

AYES.	
Mr. Boyle	Mr. North
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Doney	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Graham	Mr. Sampson
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Seward
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Watts
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
(Teller.)	
NOES.	
Mr. Fox	Mr. Needham
Mr. Johnson	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Cross
(Teller.)	

Question thus passed.

House adjourned at 9.48 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 2nd September, 1943.

Address-in-reply, tenth day PAGE 244

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Tenth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [4.32]: In addressing myself to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, it appears to me the time has come to speak of many things. No-one can but agree with the thought expressed in the Speech at the pleasure we all feel at the recent turn of events in the war and the magnificent victories of the United Nations. None of us can but feel proud of those achievements, which are so notable and have been carried to such a successful conclusion by our Armed Forces. We should stress the importance and the magnitude of the efforts of the people of Great Britain in this gigantic struggle. I desire to voice my fervent hope that at the end of this war we Australians shall feel more British than ever before and that Australia will still more firmly be a part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Mention is made in the Speech of the State Shipping Priorities Advisory Committee. I wish to commend the work done by that committee; through its efforts supplies to Western Australia are coming forward in much larger quantities than even 12 months ago.

I also desire to mention the excellent results achieved by the Central Medical Equipment Control Committee of Melbourne, which has in every way endeavoured to meet the medical needs of Western Australia. Only yesterday I had further evidence of the thought which the committee had been giving to the requirements of the State in that direction. I am extremely pleased to note that the conversion of the Transeontinental line into a uniform gauge, at least as far as Kalgoorlie, is to be a priority work. I have just returned from the Eastern States and, while there, I had made up my mind that on my return here I would emphasise the need for the completion of that work between Broken Hill and Port Pirie, so that the merchandise and other needs of Western Australia could be brought across the continent. During my visit to the Eastern States I saw in retail shops and in wholesale houses many articles which we still require in Western Australia and which are in exceedingly short supply here. Inquiry led me to realise that the shortage was due to the lack of transport facilities. I instance particularly such articles as radiators and other electrical appliances. I also noticed how full the shops were of rationed goods and materials of all descriptions for the making of rationed goods, such as dresses, etc. One could not help being struck by the immense amount of jewellery which was being purchased by the people in the Eastern States. The increased amount of money at the disposal of the people and the rationing of essential requirements have given a fillip to the sale of jewellery and other luxuries.

Hon. J. Cornell: You could not buy a watch in Melbourne.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The jewellery is of a type which normally one could not be enthusiastic about. I mention these matters to emphasise the question of the equality of sacrifice in our war effort. It can be made nearly equal but, as in all life, there is inequality. Let us take one luxury line in this State—chocolates. I do not think that they are very necessary during the war, but one cannot buy them here. In Melbourne one can do so. I was struck by the number of sweet shops operating there and by the appearance of boxes of chocolates in them. I went to a picture show one evening and during the interval a boy brought around a tray containing boxes of chocolates varying in price from 3s. to 10s. These

boxes of chocolates were quickly bought up, and fresh supplies were readily procurable on the following evening or at the next entertainment. One day I decided to try to buy some chocolates made by one firm, to bring home. They were to be sold at a certain time. I visited the shop at the specified time but a queue of about 50 or 60 people was already there, so I did not wait. I felt that if that had happened in Western Australia there could not possibly have been a queue of 50 or 60 people spending that length of time in waiting for luxuries without our manpower authorities questioning their ability to devote so long a period to such a purpose.

This confirms what I have had in mind for a considerable time past, namely, that there is a definite need for a new Convention to discuss the Constitution. The Commonwealth Powers Bill has come and gone but I feel there is some right—and maybe some wrong—in the quest for unification. I am firmly convinced that unification will eventually prevail in Australia, but it will not come about while we have our States as they are today. I have frequently emphasised that this country cannot afford the continued party strife in politics. I am not alone in my thought that such strife may cease and stable Government become more evident if unification is made an Australian policy with the creation of county or provincial governments. After having, during the past two years, toured the length of this State with the exception of the extreme North-West, I am fully seized with the inability of a central Government in Perth to govern adequately. Our South-West could easily be made a county. The area of Perth and its environs, Geraldton and its surrounding districts, Kalgoorlie with possibly an outlet to the sea coast, and our North-West, could be made separate counties each with its own governing body. Again, while in the Eastern States, I met the old question: To which does the Riverina belong, Victoria or New South Wales? Many people thought it would be necessary to make the Riverina a separate State or county, with another State comprising the Northern Rivers district of New South Wales and still another in the north of Queensland, possibly from Rockhampton upwards, before sound government could develop in Australia. It is my opinion that the local interests in such counties if established

would bring matters under a unified control, which would eliminate to a large extent the schism which has developed in Australian politics. It still may eventuate.

Turning to our own State I had hoped to see in His Excellency's Speech something about the immediate needs of Western Australia being given greater emphasis. I had also hoped that we might have had placed before us during this session consideration of the requirements of the State in relation to our future endeavours to repatriate the men after this war, and to encourage settlers from abroad. Western Australia has three paramount needs if it is to become a well populated State. I name those needs as follows:—1, electrical power; 2, adequate water supplies; 3, rapid transport. I was speaking recently with a man who had been an engineer in Europe, and he emphasised his agreement with this thought because it was not possible to ask industry to commence and grow to such magnitude that electrical power would follow. It was necessary in these days, he asserted, to provide the electrical power, and the industries would follow. Whether the provision of such electrical power is to come from our Collie coal-mines, from the harnessing of the hills waters, or from the harnessing of the tides, is a matter for our engineers to decide. My suggestions were qualified when it was pointed out to me that immediately after this war the great need would be to feed the peoples of Europe. But I do not believe that we can continue even to grow large quantities of primary products without these three essentials.

I cannot believe that our outback districts, such as the North-West, will invite people to toil there and grow food for Europe until we provide some amenities especially in the way of rapid transport. It has been emphasised in this House that our rolling stock is in a condition that calls for immediate overhaul, and the thought arises whether a continuance of the narrow-gauge railway in our State is sound policy for the future. If our rolling stock is in such a condition as has been described, would it not be better to review the question of starting afresh with a broad-gauge line as our main railway, leaving the narrow-gauge lines to act as feeders? Where the money will be found is something I am not personally called upon to answer, but the public in future will not believe that it is pos-

sible to find money in war-time and impossible to find it in peace-time.

Hon. J. Cornell: The public will find that it cannot take out of the pocket what is not put into it.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Leaving these larger problems, let me come to one of very great importance—the raising of the school leaving age. I applaud the Government for its efforts to raise the age to 15 years. I hope this is intended to be only a commencement. Naturally I agree with the suggestion. I do not think any citizen would disagree, but I trust that the Government is aware of all that this will mean. I hope that the raising of the school leaving age will not simply mean that a child is to be compelled to remain at school for one year longer. I do not propose to discuss education at the moment, but I hope the Chief Secretary will allow us an opportunity of a full-dress debate on education.

Touching education, there is one matter to which I should like to refer. Recently, the Government, after representations, raised the income limit from £300 to £350 to entitle a child to apply for a scholarship and to £500 to entitle a child to apply for a University scholarship. This also can be applauded, but I draw attention to the fact that there are many individuals today receiving well over £350 or £500 a year who find the strain of paying for education very great indeed. I am beginning to wonder whether there is anyone who is prepared to legislate for the middle class. A man on £700 or £800 a year and with a growing family to maintain finds himself, when taxation is so high, in very grave difficulties. In course of conversation with a bank manager recently, whose opinion I value highly and who was in this State for years, I learnt that he considered that a man on £700 to £800 a year, who was attempting at present to live as he had to live in pre-war times, who was attempting to give his children the education they need and who was attempting to meet such bills as might crop up in emergencies such as illness, could not today afford any entertainment. His words were, "He cannot even afford to go to the pictures."

I emphasise that the middleclass man is today paying a very considerable share of the war costs. It is he who is going to provide for the large expenditure on scholarships for our boys. The time is com-

ing when we will find that he is providing for those on lower incomes to obtain what he himself cannot give to his own children. I trust that the question of scholarships and the question whether there should be any income limit will receive considerable thought from the Government. I for one feel that if a boy or girl shows promise, arrangements should be made to ensure that that child gets the education necessary in order to enable it to become of greatest use to the State. Let us say that such a boy or girl shall not be debarred from applying for a scholarship simply because the parents do not come within what might be termed a salary range.

The Speech gives very scant attention to health. I had hoped that there would be considerable reference to the health of the public, especially in view of the fact that our State has recently been visited by the Social Security Commission and also by the Medical Survey Sub-Committee of the Commission. Never previously has the public been so health-minded as it is at present. Therefore, never before has there been such an opportunity for the State Government to make the necessary moves in regard to public health. I wish to speak of health from several angles, and then endeavour to connect my remarks and make of them one structure. There appeared quite recently a statement that the sum of £25,000 will be spent on a scheme for the provision of infant health centres, and that 16 new buildings in the greater metropolitan district and 13 in country towns will be erected as part of the post-war reconstruction programme. I will leave that aside for a moment and refer to the question of preventive medicine. Preventive medicine has merely been touched upon to date, and yet it is surely the medicine of the future. The idea of waiting until some person is ill has gone. The efforts of medicine in the future will be to prevent illness rather than to cure disease.

We have in Western Australia immunisation centres for the prevention of diphtheria. I am glad to know that at least one and possibly more of these local bodies who are contributing money and carrying out these schemes have come to think that it is essential that immunisation be made compulsory. They make the point very carefully that it is of very little use to spend large sums of money upon voluntary immunisation and

allow others to escape their obligations further to spread the disease which we are attempting to control. I applaud these local bodies for their efforts to make immunisation compulsory. With regard to hospitals, this matter is mentioned in the Speech and is one to which I have frequently referred myself. It is of very little use to take preventive medicine whilst our State regards infectious diseases blocks in the hospitals as something to be discarded. Recently an infectious diseases block at a country hospital was converted into a midwifery block. That hospital has now no infectious diseases block. I know that in recent months meningitis, scarlet fever and diphtheria have been attended to in the general wards.

So much for preventive medicine! I think I am right in saying that at one stage the infectious block at the Wooroloo Sanatorium was done away with and converted into a residence for one of the staff. There is no infectious diseases block there. I also draw attention to the fact that in one country hospital, at any rate quite recently, the practice was that newly born babes were placed to sleep in the children's ward in which was being treated a case of infectious diarrhoea. It was the only place, so far as I can ascertain, where newly born babes could be sent to sleep. So much for our attitude towards preventive medicine! In a certain country town there is a midwifery hospital which, in the opinion of the medical practitioner, does not come up to the required standard, and to which he will not send his patients. In that town at the moment attempts are being made to build a midwifery block as an addition to the general hospital. I have mentioned two points; first of all that a survey of this State is necessary in order that our medical requirements may be brought into line with modern thought and modern needs in treatment. Indeed, a survey will be necessary in almost every State. The aim of the survey will be to establish the centres at which base hospitals will be built. To build new blocks on existing country hospital sites, realising as I do that in the immediate future the survey is necessary and will inevitably occur is, in my opinion, a wrongful expenditure of public money at this moment. It would be possible in the particular instance I referred to, to meet immediate needs by assisting the private hospital to provide the necessary means of sterilisation and the necessary equipment to fit it to carry on as

a midwifery hospital, until such time as we knew what was going to happen in the way of medical organisation in our State.

I mention, as I have done before, the need for a nursing service throughout the country. Let me put it this way: Some sort of standard is necessary as to what nursing service is required under certain conditions. I give an instance of a hospital of 12 beds which attempted to carry on for a long time with one trained sister, and eventually got a second with, I think, three or four probationers. Not many miles away there was a hospital with 33 patients and, on the day I visited it there were 11 on the trained staff. There is another hospital in the country with 34 beds that at present has only two on the trained staff and four assistants. There is no uniformity of effort. All these things must be taken into consideration. I insist that a survey is immediately necessary of the whole of our hospital and nursing requirements.

Now I come to something with respect to health and hospital administration in which I have for 20 years taken very keen interest. I refer to the Wooroloo Sanatorium and all that it means to the sufferers and the public. The Government is to be congratulated on supporting the move to establish a farm colony attached to that institution, but I think it deserves the most severe criticism for the small measure of support which it is giving. This scheme is either necessary or unnecessary; it is either sound or unsound. If it is sound and if it is necessary, surely more support than the Government is prepared to extend is also essential. It must be 20 years ago that I reported to the Health Department in regard to the treatment of tuberculosis. In that report I mentioned a farm colony and all that it stood for. It is rather humorous to look back and realise that the only comment I received at the time was that the report was well written. Now, 20 years after, this scheme has been placed before the public.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member was wise before his time.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Quite! These farm colonies have been established in England for many years. The most noteworthy is the colony at Papworth, but many other colonies of the same kind have been established since. Either this colony is necessary or it is unnecessary. As a profession, we have

for many years endeavoured by every means in our power to impress upon the Government the need for fresh efforts in the control of tuberculosis. The credit today for the improved standard of treatment of tuberculosis at Wooroloo should go to Dr. Henzel. His efforts at Wooroloo have been untiring. He has advised the Government of the need for a farm colony. In reply to the doctor's efforts the Minister for Health has announced that the State Treasurer has approved of a grant of £1,000 to the fund and the purchase of an orchard property of 159½ acres at a cost of £2,500, against which there is the asset of the orchard.

The Government is so keen on the establishment of the colony that it is prepared to subscribe £1,000 and ask the public for £9,000. I appeal to the Minister for Health not to treat this matter just as if he were putting in the toes of one foot so that if it proved to be wet or cold he might withdraw it. I advise him to get in with both feet. I therefore plead with the Government, if the colony is essential, to take over the whole affair. What is going to happen if the public does not subscribe the £9,000? Is this essential part of the treatment of tuberculosis to remain as a wish only if the public fails to subscribe £9,000? The establishment of this colony is vital. I appeal to the Government to take over the whole job of running the farm colony for the treatment of tuberculosis as part of the treatment given at the Wooroloo Sanatorium. Appeal to the public if desired for extra amenities of living for those people who deserve all we can give! This scheme, I claim, is part of the treatment and I ask the Government to take it up seriously. Do not make a mendicant of Dr. Henzel! Do not make it necessary for him to give up the work he is doing at Wooroloo, but help this welfare colony into being. Do not make it part of his work that he has to go out delivering addresses on the treatment of tuberculosis in order to bring about what he considers to be an essential provision at Wooroloo.

There are many workers in this State in health matters whose hearts have been broken by the repeated negative answers of our Health Department over 20 years and I plead with the Government: Do not break Dr. Henzel's heart! This man is doing a magnificent job and for the first time in Western Australia we really have tuber-

culosis treated as it should be, with modern methods. I ask this House and the Government to see that Dr. Henzel receives every ounce of support that he deserves—and he deserves a lot. But do not ask him to be a mendicant looking for money and trying to raise funds by a method of which the public has become tired in regard to health matters. I ask the Government to view this as absolutely essential and something that it must take up wholeheartedly.

Has the Minister for Health any conception of what the future of this colony might be, what it might cost, what it might lead to before it is established as a colony? Who has decided upon £10,000 as being the cost? Nowhere in what has been reported in the Press can I find any evidence that the Government has committed itself to the maintenance of this colony. Is this orchard to remain the sole core of the colony? Is the expansion to depend entirely upon public support? Is the maintenance of it to be left entirely to the welfare fund of the Wooroloo Sanatorium?

Hon. C. B. Williams: It would not get far if that were so.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Is Dr. Henzel to be expected to keep up an agitation year after year so that money may continue to flow in to maintain the colony? This is a scheme that is worth while and must become an integral part of the treatment of tuberculosis in this State. Do not let us lose this opportunity! Do not let the colony start as an under-capitalised scheme that must fail! Treat it in the way it deserves and make it a State concern to which all contribute, and not merely those who are willing to put their hands in their pockets. Do not put the work on those who are willing to go round and use their last physical and mental efforts to keep the scheme going. At the same time as I find the scheme at Wooroloo being placed on its feet by the contribution from the Government of £1,000, I hear whispers—as yet unofficial so far as I am concerned—of economy in hospital administration. As we have had surpluses during the past three years for the first time and as we note that our monthly account is in order, I hope that we are not going to be treated to a further degree of parsimony in hospital administration. I trust that the Government will realise that these institutions have always been under-equipped, and if there is money to

spare in hospital administration, let it be spent, or at least placed aside if it cannot be spent, for the provision of further equipment for them, but please do not ask that in these days the hospitals shall economise.

Economy has been the catchword of health administration in this State for so long that I suppose my prayer that some day the word "efficiency" will take its place, is asking too much. I want to try to join these remarks together in one whole. I want to point out that so far as the health of the community is concerned, we have a practising profession who do their particular work. We have also a Public Health Department, the officers of which work in their grooves. We have officers of the Repatriation Department working in their own grooves. Then we have an Infant Health Association formulating its own plans for the future and doing its own work. Further we have hospital affairs run either by departmental or district bodies and then we have the Perth City Council's health affairs at present run by a Health Committee. But none of these appears to interlock with the others. Surely there should be some central body to link up all these activities so as to co-ordinate their efforts and make for greater efficiency and greater success. It is rather appalling to realise that the practising profession do but little work in public health and know very little of what the Public Health Department does and that the Public Health Department has for years appeared, rightly or wrongly, to be out of step with the practising profession.

So all these various avenues that tend to look after the health of the community proceed along their own lines, trusting that they will all do their meed of good. I feel that if we are going to be at all successful we must survey this State completely and re-organise and start again on a new basis of health. Let me refer to just one matter that interested me in the House a day or two ago. On that occasion a reference was made to the need for a full-time health inspector in Wagin. I happen to know something of the reasons behind all this, but I am not going to discuss them. All I want to say is this: There cannot be sufficient work to maintain a full-time health officer in a town the size of Wagin, but surely there is need for a zoning system so that full-time health officers may be appointed and their attention fully occupied in caring

for the health needs of the areas so zoned. I am quite convinced that a health officer could look after Wagin, Dumbleyung and Katanning quite easily. But if we are going to make a man a clerk in the morning and a health officer in the afternoon, we are not going to get efficient health officers. Here again there should be a survey of the State so that we could ensure efficiency in that phase of our administration.

I want to emphasise the need for a State organisation to join these activities together. A report of the Social Security Medical Survey Sub-Committee dated the 30th June, 1943, emphasises the need. It admittedly refers to certain difficulties which would occur when it was desired to give local powers or executive authority to the practising doctor in a community, but has no doubt whatever that the health districts of the State should be defined. A later issue of its report will provide its idea of the health zones required. They will possibly need revising by our own organisation. When I referred to this co-ordination of health affairs I received support from the Social Security Commission and the paragraph I am about to read in this connection is of very great interest—

The National Health and Medical Research Council has various expert sub-committees for particular advisory purposes; the Commonwealth and State Departments of Health have certain departmental sub-divisions and officers with specialised knowledge of particular aspects; there are numerous extra-departmental bodies, private or, occasionally, quasi-Governmental, interested in medical care or particular aspects of protective medicine—

And here is the important part—

—but neither the Commonwealth nor any State in Australia has at its disposal an adequate body of responsible people competent to advise it on all aspects of protective and corrective medical care.

The Commission adds this final paragraph—

Under these circumstances, it appears inevitable that Governments and Ministers must occasionally suffer from a lack of adequate advice, or from misleading advice on these matters from irresponsible persons.

That is a pretty damning criticism of the method under which our health matters are administered, not only in this State but in other States also. I would like to emphasise to the Minister that the profession will always be at his back to give advice on such matters as appertain to the health of the community.

The Health Department of the future must have a much greater weight of professional advice for the Minister in charge. The Commonwealth Government has given a lead. The adviser to the Minister for Health of the Commonwealth is a medical man. It is a long way down the organisation before one comes to lay bodies, but in this State lay advice is too often taken in the administration of health matters when professional advice would have been otherwise. Professional advice is available. It will be freely and willingly given to the Minister when he cares to ask for it. I would plead with him and point out to him that the time is ripe for a complete investigation into the needs of this State in regard to all matters appertaining to health. Should he require advice from the medical profession it will be given freely. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

HON. F. E. GIBSON (Metropolitan-Suburban): As was to be expected, the first reference by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor in the Speech he delivered to us was in connection with the war and in it he paid a well-deserved tribute to those who are fighting overseas and to the great work the Allies have done in connection with the protection not only of the British Empire, but of all the Allies stand for. As we eagerly open the paper in the morning to read the daily news, I think most of us are astounded at the change that has taken place in recent months in the conditions that confront us. We are now assured that the position of Australia is safe and I think we are all convinced that, so far as the operations in Europe are concerned, England is as safe as we are. I sometimes wonder whether proper consideration is given to those who are responsible for that state of affairs, and whether we are as thankful to the men who are making sacrifices for us as we should be. In recent months we have heard great argument as to who saved Australia. I do not think there can be any doubt about the answer to that question. The men who saved Australia are those who have struggled in the fighting line, the men in the air and the men in our ships, both naval and mercantile. We should remember with undying gratitude the men of the Sixth Division who, with their comrades of the British Army under General Wavell, wiped out the Italian Army of 250,000 that was threatening Alexandria and the Suez

Canal, and thus made it possible, at a later date, for us to take control in Iran and Syria. One shudders to think what would have happened had we lost control of the Suez Canal at that stage of the war. It would have enabled the Germans and Japanese to join forces, and that would have been a most serious matter for the Allies. At present we are convinced that Australia is safe from invasion and we can look forward with confidence to the time when our victorious armies will be marching down the streets of Tokio.

I sometimes wonder if people really realise the debt the world owes to Britain, that small island off the coast of Europe which we are proud to speak of as our Motherland. After the capitulation of the Belgians and later of the French, our armies had to fight their way back to Dunkirk and embark on whatever vessel was available, leaving all their equipment behind them. I feel sure there was no person outside the British Empire who did not think at that stage that Britain was beaten and that it would only be a few weeks before she must capitulate. For months she fought alone and had she been defeated all that we hold dear would have been swept aside; but Britain stood firm and today we are dwelling in security that, judging by our position some few months ago, seemed quite impossible. When peace dawns great problems will face the nation and those charged with the government of our State. Co-operation with the Commonwealth Government will be most necessary, and I am sure that there is not a member of this Chamber who, from that standpoint, does not realise his responsibility to those who have fought for us. Mistakes that were made after the last war in connection with repatriation matters can now be avoided.

Normally we are a primary producing State and the more primary industries we can develop the greater will be the need for secondary industries to supply their requirements. In the course of an excellent speech Sir Hal Colebatch made reference to the need for the greater development of our coal resources. We are fortunate in having so close to our industrial centres such huge deposits of coal which, although not of the highest grade, are of great value from the standpoint of our industrial existence. Without fuel we can not have power. I hope that in the immediate post-war years efficient development of our coal deposits will mean the employment of a much greater

number of men than are now engaged in the industry, and that the future will see men working there under decent conditions and producing the coal in such quantities as will enable power to be generated at a much lower cost than obtains at present. During my many trips through the rich areas of the South-West I have often tried to visualise conditions under which every farmer would have the benefit of electricity in his home both for lighting purposes and for power to operate his machines. If that were possible of accomplishment, those conditions combined with the irrigation systems already installed or planned, would mean that that portion of Western Australia should in time be a veritable garden engaging the attention of many more thousands of people than are to be found there today. I assure members representing the provinces affected that any help I can give in accomplishing that end will be readily extended.

Many years ago it was my good fortune to visit Yallourn in company with the late Sir John Monash who had at that time only recently been appointed chairman of the Victorian Electricity Commission. The developmental work on that field, with its vast deposit of brown coal, was in its early stages and while I was there the over-burden was being removed. I have since visited the centre on two occasions and today there is at Yallourn a model city occupied mainly by employees of the Commission. Electricity generated at Yallourn is carried over a network of cables throughout Victoria and across the Murray River into New South Wales. We have several coal deposits in Western Australia, and it seems to me that greater attention should be devoted to the use of these fields for the development of power so that the State, particularly in the settled parts, could possess electricity supplies so essential for our industrial development. I do not desire to enter into a discussion of the problem of whether it is more economical to generate power at the pit mouth for transmission to the consumer or to haul the coal to the power-house close to the consumer. That is a matter for experts to decide, but I was told by the manager of the Newport power-house which supplies electricity for the Victorian railway system, that he could generate power more cheaply in the city with coal hauled from Wonthaggi than he could purchase it

in bulk from the Yallourn scheme. Here we have the coal and we can have the electricity supplies if we go into the matter fully. I hope this question will be given prompt attention in the immediate post-war years.

The surplus disclosed in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech—the amount mentioned was £24,436—should be a source of satisfaction, but it would appeal to me much more favourably if it was what one could regard as a genuine surplus. Having regard to the condition of the railway rollingstock, the Perth trams and our public buildings, we must realise that many hundreds of thousands of pounds will be required in the future to restore them to the conditions that obtained in pre-war years. Apropos of that aspect the story told by Mr. Cornell of his railway experiences must be regarded as rather disconcerting and certainly conditions such as he disclosed cannot be regarded as creditable to those in authority. On many occasions recently I have received complaints from those who travel by the railway service concerning the late arrival of trains in Fremantle. It is not very satisfactory to workers to find that on five mornings in succession the trains by which they were travelling to work were from 7 to 15 minutes late. That state of affairs certainly needs rectification.

The subject of education also received attention in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. The Government promises to give early attention to that phase, and I am certainly pleased that it is intended to raise the school-leaving age to 15 years. I certainly hope that the necessary action will not be long delayed. There is one aspect that I think should be taken into consideration. Does this step merely mean that children are to be kept at school for an extra 12 months during which period they will continue to be tutored along the lines followed during the previous year? I think the matter should receive the attention of a trained body of investigators so that the best results may be achieved. I think it should be necessary to determine at a much earlier period just to what the individual child is most suited. I do not hold that every child is fitted to be a Bachelor of Arts, a doctor or a lawyer. At an early stage it should be possible for trained investigators to decide the course for which an individual child was most fitted. In my opinion technical

education should be largely prescribed for the extra 12 months of school life for the rising generation, and for this purpose a greater number of junior technical schools will be necessary. I know that the Minister for Education is desirous of further advancing technical education and we are very grateful to him for the fine school that has been erected in Fremantle during the last few months.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You did not say that school had been erected at Norseman or some other backblock centre?

Hon. F. E. GIBSON: No; it has been erected at Fremantle. Recently I had the pleasure of visiting the Eastern States with the Chief Secretary and of inspecting some of the educational institutions in Victoria and New South Wales. We were filled with admiration, but when we realised the density of the population of the capital cities there and the wealth of the States, we were able to return to Western Australia feeling that the position here was not so unsatisfactory. Of course, there has been some criticism regarding the educational facilities available here, but I believe, in view of the immensity of the State and its small population, we have done a particularly good job. The task of the Education Department is extremely difficult, and I think it would be much better to assist the department in its huge task than to offer criticism which, too frequently, is not justified. I read with interest the report of the Royal Commission on Child Delinquency, and sincerely trust that, as soon as possible, the Government will give effect to the recommendations submitted by that body.

Regarding Barton's Mill, I agree with the opinions expressed by Mr. Wood. Shortly after the prisoners had been evacuated from the Fremantle Gaol, in company with the resident magistrate at Fremantle, I visited Barton's Mill to inspect the prison. We were both appreciative of the excellent work that had been carried out there in a very short time by the Prisons Department and the officers concerned. When we were there, the accommodation for the warders left much to be desired; but that was only temporary, and improvements will be effected as time goes on. From the standpoint of the reformation of prisoners, Barton's Mill offers much greater opportunities than ever existed at Fremantle. I trust that whatever happens, none of the prison-

ers will ever be returned to the Fremantle Gaol. The conditions under which the prisoners live and work at Barton's Mill are particularly satisfactory, and certainly those conditions are much better than those now enjoyed by soldiers who are fighting the enemy so that we may live. I know there was some difficulty about the construction of a fence round the prison area so that the men could be kept within the boundaries, but that will be speedily rectified.

During the course of his speech Mr. Parker referred to the congestion in St. George's-terrace and the difficulty experienced regarding the boarding of trolley buses and ordinary buses. I hope something will be done to remedy the existing position. I have had some experiences there, and I saw an elderly woman pushed away so that men could board the vehicle. There must be a remedy, and surely we are not going to permit present conditions to continue with every indication of it becoming more aggravated. When I was in Martin-place in Sydney, I noticed a crowd queueing up in heavy rain waiting to board a bus. If it is possible to do that in Sydney, surely people in Perth can also queue up.

I am reminded that recently at a meeting held in Fremantle some disturbance took place to which references have been made in this Chamber and elsewhere. I happen to have been the chairman of that meeting. I was advised early in the day that certain obstruction was to be indulged in, and in consequence I had an interview with the inspector of police at the port. When the Rt. Hon. R. G. Menzies who was to address the meeting arrived at the Town Hall, I told him what was expected and that I had seen the police inspector. That officer, I may add, was present at the meeting, together with a sergeant and four constables. Mr. Menzies replied that if he were not able to make himself heard without authority, he was particularly anxious that authority should not be called in. He added, "I do not want a hearing with it." There was at no time any attempt at violence; had there been, I am sure the police would have taken action. What they did as regards that particular meeting, they did under instructions from me. The Labour movement, as a movement, entirely dissociated itself from that disruptive meeting, lending the disturbing element no countenance whatever. The disturbances were organised by a notorious in-

dividual who addresses meetings. During the meeting itself they were led by a man employed on the wharf, who should have known better. In my opinion, not more than 50 people took part in the disturbances and interference with the rights of 1,200 people who had come to hear one of the foremost political leaders of Australia.

The disturbers at that meeting are the people who shriek for the right of free speech, but only their speech; who shriek for a Second Front, being prepared to send hundreds of thousands of men to their death while they themselves are sitting in security 12,000 miles away; the people who are sowing the seeds of civil war in the country; the people who attach themselves to the political party which was successful at the recent elections but who will be prepared to split that party in twain when it suits them. That this danger is recognised in the Eastern States is evident from the statement made in the Legislative Assembly of Victoria by a prominent Labour man, who in referring to this type of person said, "I have a hatred of any form of Fascist domination, but I have a horror of Red Fascism." The Lieut.-Governor's Speech also made reference to the conditions on the goldfields. As an old goldfields resident, I sincerely sympathise with the people who have suffered and are suffering there. I trust it will not be long before sufficient men are made available to man the mines again, because I believe our mining industry will be one of the main factors in the successful repatriation of our soldiers. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. H. L. Roche, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.48 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 2nd September, 1943.

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

[11]

QUESTIONS (2).

TAXATION.

As to Deductions for Donations.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Premier: 1, Are donations made by taxpayers to the Infant Health Association allowed as concessional deductions? 2, If not, will he make representations to the Federal Treasurer to that end?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, Yes.

RABBIT SKINS.

As to Disparity in Prices.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Has he noted the instances I quoted, when speaking on the Address-in-reply debate, of Western Australian rabbit skins being sold in the Eastern States at prices approximately 50 per cent. higher than similar skins realised when sold on the same day in this State, and particularly that the skins sold in Sydney were sold as Western Australian skins? 2, As the marked disparity in prices received in the Eastern States and here, is leading to a demand to send skins to the Eastern States for sale will he cause inquiry to be made with a view to adopting some other means of sale, such as sales after appraisalment in this State? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, See 1 and 2.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Workers' Homes Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Premier.
- 2, Public Authorities (Retirement of Members) Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Works.

BILL—ELECTORAL (WAR TIME).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 26th August.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [4.34]: It is my intention to support the second reading of this measure, because I believe it to be essential that we should provide some reasonable and satisfactory means of enabling members of the Forces to record their votes at our next election. I am very glad that the Bill does not resemble the measure which was introduced into this House a couple of years ago at a time when we were not considering or had not considered the postpone-