the amount for one road reaches £703 what will the board's position be? Like many other road boards it must become bankrupt.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That board has a big mileage, like most other road boards, I suppose?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Yes. The same can be said of the Greenough Road Board

with a total revenue of £1,787 and of the Geraldton Road Board with a revenue of £1,736, and there are many other road boards in just the same position. It will be an absolute impossibility for them to carry on if those charges are made as in the past. Is it just to charge Irwin, Greenough, Upper Chapman, Northampton, Mingenew, and Carnamah for work on the Midland Junction-Meekatharra road, or to charge Meekatharra, Cue, Magnet, Yalgoo, Nannine and many other distant boards for work done on the Swan bridge? The allocation circular read—

The contributions from the local authorities are not at a uniform rate, but have been varied because, in the opinion of the board, such variation is substantially according to the benefits to the local authorities from the respective works.

When the Meekatharra Road Board was asked whether it was satisfied with the allocation, the following reply was sent—

If you mean the amount assessed against the board for main road work carried out elsewhere, it is thought to border on the burlesque to apportion a tax on any community over 500 miles from the site of the works.

That board has been charged for works 500 miles distant from the district. Were the revenue and ratings taken into account when charging Perth municipality 2.5 for the Midland Junction-Meekatharra road and charging Swan, Chittering, Victoria Plains Moora, Dalwallinu and Yalgoo each 7.9, and the Midland towns from Gingin to Northampton 3.1? Many of those North Midland towns are not in any way connected with this road. Again, on the Moora-Geraldton road, Moora, Carnamah, Mingenew, Irwin, Greenough and Geraldton Road Boards are charged 12.7, East Chapman and Northampton 5.4, and Geraldton 12.7, while such local authorities as Midland Junction and others in the metropolitan area are left out. It shows that the whole thing is positively wrong. The allocations have been made in quite a wrong way. I am not going to dwell at greater length on the matter of the Main Roads Board because I think members are convinced that the conference was quite in order in meeting to discuss the work. May I mention in passing that some of the roads on which money has been squandered were constructed immediately prior to the last general election. There is no need for me to enlarge on that aspect of the question.

Referring again to the specifications sent out, I should like to read one of the many clauses to show how unjust the specification are. Clause 19 begins—

It is hereby expressly agreed that it shall not be imperative upon the board to proceed with the works unless the money for the same has been voted by the Legislative Assembly and sanctioned by some Appropriation Act; and in case sufficient money shall not have been so voted and sanctioned, it shall be lawful for the chairman from time to time, by written notice addressed to the contractor and left at his usual or last place of abode or on the works, to stop or suspend the works either temporarily or permanently, or to order that a portion or portions only of the works shall be proceeded with, and the remainder to be stopped or suspended either temporarily or permanently; and the contractor shall thereupon either stop or suspend the works or finish such portion or portions thereof, and then stop and suspend the works, as he shall be by such notice directed. And in case such works shall have been temporarily stopped and suspended under the power therein conferred, the contractor shall resume the same upon receiving an order in writing to that effect from the chairman.

Thus a man who takes a contract from the Main Roads Board under those specifications may begin the construction of a three-mile road, then be stopped and have to put the men off for a few days, and then be ordered to resume the work, and later be stopped again. It is quite ridiculous. I think I have said enough to show that an inquiry into the work of the Main Roads Board is absolutely necessary. Such an inquiry would be in the interests of the local authorities concerned, in the best interests of the State, and certainly in the best interests of the Main Roads Board. I join with other members in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

**HON A. J. H. SAW** Metropolitan-Suburban) [7.40]: There are two things on which I wish to touch in speaking on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply. Members will probably remember that during the Address-in-reply debate last session I directed the attention of the Government and the House to the question of the control of the milk supply and of obtaining a pure milk supply for the city of Perth. I am sorry to say that my efforts in that regard were not appreciated by the Government. I can quite understand the difficulty of the Government owing to the presence of a gentleman temporarily holding the office of Commissioner of Public Health, who was hostile to the views I expressed.

No doubt the Government were influenced by the attitude adopted by Dr. Mitchell. I cannot congratulate the Minister for Health (Hon. S. W. Munsie)—and I presume the Leader of this House reflected the views of the Minister for Health in the attitude he took up—on the discrimination which he displayed, or rather did not display, in the matter as I presented it. I took care to quote chapter and verse for the views I expressed, and I did not speak without quoting definite authorities for the views I advocated. I was very pleased to see that when Dr. Atkinson, the Commissioner of Health, who had been on a tour of America as the guest of the Rockefeller Institute, returned to this State, the very first thing he mentioned, not knowing of the controversy that had taken place during his absence, when asked what had most impressed him during his travels, was, "the method of distribution and the pasteurisation of milk in the large cities in America." Since then Dr. Atkinson in the Press and also in addresses given to the medical profession has stated quite fully his conviction that pasteurisation is the proper system of dealing with the milk supply. He has borne out every contention that I advanced in this House 12 months ago. Not only does Dr. Atkinson bear me out, but the highest authority in the scientific world on the question of nutrition, Dr. McCollum, states that in his opinion the milk supply of every large city should be pasteurised. I hope that during this session the Government will pay some attention at any rate to the views Dr. Atkinson expressed, if only for the reason that at considerable expense, not to the Government but the Rockefeller Institute, Dr. Atkinson was afforded an opportunity to visit America and England in order to learn of recent developments in public health. When he returned to the State he said the thing of outstanding merit was the system of milk supply and pasteurisation. Dr. Atkinson also confirms what I said that in the large cities of America from 95 to 90 per cent. of the milk distributed is pasteurised. Furthermore, he says that in London where the United Dairies controls 60 per cent. of the milk supply of that huge metropolis, the whole of the milk it distributes is pasteurised. How much more is pasteurised in London I do not know, but this one huge corporation controlling 60 per cent. of the milk supply of London pasteurises all its milk. I am perfectly convinced that we shall never get a proper system of milk supply

for Perth until the supply is controlled. I noticed in this evening's newspaper that the milk producers are getting alarmed about the parlous condition into which they are drifting owing to the poor price that they consider is being paid. I notice also that they contemplate increasing the price of milk. My opinion is that it would be much better if, instead of increasing the price and thereby diminishing the consumption, they concentrated more on getting a pure supply and in that way increasing the consumption in the metropolis. Undoubtedly people do not drink anything like enough milk, and if they were assured of the purity of the supply, a great deal more would be consumed. That would be of benefit to the producer and would immensely benefit the consumer. Although the Governor's Speech contains no reference to the question of the control of milk or measures to be taken to ensure the purity of the supply for the metropolitan area, I hope that during the present session the Government will give their attention to that question and that a Bill will be brought in to deal with the matter. A subject referred to in the Governor's Speech is the Hospitals Bill. Hon. members will recollect that the last Hospitals Bill came to an untimely end in this House, and it came to an untimely end owing to a combination of forces. The members of the Labour Party opposed it and certain other members of this House, to whom it was not pleasing also opposed it. The result was that the Chairman was moved out of the Chair after the second reading had been carried without a division. I was strongly in favour of that Hospitals Bill and I hope that the Government will introduce a measure on somewhat similar lines and so place the hospitals on a proper footing. I was glad to see a statement the other day by Mr. Munsie with reference to the establishment of an intermediate hospital. I was also glad to see his reference to the site for hospital extension in Perth, which I have been advocating in this House for some time, namely, that site between Nedlands and West Subiaco. There we have a vast extent of land which can be obtained from the University and I understand from Mr. Munsie that the Government contemplate an exchange of land with the University whereby the proposed hospital will have plenty of ground surrounding it. The site



proposed will have the benefit of quietness and the exchange will benefit the University in that it will be enabled to raise revenue. The question of intermediate hospitals has agitated the English-speaking world for a considerable time. It is true, so far as Perth is concerned, that the sisters of St. John of God hospital have done a very fine work and to a large extent have supplied the needs of such an institution. I maintain, however, that although the work of those sisters is magnificent—and I would like here to pay a tribute to the high quality of the work they do and to the great benefit they have conferred on the community—that fact has not relieved the Government of the need for providing an intermediate hospital. There are certain phases of intermediate hospitals which we cannot expect private enterprise to supply. It should be an institution like the Perth Hospital with similar departments, and that cannot be expected from a purely private institution. Another matter mentioned in the Governor's Speech is the Redistribution of Seats Bill. This, of course, is long overdue, and I take it that it is a blot on the Government of the day that such a measure was not brought in before the last general election took place. That election was fought on a distribution of seats under which 15 electorates aggregate the number of voters to be found on the Canning electorate roll. That in itself is a sufficient condemnation of the existing distribution so far as the Assembly is concerned. I hope the Government will appoint an entirely independent board, free from political influence, to determine the boundaries. I wish to draw attention to the anomaly that exists with reference to the province I have the honour to represent. My two colleagues and I represent one-third of the electors for the Upper House.

Hon. J. Cornell: I will exchange any of my colleagues for one of yours to-morrow.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I would be glad to welcome Mr. Cornell as one of my colleagues of the Metropolitan-Suburban Province, but I should be sorry to lose the colleagues I already have. I particularly refer to the two adjoining provinces—the Metropolitan and the West Provinces. In the Metropolitan-Suburban Province there are 22,000 electors, whilst the Metropolitan and West Provinces

contain between 7,000 and 8,000 electors. The interests of the electors of these three provinces are almost identical. Having recently come from an election, what I wish to draw attention to is the desirability of amending the Electoral Act in respect of the Province I represent. A considerable number of the voters of the Metropolitan-Suburban Province reside in the Metropolitan Province, and also a large number of those who live in the Metropolitan-Suburban Province come into the city every day to their avocations. There is some unnecessary difficulty in these people recording their votes. I cannot see why there should not be a polling booth in the city for the convenience of those electors who number thousands, some of them dwelling in the city and others dwelling in the Metropolitan-Suburban Province and who work in the city. The smallness of the poll in the Metropolitan-Suburban Province is, I think, largely due to the lack of this voting facility. These people come to the city to work and do not record their votes. They spend their morning in Perth and as soon as they have quitted their work, rush home and immediately afterwards go to a football match or to some other sport as spectators or perhaps players, and never think it worth while to go near a polling booth. I can see no objection to one or more polling booths being established in the city for the convenience of these people. There is deplorable apathy displayed by the public at these elections, and it is particularly reflected in the Metropolitan-Suburban Province, owing to the enormous area it covers. It is exceedingly difficult to keep in touch with the various centres in that province. Unfortunately the electors will not attend meetings to listen to our election addresses. I can hardly blame them for that, but I do think every facility should be given to them to record their votes, and one means I suggest by which that can be done is to supply a polling place in the city. I make that suggestion not in my own interests because my election has just passed, and it is extremely improbable that I will have another. I make the suggestion in the interests of others who may come after me. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

**HON. J. E. BROWN** (North-East) [7.54]: I desire to preface my remarks by referring to what was said by Mr. Hamersley and Mr. Holmes. Mr. Hamersley pointed out that the Southern European was a better man for

clearing land prior to being ploughed than was the Australian. I wish to contradict that and to declare that the Australian is far ahead of the foreigner even for the clearing of land. Take the Australian at woodchopping; he will cut as much wood in eight hours as the other will cut in twelve. The Southern European, who takes a contract for clearing, does not do the work himself. He writes to his relatives in Italy or Austria, and brings them out to do the work. In that way ground that is worth £10 an acre to clear is cleared for £5 an acre. If an Australian is paid, he will clear the land. He does not bullock himself out. The initial expenses of clearing land in the first place are heavy, but once the work is done it is done for all time. As soon as the plough goes into the ground, no more big trees will grow there. Mr. Holmes spoke of the Profiteering Bill that is coming before us, and said that the worst profiteers of the lot were the men who loafed on the boss, the men who did not do a fair amount of work for the money they received. I am sorry Mr. Holmes is not here to-night. He sees that he gets his pound of flesh, and every bit at that, from those whom he employs. He has a very poor opinion of the other chap. As soon as a man has a time book and wage sheet, he sees to it that he gets a fair return for the money that he pays out. I heard of the case of a man who came across another who was working like mad. The latter was told to go and collect his pay, and when he asked the reason he was told that he could not possibly keep up the pace at which he was working. He knew the man was doing it simply because the boss was there. The other men were carrying on in the ordinary way. I know that if Mr. Holmes had a long-handled shovel or a pick in his hands he would have his back straight more often than it would be bent. There are only three things I am going to touch upon related to the Address-in-reply. We had a very nice Speech from the Governor, and now we are looking forward to the measures to come before Parliament. Dr. Saw touched upon the Redistribution of Seats Bill, saying that it was overdue. I agree that it is. But I am not going to blame the Collier Government for that. They could not bring it up during their first term of office. They were not going to bring it up on the eve of an election, for they had other things to do. Now in this new Parliament they have brought it up at the first opportunity. All members will agree that a Redistribution of Seats Bill is required,

but those who have spoken on the matter have qualified their assertion by saying, "So long as it is equitable." The word "equity" will have to be defined here, for every member seems to have a different idea of it. Mr. Holmes may not be pleased with a redistribution that, possibly, would be quite satisfactory to Dr. Saw, who represents some 22,000 electors, while Mr. Holmes speaks for 640. Anyhow, when the measure comes before the House I hope members will give it the consideration it deserves. I agree with Dr. Saw that it would be well if a board were appointed to lay down the correct boundaries. Now I wish to speak about public hospitals. Dr. Saw touched on that subject also, and referred to the deplorable financial state of the Government Hospital. There are many ways of raising money for a hospital, but some of them are declared to be unsatisfactory. We have only to go up to the Perth Hospital and inquire how the nurses are paid. For a miserable pittance these brave women battle on without protest, knowing that the authorities cannot afford to pay them any more. Any day in the week, if one goes into the corridor, he will see anything up to 200 patients seated there. Most of them will have been there since 9 a.m. and will be there until after lunch time. They make a point of arriving early in order to get their cards in early. Most of the doctors are acting in an honorary capacity. They come in at about 10.30, attend to a few of the patients, and are then called away for morning tea. Usually they are away for any period up to three-quarters of an hour. But nobody can say yea or nay to them, because they are in an honorary capacity, and the Government cannot afford to pay doctors full fees to stop there all the time. The pity is that the Government cannot afford to pay about eight resident medical practitioners who would be on duty for full time. Those poor patients who have been unable to get their cards fixed up by 12 noon, have to come back again next day. Mr. Lovekin, if he were here, would bear me out in this, for he has frequently remarked upon it as a grave anomaly. There is only one way of financing the hospital, and that is either by premium bonds or by a lottery sweep. People say it is gambling. That is true. But then the churches themselves indulge in gambling. When they want to raise money, they organise a bazaar and raffle a cushion, or if it be Christmas they raffle a goose or a duck. It is all gambling. If we were to

eliminate the selling of sweep tickets by able-bodied men along the city streets, what a revenue the Government would have for their hospitals! Just look at the money going to Tasmania and Queensland every year. That money could be kept in the State.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Will you pass legislation to prevent it from going out?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: No, we cannot do that.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Will you agree to cut all sweeps but the Government sweep?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Yes, certainly. One can see in every tobacconist's window, "I communicate with Hobart." We all know what that means.

Hon. J. Nicholson: How could you keep the money in the State?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: By affording facilities to spend it here to the same end. A few months ago we had a tipping competition. It ran for only a short period, but it gained great proportions in that time. About £3,000 per week came in through that competition. One promoter in Fremantle used to pay £1,000 per week in prizes to those who picked the most winners on a Saturday. The turnover was amounting to something like £150,000 per annum. That has all been cut out. Suppose everything else of the sort were cut out and all sweeps and raffles done away with, just consider the money the Government would have for the support of the hospitals! We cannot stop Australians from having a gamb'e. Why, the very people who would oppose a lottery Bill here, are quite prepared to have a gamble on the quiet with anybody.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you look forward to having a tipping competition on the Federal election?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: You can have it on anything you like. I do not see any other way by which to raise money for the hospitals. It must be a nightmare to the Minister controlling the hospitals to be always rushing off to the Treasury for a few pounds, well knowing that the money is not there for him to get. One member remarked that patients did not pay for their treatment in the hospital. It would not make much difference to the finances of the hospital if they all paid, for it takes quite a few thousand pounds per annum to run the institution. Another thing I want to touch upon is the Profiteering Bill, which we are told is to be brought down this session. There are many different ways of

profiteering. First there is the middleman. That is the man who does the profiteering. He is like a white ant, in that he works in the dark. Another chap is like the ostrich, in that he buries his head in the sand. Still, we get a shot at him once in a while. We have to look at the man who depletes our meal tables, breakfast, dinner and tea. Take any of our food commodities. Take currants for instance. Currants are grown in our very midst. The grower has to pick the fruit, see that it is dried, washed, cleaned, put out on the racks and taken in again out of the dew. Then he has to pack the fruit in boxes and send them to the market, where he gets 3½d. per lb. for his product. On the other hand, the local housewife has to pay 8d. per lb. for the same article. All other food commodities, bread, meat, vegetables and the like are treated in the same way by the middleman. The other chap I am after is the landlord. Let us suppose he has a city shop standing empty. It has been a white elephant for months. At last a tenant goes into it and succeeds in establishing a good business. As soon as the landlord sees that, he doubles the rent.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Could not the tenant get a lease of the premises?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: He would not want a lease to start with. In any event, he could not get a city shop on a long lease. And if he gets the lease, the rent is doubled just as soon as the lease expires. Dozens of such cases have been investigated. As soon as the landlord sees the chance to double the rent, he does so. Then there is the landlord who owns a couple of tumble-down shacks. He advertises that he has a newly renovated house to let. Only last week I investigated such a case. One went to the front door of the house and found it would not open.

Member: Why did you not go to the back door?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: The back door would not close.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Were the windows any good?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Yes, they were all right. But the bathroom door could not be opened without a jemmy, and the door of the W.C. was in a similar condition. Yet the owner wanted 35s. per week for a house like that, in the suburbs, which meant that there were tram fares to be paid in addition. A board should be appointed to go into such cases and fix the rent, instead of letting the landlord charge what he likes. It is the old struggle between capital and human flesh.

Capital gets far too much protection, whereas human flesh gets too little. Then there is another individual who robs the public. I refer now to the lawyer. There are what might be called new lawyers, and again there are second-hand lawyers. There is in the Parliament House library, in fact it has not yet got upstairs, a book entitled "May It Please Your Honor." The author is himself a lawyer, and he declares that the lawyer is the most truthful man that ever lived.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I am told that that book has been upstairs for the past 18 months.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Well, the librarian must be a liar.

Hon. E. H. Harris: All men are liars!

Hon. J. R. BROWN: The author of that book tells us that a lawyer cannot lie.

Hon. J. Nicholson: A lawyer never tells a lie.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Suppose a client who is in a terrible mess consults a lawyer. The client knows that he has only Buckley's chance of getting out of the trouble, and the lawyer knows that he has not even Buckley's chance. Yet he says to him, "You have quite a good case, old chap." The next thing is, how are the client's finances? The lawyer wants to know whether he can pay £10, £20 or £50. He says, "I will get you out of this all right." So he buoys up his client, who, however, gets a rude awakening when he hears the prosecution's evidence and finds he has to go to gaol, leaving his £10, £20 or £50 in the solicitor's pocket. These lawyers live in palatial buildings, have motor cars and indulge in all luxuries. I know of a lawyer who is not only untruthful, but is positively dishonest. I can point to a case in Perth in which a lawyer was dishonest. A certain woman wanted a divorce. She went to a Perth solicitor and told him her circumstances and that she was poor. He offered to do the job for 25 guineas because of her position. The mother called in and paid him £14 down. The woman herself was in indifferent health, and did not go on with the case there and then. She ultimately died.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Was it the woman or the mother who died?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: It was the woman who died. Has the hon. member no ears? The mother applied to the solicitor for a refund. There had been no overhead charges, but the lawyer only laughed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I thought she was dead.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: Let the hon. member go on thinking. The lawyer will not return the mother her money. Perhaps he will not laugh when she sues him, as she intends to do. There is another form of profiteering. I refer to doctors. If I had my way I would annihilate 75 per cent. of them, because they are inefficient. I do not say that all doctors are inefficient, but 75 per cent. of them are. They have a set of prescriptions that they make up. If a man's foot is bad he will get one particular prescription. If it is a headache, a backache or a stomachache, the patient will be given some other kind of prescription. In actual fact the doctors know no more about the business than a pig does about a white shirt. These doctors follow much the same lines as the solicitors.

Hon. J. Nicholson: They are a bad lot.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: They charge patients whether they effect a cure or not. It is not necessary for them to cure a patient before they charge him. The fee is a guinea for the smallest advice, but if it is a question of an operation the fee may be 30 or 40 guineas. I know a man who took his wife to a Perth doctor, who told him she was far gone with a malignant growth and that he could do nothing for her. The husband said, "What can be done, must she simply die?" The doctor said, "Try deep therapy, the X-ray." Accordingly the woman was taken down for X-ray treatment at a cost of 15 guineas an hour for a few hours a day. After a while she was told that she was normal again, and had better go back to her doctor. The doctor said, "I can now operate on you; I will fix that up quite easily. You go into hospital." During the operation the doctor took half of the disease away and left the other half behind. The result was that the woman died. The doctor, however, had been paid more than half his fee, and is now clamouring for the other bit. I do not know how a doctor has the hide to put in a bill, after the person is dead, for services rendered when he knows in the first place he cannot do any good. That is where the profiteering comes in. There are hundreds of poor men in the State whose nose is always on the grindstone because they have never been able to pay the doctors' bills. I know all about it because I have been under nine doctors lately. I have now had my little

say on the Address-in-reply, and am prepared to support the motion.

**HON. E. H. HARRIS** (North-East) [8.20]: His Excellency's Speech in one sense is not unlike the Speech of 1924, in that the whole of the legislation that is likely to be brought forward has not been forecasted. We had an instance to-night of the Honorary Minister giving notice for the introduction of two or three measures to which no reference was made. The Minister for Water Supply said he intended to bring down a comprehensive measure to amend the Municipal Corporations Act and the Road Districts Act. Apparently we shall have the policy of the Government unfolded to us from time to time as the Bills are introduced, just as has happened before. Whilst the number of Bills indicated is small, some of them are of great importance. What interested me most from the point of view of curiosity was the Profiteering Bill. I have yet to learn to what that is intended to apply. If Mr. Brown's remarks are any indication, this will be one of the most interesting Bills we have had before us for a long time. No doubt he has the inside running, and should know what is to be embodied in any Bill that is brought down. It may be a combination of price-fixing, fair rents, the fixation of the percentage of profits that people may earn, and the charges that may be made by members of the medical and legal professions.

**Hon. J. Cornell:** That is between the quick and the dead.

**Hon. E. H. HARRIS:** If the Bill embodies the items enumerated by the hon. member we shall all find it most interesting.

**Hon. A. J. H. Saw:** There will be at least two members in the House who will vote against it.

**Hon. E. H. HARRIS:** No doubt the Hospitals Bill will be introduced at an early date. We know that our hospitals have been starved for necessary funds required for the carrying out of desirable work. We know what happened to the Bill that was brought in on a former occasion, this providing for a charge of 1d. in the pound on all incomes. We know the attitude of the then Opposition, that it bitterly opposed the measure, claiming that the penny in the pound was unfair, and that its incidence as regards the worker was unjust. When the Federal Government determined to relieve those people

who were on the bottom rung of the ladder, those who went to amusements and had to sit in back seats, the present Minister for Health immediately introduced a Bill providing for the taxation of all amusement tickets ranging from 9d. to 2s. 6d. I said then, and I repeat now, that the imposition of a taxation on 9d. tickets was a direct burden upon people who could ill-afford to pay sums of money to maintain hospitals, whilst those who were in more affluent circumstances and were able to sit in seats that cost a higher figure did not have to contribute anything towards State hospitals. From a return given this afternoon by the Chief Secretary, in response to a question I asked, I find that during the years 1925 to 1928, since the introduction of that measure, £81,284 has been paid into the fund for hospital maintenance by people who bought tickets for amusements ranging from 9d. to 2s. 6d. I shall be interested to learn whether the Government will still maintain that burden upon a section of the people who perhaps can ill-afford it, when once they introduce the Bill the terms of which will be outlined later. Mr. Fraser had a lament with regard to those engaged in the congenial task of tipping competitions. No mention has yet been made of that. It is suggested that it was the intention of the Government to run either tipping competitions or some form of sweeps in conjunction with the Hospitals Bill. Another item that is prominent in the legislation forecasted has to do with the redistribution of seats. Members will recollect that the Premier, when challenged with not having introduced a redistribution of seats Bill, which he promised to bring down in his 1924 policy speech, said that if returned to power they would immediately introduce a Bill and place the distribution of seats on an equitable basis. Everyone will admit that the present basis is very inequitable, and that it is very desirable and necessary to alter the shrieking anomalies that at present exist. I am interested to know whether the Government will have the courage to put into operation that which they have preached from the public platform, namely, one vote one value. This would mean that the majority of the seats in this Parliament would be held in the metropolitan area. It has been preached by more than one member of the present Ministry. I shall be interested to see whether they are prepared to put

their policy into operation in any Bill they may bring forward.

Hon. J. Cornell: Even that is superior to the present system.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The point raised by Dr. Saw as regards electors having to vote in the electorate in which they live is an important one. When they come to a poll in connection with the Federal elections, people may vote in a particular subdivision in Perth for one in the country, although the vote may eventually reach that district after the poll has closed. In the case of State elections a person has to record his vote and it has to be back in the district before the poll closes on that day. Dr. Saw suggests that the Electoral Act might be amended along these lines. This would afford greater facilities than the present system does.

Hon. J. Cornell: Under the Commonwealth Act a Tasmanian elector can vote in Wyndham.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: And the vote can go back to the district, where it would subsequently be counted. The only difference would be that such votes could not be counted on the date of the poll. It is only a matter of postponing the final count for a few days.

Hon. J. Cornell: The evil day.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The Profiteering Bill and the Redistribution of Seats Bill are the two that may serve the purpose of the Government if they realise that they are on the ebb tide of their popularity.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Oh!

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I ask the hon. member to recollect the demonstration of the unemployed. The party with which he is associated carried some rather strong resolutions concerning the Government and the attitude they adopted towards those people. Mr. Kempton has pointed out what happened at the road board conference, and what happened in connection with the squandering of public money immediately preceding the 1927 elections. The Government of the day might work things so that it would seem very desirable to have a dissolution. They might think it a suitable time to bring down a Profiteering Bill, something that would tickle the ear of the worker. They might insert some clauses that they would insist upon. They might likewise bring in a Redistribution of Seats Bill, and send both measures simultaneously to this House. If those Bills failed to pass the Government might go to the country on the pre-

sent boundaries, with a view to returning to power and postponing for a further three years any redistribution, thus giving themselves a new lease of life and stifling the voice of the people.

Hon. G. W. Milcs: Do not put ideas into their heads.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: That may be one of the reasons why the Government suggest bringing down a redistribution of seats so early. As a rule a Bill of that sort is the last thing a Government would introduce before going to the country. They seem to be going to introduce it early this session, as well as a Profiteering Bill. They may insist upon this House passing both measures, and if the House refuses to do so, the Bills may be used as decoys to give them the opportunity to go to the country. I suggest that may be what the Government have in mind.

The Honorary Minister: You have a wonderful imagination!

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I suggest that what I have indicated may be one of the reasons why these Bills are introduced so early. I was not here at the opening of the special session to convey congratulations to new members, but I now wish to extend my congratulations to Mr. Fraser in particular. That hon. member made a candid criticism of the Government's attitude towards the unemployed. Resolutions were carried by the Trades Hall, and it is rather unfortunate that Mr. Fraser did not quote something that had reference to the workless. The matter may not have come under his notice. In case it has not, may I be permitted now to read a brief extract from a paper called "The Workless," published by the unemployed, which, under the heading "Collier—Renegade," writes—

Mr. Shapcott is in an unenviable position owing to that spirit of philosophical detachment his chief has cultivated in endeavouring to forget that he once had to work for himself, and not depend upon the votes of the bulldozed wage slaves to retain him in authority with which is allied easy pelf. The earth of the grave has covered other traitors.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Do you know who is the editor of that paper?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The article continues—

With the passing of time the quicksand of political oblivion will encompass the Hon. P. Collier and remove a blot from the body politic—

The PRESIDENT: Order! Will the hon. member resume his seat? I would remind the hon. member of Standing Order 394, which states—

No member shall use offensive words against either House of Parliament or any member of such House.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Yes, Sir; but I was not aware that I was using offensive words, because this has been published and broadcasted throughout the metropolitan area.

Hon. E. H. Gray: By a Communist paper.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Never a word has been said in opposition to it. Therefore I considered that I was entitled, nothing having been said by those to whom the matter referred, to make the quotation.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The hon. member is quoting from a Communist paper.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I am not. However, I will leave the matter there, and not read the other portion. Following up the question of the unemployed, it is well remembered that we had unemployed during the time of the Mitchell Government. I then heard members of the Labour Party on the Esplanade describing how Ministers went on costly jamborees throughout Western Australia at week-ends. Has not the same thing happened since the present Government have been in power?

Hon. E. H. Gray: The Federal Government have caused most of our present unemployment.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: We have had the unemployed here since last January. We had them here during the harvest season. The Government of the day had it in their minds to provide for the unemployed after the end of the financial year. In 1928 there was no balance remaining from interest and sinking fund on the goldfields water scheme loan, and so the Government tried to square the ledger by postponing all, or almost all, of the works that might have been brought forward. In order that the Premier might not be burnt in effigy here before Parliament House on the day of the meeting of Parliament, the Government provided some work for the unemployed a week before Parliament assembled. The Government sacrificed the unemployed in that way. Another matter I wish to bring under the notice of the Government refers to a worthy institution which is a credit to Western Australia—

I allude to the Kalgoorlie School of Mines. While Parliament was in recess Mr. Nangle, Superintendent of Technical Education in New South Wales, was requested by the Government of this State to report on Western Australia's system of technical education. I have asked for that report in order that I might be armed with a copy of it before making any reference to it in this Chamber; but I understand the document will be put up as a Parliamentary paper, and that in the course of a week or two it will be available. In the absence of the report itself I have to rely on some Press clippings, and it is on these I base my remarks. The position held by Mr. Nangle in New South Wales shows him to be a man of some standing, and one whose opinions should command attention. At present the head of technical education in Western Australia is also head of the Kalgoorlie School of Mines; in fact, he has been so ever since the inception of the school, some 20 years ago. Further, the Director of the School of Mines is responsible to the Mines Department. The Press paragraph I wish to quote reads as follows:—

Mr. Nangle recommends that the dual position of Director of Technical Education and head of the Kalgoorlie School of Mines be abolished, and a superintendent placed in charge of the branch, and responsible to the Minister through the Director of Education.

The School of Mines is affiliated with the University of Western Australia, as also is, I understand, Muresk Agricultural College. I do not know that it has been suggested that Muresk Agricultural College should be brought under the Education Department. The Kalgoorlie School of Mines is a most worthy institution, with a world-wide reputation for the men whom it has trained, some of whom have achieved distinction in other countries. The work of the school being chiefly on the science side, it would be wrong if the institution were placed under the Education Department. Our School of Mines is in competition with other Australian schools of mines, chiefly that at Ballarat, and we shall lose a good many of the pupils at Kalgoorlie if our institution is brought under the supervision of the Education Department. I do not know that Mr. Nangle visited Kalgoorlie or inspected the school, or that he has any acquaintance with the work done there. If the suggestion as recorded in the paragraph I have quoted is to be adopted as Government policy, then I as a member for the North-East Province must enter my

most emphatic protest. We have the largest auriferous area in Australia, and the greatest possibilities, and we produce most of the gold that is won in Australia. If the Government, because of the temporary depression in the mining industry, decide to place the School of Mines under the Director of Education, thus materially altering its status, they will be showing the white feather in regard to gold mining. If the status of the school is to be maintained, whoever may be in charge of it should be directly responsible for the Mines Department, as has been the case hitherto. Adelaide once had what was admitted to be a good school of mines, but the institution developed into a technical school; and the status of anything of that kind is negligible. Ballarat and Kalgoorlie are the chief schools, and Kalgoorlie offers special opportunities for the gaining of practical experience both at the school and at the mines. We should make every effort to attain and maintain the highest standard there, as we have done hitherto.

Hon. J. Cornell: Not an ounce of gold has been got at Ballarat during the last five years.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: That does not matter from this particular aspect. It is a question of the status of the school. I know a former Kalgoorlie mine manager, now resident in England, who has sent his two sons to study at the Kalgoorlie School of Mines. They are a credit to the school and to Western Australia. I do hope that the paragraph which I have read and the interpretation which I have placed upon it will both prove to be incorrect, and that the Government will allow things to remain as they are. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.42 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 14th August, 1928.*

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

### QUESTION—MAIN ROADS BOARD SUPERVISORS.

Mr. BROWN asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that applications were called for supervisors for Main Roads Board by advertisement in the "Sydney Morning Herald" of 20th June, 1928? 2, Was the opportunity given to men in Western Australia to apply? 3, Has any appointment been made in response to such advertisement?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. This is a matter for the discretion of the Main Roads Board. 2, Yes. The Main Roads Board has made it generally known locally that there are vacancies for good men. 3, No.

### QUESTION—STATE HOTELS, TARIFF.

Mr. THOMSON (for Mr. C. P. Wausbrough) asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is it a fact that the tariff at State hotels has been increased by 20 per cent. since the 30th June? 2, What circumstances have arisen in connection with this branch of State enterprise that warrants this action? 3, Is he aware that privately owned hotels have not increased their tariff and that the department's action has added an unjust impost upon citizens and travelling public alike? 4, Will he inquire into the matter with a view to reverting to the original charges?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes. 2, The tariff of 10s. per day previously charged was not commensurate with the services rendered. 3, No; many of the better class country hotels have long since raised their tariffs. 4, There is no necessity for further inquiry.