

this Chamber, it is very unfair for a member, whether a supporter of the Government or a member of the Opposition, to single out any man associated with the administration of a Government department for a personal attack.

If I have any complaint to make I do not bring it forward in Parliament, unless it is a matter of personal importance. If it is one solely affecting policy, obviously the duty of the aggrieved individual is to complain to the person or persons responsible for that policy, and not to select for adverse criticism the individual merely responsible for giving effect to the Government's policy. In selecting Mr. H. T. Stitfold for the position of Deputy-Director General of Manpower, the authorities chose a man I hold in high esteem. Members possibly know that he is associated with a road board of which I also am a member. I state with definite sincerity that I have learnt to respect Mr. Stitfold's ability, sincerity, enthusiasm and impartiality in all circumstances. He has at his disposal a very expert staff, the members of which know their task in its various branches. They are handling competently a large volume of work in the interests of the individual as well as of the State. I trust that the member for Pingelly, should he make allowances for the difficulties that have to be encountered in the initial stages of a work that is so difficult and yet important, will admit the diverse character of the interests affected and appreciate the position.

I associate myself with the hope expressed by others that in the not far distant future Western Australia, and the world generally, may be restored to saner foundations and that out of the morass of the present conflagration some better social order may arise, something more like that visualised by the member for Murchison in speeches he has delivered in this Chamber. If we cannot attain the heights he may desire, I feel sure that a new order will arise from which will definitely be excluded many of the old shibboleths that have ranked as of such importance in the past. I believe they will be cast aside in the interests of society and its prosperity throughout the world. I trust that the work of the session may be productive of beneficial results and that at the end of our deliberations our harmonious relation-

ship may be such that party politics may almost have been excluded from the portals of this Chamber.

On motion by Mr. Doney, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 3.13 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 25th August, 1942.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2).

BETTING, FINES.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Are any fines imposed on persons for S.P. betting breaches outstanding? 2, If so, what is the unpaid amount due, and by how many individuals is it owing? 3, What is the longest period that any amount due has been owing? 4, What percentage of fines outstanding is thought to be recoverable? 5, Has there been any attempt to dis-train for fines owing? 6, If so, upon whom? 7, Have any owners of, or tenants who occupied premises where S.P. convictions have been secured been prosecuted within the past year? 8, If so, how many? 9, Are fines imposed upon employees of S.P. bookmakers still an income tax deduction by such book-makers?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, £740 17s. 6d. as at the end of July, 1942. Owing by 24 individuals. This is being reduced by regular instalments. 3, Since the 1st July, 1940. This man is paying off the fine by regular instalments. 4, Up to date most fines have been recovered and there is no reason to think that the major portion of fines inflicted will not be collected. 5, No. Warrants of commitment against those disobeying the orders made for payment are issued. 6, Answered by 5. 7, No. 8, Nil. 9, Yes.

AGRICULTURAL BANK.

Sustenance to Clients.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What was the original rate of sustenance granted by the Agricultural Bank to necessitous clients? 2, Upon what date did it first commence to operate? 3, What is the present rate? 4, Is the amount of sustenance that may be granted to a necessitous farmer subject to an interest charge? 5, If so, what rate is charged? 6, Is every grant of sustenance repayable? 7, If not, what exceptions are made? 8, Do the Agricultural Bank Commissioners propose to add the recent basic wage weekly increase to the present rate of sustenance? 9, If not, why not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, A set rate of sustenance was not fixed when advances were originally made; later a rate of 9s. per day was advanced by the Industries Assistance Board in the initial stages of settlement, the advance being made on the actual work done on the farm, either in respect of cropping or improvements to the satisfaction of the inspector, such advances carrying a maximum rate of 7 per cent. interest. All proceeds from the farm including side lines, if any, were claimed under the Act. Full scale I.A.B. advances ceased during 1925. Agricultural Bank advances for sustenance commenced 1935—rate £72 per annum. 2, 1915. 3, £84 per annum man and wife with an additional £6 for each child under 16 years = maximum £126 per year. The farmer is allowed to make use of and retain proceeds of side lines. 4, Non-interest bearing 1941-1942 (to the 31st March, 1942); 1½ per cent. for the current year. 5, Answered by No. (4). 6, Advances from loan moneys are repayable, but grants for sustenance made during the current year to marginal area settlers from funds provided by the Commonwealth Wheat Industry Assistance Act are not repayable. 7, Answered by No. (6). 8, No. 9, The advance is made to augment settler's own resources and is not in the nature of a wage.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. L. B. Bolton (Metropolitan) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the 18th August.

HON. H. TUCKEY (South-West) [2.24]: I greatly regret that we have met again this session under very serious war conditions. Democracy, which has done so much for the peace and freedom of the world, is today in danger of being smashed by the most ruthless dictator the world has ever known. I am not a pessimist, but it would be wrong not to face the facts with commonsense and not to be prepared to do everything possible to assist in combating this great danger. Comparatively speaking, we in Australia are having a rosy time. We have not all yet decided that it is necessary to present a united front by burying our party differences and co-operating in every way. Lack of unity, disorderly conduct or mob rule is not in the best interests of the Australian war effort. The State Government is doing all it can to assist the Commonwealth Government, although I fear that members of Parliament are not being given many opportunities to supplement that help. As representatives of the people, we are entitled to do more than we have done in the past.

Some time ago I suggested that the Premier might call a conference of members occasionally in order to afford them an opportunity to discuss war matters; any worthwhile decision arrived at by such a conference could be sent on by our Government to the Commonwealth Government. Such decisions would lead to the avoidance of certain public criticism and would bring about greater satisfaction. It is impossible for individual members to get very far; but it would be quite different if the Government handled some of their complaints or proposals. I have some information that I do not propose to discuss in this Chamber. Far too many statements are made that must encourage and assist the enemy. For instance, the other day it was broadcast that of the total strength of the Forces in Australia, only 20 per cent. came from America. Again, it was stated in another place a week or so ago that some of our soldiers were sent to battle stations without rifles, and that they had never handled or fired a rifle. Cannot we refrain from saying these things, or must we drift out of existence? There appears to be but little prospect of our reaching 100 per cent. in our war effort with such a lack of sound organisation.

Local orders for gas-producers cannot be fulfilled because of the shortage in raw materials, caused by shipping difficulties. I am informed that quantities of material have been lying on the Adelaide wharf awaiting shipment for several months, while 480 gas-producer units have reached Fremantle this month. It is calculated that metal for the manufacture of 12,000 gas-producers could have been shipped instead of the 480 units. Then, again, nine Pederick gas-producer units manufactured in Victoria under license were shipped to this State and fitted to Government vehicles. The Pederick Gas Producer Manufacturing Co. is established in Western Australia and could have carried out that work. With such unbusiness-like methods is it any wonder that this State has lagged behind?

The Lieut.-Governor's Speech mentions but little proposed legislation. I understand Bills are to be introduced to amend the Traffic Act, the Road Districts Act and the Bush Fires Act. I hope the Government will make some provision to enable local government authorities to collect rates owing by clients of the Agricultural Bank. As the law stands, the bank does not make any provision for payment of either road board or water rates. In many instances the bank demands the whole of the proceeds of a farm, less merely an amount sufficient to enable the farmer to carry on; no provision is made to pay the rates owing to local authorities. The State Government has been fighting for State rights, and I commend its action; but why should it not be a little more considerate towards local government authorities? Some road boards find it difficult to carry on because of this unfair treatment. We are well aware that at least road maintenance must be carried out, otherwise farmers would be in a worse position than they are today. This matter has been before the Road Board Association for many years, but the association has not been able to induce any Government to introduce the legislation necessary to alter the position. Although scores of road boards are affected, I propose to quote only a few figures:—

Name of Board.	Outstanding Rates at the 30th June, 1942.	Proportion of Rates
		Outstanding by Agricultural Bank Clients.
	£	£
Kent	1,649	1,215
Dalwallinu	3,793	2,149
Wongan Hills-Ballidu	2,501	1,763
Kojonup	1,706	1,236
Lake Grace	5,582	4,194
Koorda	2,432	1,764

Referring to the Koorda Board, I shall quote from a letter of the secretary of that body as follows:—

In this district there are approximately 77 farms being operated on which the Agricultural Bank holds mortgages. The £1,015 3s. 1d. arrears of rates, quoted in my letter to the Association, is owing on 42 of these, an average of approximately £24 per holding. The other 35 properties are owned by farmers who either have an additional mortgage with an Associated Bank or are in a sounder financial position and operate current accounts with one of the Associated Banks. These men pay their rates; but the 42 referred to above are unable to obtain from the Agricultural Bank any allocation for rates when arrangements are being made for carrying on. The usual reply from these farmers when the matter of the payment of rates is referred to them, is to the effect that as the Bank takes all proceeds from the farm and allows them sustenance only, it should make the payment. I can assure you the terms used are not very complimentary to the Bank.

The position regarding leases is that in this district, as in others in the north-eastern wheat-belt, the Agricultural Bank leases either the whole or portions of abandoned holdings for either cropping or grazing. The lessees are informed by the Bank that they are responsible for the rates; but the Board was informed by the Public Works Department in June, 1935, that it has no power to enforce the payment of rates by the lessees. Payment therefore depends on the goodwill of the lessee with the result that certain farmers always pay, whilst others just ignore any assessment issued. Their argument is that as the Bank gets a rental from them it should pay the rates, otherwise the lessee is paying a higher rental than that agreed upon. During the last three years arrears of rates totalling £53 16s. 7d. have accumulated on this class of lease. This amount is additional to the arrears on Agricultural Bank properties quoted to the Association. The solution to this problem appears to be for rates to be included in the payment to the Bank, who in turn would remit to the Boards concerned. It would be quite a simple matter to notify the Bank prior to any lease being signed of the amount of rates concerned.

In case you did not get the particulars I forwarded to the Road Board Association, I quote them again:—

Total arrears of rates in rural wards	£2,432 19 8
Arrears of rates on properties mortgaged to the Agricultural Bank	£1,764 18 0
or 72.5 per cent. of the total.	

Agricultural Bank arrears are made up as follows:—

Properties being worked	£1,015 3 1
Abandoned holdings ..	£749 14 11

The amount of £53 16s. 7d. referred to as the arrears on leases is not included in these

figures, and will, therefore, still further increase the proportion of arrears on Bank properties.

These details disclose that farmers who are clients of the Agricultural Bank owe rates to the respective local governing authorities I have listed amounting to over £12,322. I do not need to say more to back up what I have already said. It is unfair that the Government—because we cannot blame the Agricultural Bank, which works under an Act—should allow this state of affairs to continue. It is a matter for legislation. If road boards could collect the current rates, they would be satisfied. They would hardly expect at this time to collect arrears, but they urgently need assistance.

The other day I was speaking to a prominent farmer from the Mullewa district. He was connected with the local road board, and said it was lucky to collect 30 per cent. of the rates due, which was totally inadequate to enable the board to carry on its necessary work. I appeal to the Government to consider this matter with a view to giving the local governing bodies some assistance. We have approximately 1,000 road board members in this State, representing 128 boards. These men are rendering great service at, in the majority of instances, considerable inconvenience and expense to themselves. While, generally speaking, the boards find that different Government departments co-operate very well, they have never been able to get any satisfaction from the Agricultural Bank in connection with rates. I ask the Government to meet the various boards, for the issue does not affect only those I have mentioned.

There is no agricultural district that is not more or less affected. I have not quoted any examples from my own province, but even the road board of which I am a member has had considerable difficulty with small ratepayers. They get the idea that because they deal with the Agricultural Bank they are immune from prosecution, and so will not pay, although some of them could at times pay something off their arrears. At the present time the road boards are not getting much assistance from the Government by way of expenditure of public funds. A while ago the Main Roads Department was spending a lot of money in country districts, which was a great help, but we do not now enjoy any such expenditure, and it is necessary that something be

done to assist rural road boards to collect some of their revenue.

I regret having to refer to the destruction of private property in the country caused by soldiers. One does not like to complain too much, but it does seem strange that military officers should allow such vandalism to go unchecked. I know of a 400-acre paddock not far away where a fence has been cut in four places, large gateposts have been knocked flat on the ground and many holes dug in the paddock. When soldiers finish their manoeuvres, or their camping, they just go off and leave properties in a deplorable condition. They should at least repair the damage. In many instances there is no need for them to cut fences in so many places, and at the same time destroy a gate. They do not look for the owner and make any request to use the property. If they would only take some care—

Hon. J. Cornell: When that happened in France during the last war the men concerned had to pay for it!

Hon. H. TUCKEY: It seems to me that they just about run riot and do not respect private property, and it is certainly time the authorities took steps to stop this sort of thing. On one occasion, soldiers went on to a farmer's paddock, where he was preserving a few jarrah poles for his own farm use. This paddock was just alongside a jarrah forest, but the soldiers cut just about every pole that that man was saving for his own purposes. There should be no need for that sort of thing. The farmer, of course, had no redress, but it does seem wrong that these men should do things that are not necessary. If there were an invasion, or if it were necessary for some other reason, we could understand it.

The potato industry is important in the South-West, because most of our local potatoes are grown in that part of the State. Many people think that because a Bill was passed during the last session, the industry will be controlled and regulated. That is not so, because the registration of growers is all that has been provided for to date. No control is exercised over the crops or the marketing of potatoes. The registration fees will provide money to proceed further with the legislation, but unless the matter is taken in hand the growers and consumers will not be any better off than they were in the past. I trust that we shall

have the co-operation of the Eastern States, otherwise I cannot see how we can do much good. It is necessary for the powers that be to get on with the job and use some of the fees collected from the growers in order to provide adequate control and to protect the industry as a whole.

The shearing problem has been discussed in this House, and it is not generally understood that the Manpower Department has for some time been trying to overcome that difficulty. Arrangements have been made so that sheep-owners can register their flocks and supply such information as the names of the shearers who may be released to do the shearing, and the Manpower Department will do all it can to assist the sheep-owners to get their work done. I believe that many shearers have already been released, but it is necessary for sheep-owners to make their arrangements as early as possible and notify the department which shearers they would like released.

I had intended commenting on the motor car lighting restrictions, but the matter has been pretty well discussed. I am surprised that the Government invited the Federal authorities to nullify the decision of this House, because, while we all realise that precautions are necessary for the safety of the public, I do not think there is any reason for what is being done at present. The masking of headlamps is a menace to the safety of the people, and in many country districts it is almost impossible to use a motor car at night. There seems to be no uniformity in the lighting arrangements. Take, for instance, a sawmill. A man can stoke a fire all night at a mill where waste timber is burning, and just about every sawmill has at least one of these huge fires burning day and night. If the same man takes a lamp down to an orchard to trap rabbits, he is prosecuted! Some rabbit-trappers have given up trapping because of the inconvenience caused by not being allowed to use a light at night; at least, that is what they say. In another case, a farmer living about 100 miles inland was recently warned by an A.R.P. warden not to burn at night-time a log which had fallen over his fence. He was told he would have to put out the fire at sunset, but that he could re-light it the next morning. That is going altogether too far. In the city many instances in which the lighting restrictions are not being strictly observed have come

under notice. Unless greater care is exercised the whole business will become farcical.

I would be happy to assist the Government to a greater extent than I am able to do at present. I have already done certain things which I will not discuss now, and will continue to do them in future. I trust the Government will give members an opportunity to express their views without necessarily having to do so publicly in Parliament. I have already spoken to you, Mr. President, about one or two matters that, with other questions, should not perhaps be discussed here. We all very much regret the Premier's illness. It must be a great drawback to the Government that he should be away from his office at this juncture when so much requires to be done. Although the Deputy Premier is undoubtedly doing a good job, the fact remains that the absence of the Premier from his public duties constitutes a loss to the State. I hope the Premier will very soon have fully recovered his health and will shortly be able to resume his seat in another place. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

HON. G. W. MILES (North): I, too, desire to express deep regret at the death of our old friend and colleague, Hon. J. M. Macfarlane. He will be a great loss to the House. My deepest sympathy goes out to his relatives. I also regret the Premier's long illness, as well as the illness of the Deputy Premier. It is pleasing to see Mr. Baxter with us again this afternoon. He has lately suffered through illness as have also Mr. Thomson and Mr. Bolton. I hope all those members will speedily recover their health and be able to resume their seats in Parliament.

The strenuous times we are passing through and the difficulties we all have to contend with constitute a great strain upon us, and the health of members is likely to suffer in consequence. I congratulate the two new members upon their election. My colleague, Mr. Cornish, will I am sure prove an acquisition to the House. With his youth and knowledge of the North he will be able to express the views of the electors of the province in this Chamber, as he has already shown he can in his maiden speech. I hope he will be with us for many years to discharge his duties, and I am sure he will follow well in the footsteps of his predecessors.

sor, my late friend, Hon. J. J. Holmes. I congratulate Mr. Gibson upon his imperialistic speech last week. It was very gratifying to hear a member talk about the Empire in place of all the squealing that has been heard throughout Australia in recent times.

I pay a warm tribute to the people of the North and am proud to represent them. Since the trouble with Japan those people have stood up to their difficulties in a splendid manner. I refer more particularly to those who live in Wyndham, Broome, Derby and Port Hedland, all of which towns have been bombed by the enemy. The manner in which the people of the North have faced dangers is fully in keeping with the British spirit. I thank the Minister for Lands for what he has done for the North, and wish on behalf of the electors to express appreciation for the visit he paid to Wyndham some two or three months ago. Everybody concerned was delighted to have a visit from a Minister of the Crown, and to know that that important part of the State had not been forgotten. The Minister enabled us to get our six months' quota of stores and supplies. We do not come under the petrol rationing scheme and the Minister also enabled us, through his negotiations with the Commonwealth Government, to get our tyres. That was a great benefit to the people of the North, for their only means of transport is by motor vehicle. At one time it was costing from £50 to £60 per ton to obtain supplies through central Australia. I think the Government has now arranged to subsidise the cartage of goods from Broome through Hall's Creek to the East Kimberleys and Wyndham. We have to thank the Minister for that. Such a subsidy was long overdue, but it is none the less appreciated. After all, it is only on a par with what State Governments have done for wheatgrowers in the southern areas.

The Army authorities have taken possession of all tinned and dried fruits, and tinned vegetables and potatoes, with the result that the civil population has had to go without those commodities. The position is all right in the South where people are able to get fresh fruit. Residents in the North should be placed in the same position as members of the Armed Forces. It is essential that they should be provided with fruit and vegetables. Today men on stations in the East Kimberleys are living on bread and meat alone; they can get neither fruit nor

vegetables. One of the outstanding features of the conduct of this war is the number of square pegs we have in round holes. In charge of the control and distribution of food supplies are civil servants who are not able to cope with the job. The point has not been taken into consideration, and I hope the Chief Secretary will make a note of these remarks. The Minister for Lands is doing what he can to see that supplies of the commodities I have mentioned are forthcoming. It is necessary for men who are looking after cattle to obtain food of that description as they are producing beef for the troops, members of the Air Force, munition workers and members of the civilian population.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Especially in that part of the State.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes. The Commonwealth Government seems to have gone mad on the enlistment business. The country cannot put the same number of men into the Forces in proportion to the population of the country as was possible in the 1914-18 war. During that war the men went overseas, where they were provided with food, clothing and munitions. On this occasion those supplies have had to be furnished from within Australia. The authorities have gone ahead without proper regard to that point. The economy of the country has never been fully considered. When the Prime Minister was here I had the pleasure of telling him that he made a magnificent speech, but that he had missed the main point, namely, the economy of the country. In his fireside chat that night Mr. Curtin mentioned the matter, which has been overlooked too long. Countless workers have been taken from the land, and I do not now know where the authorities are to obtain the revenue with which to carry on the war. They are calling up men, girls and women from all over the place.

Many individuals are going out of business. In some instances large as well as small businesses will be ruined unless something is done to improve the situation. Prices have been arranged on the basis of what appertained in 1939, and by that method a margin was fixed for profit-making. Since 1939 the basic wage has risen by 12s. 9d. per week, but business people have not been allowed to increase their profits to cover that extra payment. In addi-

tion there is the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. pay-roll tax which every employer has to make up. Business cannot continue successfully along those lines. Men who in 1939 were able to make a profit of 10 per cent. on certain lines, today, owing to the alteration in income-tax and increased costs generally, are not allowed to make a profit greater than five per cent. on similar lines.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They are not bankrupt yet.

Hon. G. W. MILES: No, but they will be unable to pay income-tax out of what is left. The authorities will have to adopt the Fadden scheme of making everyone contribute to Commonwealth funds by taxation, a proportion of the contribution then going into a forced loan. People who were paying taxation prior to the present condition of affairs are not now deriving any income from which to meet that commitment.

Hon. J. Cornell: Many people are getting very close to that position.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Instead of the authorities obtaining the best business brains to handle a proposition of this kind, the work has been put upon the shoulders of civil servants. Some change will have to be made in the present methods; they cannot be allowed to continue. It is just as essential for the people I speak of to be fed and clothed as it is for the men in the firing line. How is the business of the country to be carried on under the present methods? How will the Government obtain the money that will be required to make a success of the coming loan? The economy of the country must be considered just as much as the men who are doing the fighting. If the economy is not right, we cannot keep men in the firing line.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That has been forgotten to date.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I hope the Government will take notice of the point and urge the Commonwealth Government to relieve the situation, which has now got out of hand. I do not know how a change can be brought about. Once men enter the Army they cannot be got out again. From what I hear, in many instances the men are not receiving the training they were supposed to get. It was understood that men went into the Army to learn how to fight, but many of them have been told off to wash dishes,

chop wood or do nothing at all. I hope the Government will take notice of these matters.

The State Government is to be complimented upon having sent the Director of Works (Mr. Dumas) to examine the Ord River. That gentleman's report indicates that as much water is running down the river in a day as passes through the Cannelling Dam in a year. For the last 20 odd years I have stressed the possibility of peopling and developing that part of the State. If my advice had been followed, then the North of Australia would be in a better position today. We had a scheme for settling Maltese in this country. The people of Malta have already proved that they are 100 per cent. British. The scheme was set at naught by little Australians and party politicians. I told the British Minister for the Army in 1923 that a storm would blow up in the Pacific and that Australia would be the centre of the storm. That also has proved true. I was laughed at by city dwellers and by so-called journalists. Of course, journalists are men who generally never leave their office chairs and yet the people of Australia follow them and their publications like a lot of sheep. "The Daily News" said that I was likely to raise the ire of a noble race when I stated that Japanese laundrymen knew more about Australia than the average Australian knew about his own country. Mr. Lovekin afterwards became a member of this House and in 1922 went for a health trip to Japan. When he returned he said that in Japan he had learned more about North Australia than he ever knew before. He said that the Japanese had the whole area mapped out with full details regarding water-supplies, the nature of the soil, and rainfall data.

In 1928 Mr. Lovekin entertained the Japanese Consul-General at Parliament House. After the luncheon I got the Premier and his colleagues together with the guest of honour and his host in the corridor and remarked to the Japanese Consul-General, "Our host took me to task four years ago for saying that Japanese laundrymen knew more about Australia than the average Australian knew of his own country. He added that by making such a statement I was likely to raise the ire of a noble race." I also told him that I had merely paid a compliment to that noble race when I made the remark about the laundrymen—I em-

phasised the reference to laundrymen—and that my statement had been also intended as an insult to Australians. I assured him that I intended to continue insulting my fellow Australians until they woke up to the fact that they had a country worth peopling and developing. Since Japan entered the war, an ice-cream vendor in the Celebes has turned out to be a General and a barber in Borneo has also turned out to be a high Japanese officer. These things prove the correctness of my statement that Japanese laundrymen along our coast were civil engineers.

In view of past happenings, it is gratifying to hear younger members of this House advocating the unification of the gauges of Australian railways. That unification was part of a scheme I put up to the Commonwealth and British Governments. In 1920 I got the late Mr. Henry Gregory, a Federal member, to dig up the report furnished in 1910 by Lord Kitchener, when he came here to advise us on the defence of Australia. Lord Kitchener's report was pigeon-holed for 10 years, but I availed myself of its contents as an argument against certain contentions of the Melbourne "Age," and pointed out that paragraphs 10, 11, and 13 of Lord Kitchener's report were a complete reply to that newspaper. Lord Kitchener said that our railways were a menace to Australia and might assist an enemy that had temporary command of the sea, and he advocated the standardising of our railways with inland interior communications, which was exactly our scheme. However, no notice was taken of the report. We did manage to carry the matter so far that Mr. S. M. Bruce, when, on his first trip to England as Prime Minister of Australia, stated that he would put it up to the British Government if the Governments interested would submit it to him. However the proposal was turned down by Mr. Theodore and by Sir James Mitchell. Those two men are responsible for Australia being in its present position. Had they been willing, the British and Australian Governments were prepared to go ahead, and unification of our railways might now be an accomplished fact, affording some protection to us in the present crisis.

I desire to pay a further tribute to the Minister for Lands, Hon. F. J. S. Wise, for the good work he has done for the people on the land, which is highly appreciated. I hope that Mr. Wise and his fellow Ministers

will go further, now that we have unification of finance, for which I am deeply thankful. I am glad to state that I was the only one of the 80 members of the State Parliament to support the proposal. The only way in which the position can be altered is by the State Premier and Treasurer using his influence with the Commonwealth Government. Now as regards the farmers and pastoralists, the increase of lambs and calves should not be taken in as revenue for taxation purposes. That practice should be cut out and the tax should be paid only after the lambs and calves have been sold. This is essential if the pastoralists are to recover at all. Generally as regards taxation of the farmer and pastoralist, their losses should be spread over a period of ten years before they resume payment of taxation.

Hon. J. Cornell: We have no jurisdiction over that aspect.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Not for the time being. The same remark applies to many other things. I appeal to the Commonwealth Government to see that the necessary relief is given, so as to allow pastoralists and farmers to recover from their past losses. The North has experienced a drought lasting seven years, and since then it has had a blow or two. Now, when there is a decent season, thousands of sheep are being lost on every station through the blow-fly pest. The only chance for recovery is to amend the taxation laws to exempt pastoralists and farmers in respect of their losses over a number of years. They should not be called on in the meantime to pay taxation on profits made during the good seasons we are now likely to have. The arrangement as regards debts is satisfactory in the case of pastoralists. The debtor puts up his case to the Surveyor-General, the chairman of the Pastoralists' Association, and the creditor. Those three meet as a board and the case is examined. If the members of the board agree that the asset is not worth what it was, the debt is written down. If an asset carried a £20,000 liability on a £40,000 value and its valuation had been reduced to £10,000, the creditor in many cases agreed to have £10,000 written off. If the property could earn interest only on £5,000, the creditor accepted the agreed rate of interest on the £5,000 and the Government paid 2½ per cent. interest on the balance. That happened in many instances.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Why not extend that system to the farmer?

Hon. G. W. MILES: It could be extended to the farmer if the farmer were not so outrageous an individual and did not want to repudiate his liabilities. The farmer should adopt the same attitude as the pastoralist. Reverting to the Minister for Lands, I regard Mr. Wise as a good Minister for the country and a good Minister for the farmer. It is lucky that he is a member of the Assembly. He once tried to gain my seat when only ten days were allowed between nomination day and polling day. I kept Mr. Wise out of this Chamber, and he has become a Minister of the Crown.

I am, and always have been, prepared to give credit where credit is due; but the present Government has done one of the most diabolical things that have happened since responsible government, by interfering with the Industrial Arbitration Court. In quoting figures of production, I showed that the basic wage here has risen by 12s. 9d. since 1939. The Government saw fit to go over the President of the Arbitration Court recently and grant a further increase of 4s. 6d. And we have Ministers talking about establishing secondary industries here! How is that possible when we declare that our men are worth 5s. 11d. per week more than corresponding workers in the Eastern States? I cannot speak more strongly of this action of the Government than I have done already. The Lieut.-Governor's Speech foreshadowed legislation allowing this Parliament to deal with the subject of the basic wage.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Government did not wait for that.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Government played to the gallery, appealing against Commonwealth legislation for uniform finance. Later it appealed over the head of the State Parliament to the Commonwealth Government, asking for a regulation to allow the Premier, of all men, to fix the basic wage irrespective of the Arbitration Court.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Are you for or against unification?

Hon. G. W. MILES: I am for it. I am not a one-eyed man who can look only out of his own corner. The Government again ran to Canberra with a request for the promulgation of regulations under the National Security Act. The people of Western Australia and their elected representatives were

utterly disregarded. The Western Australian Government rushes to the Commonwealth Government when it cannot get what it wants from this Parliament. The cry is, "Do this for us, Mr. Curtin!" I do not mind if that course of conduct brings about unification.

Hon. C. B. Williams: What did you do years ago? You instructed the State Industrial Arbitration Court to reduce wages by 22 per cent.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes, when everybody was reduced because of the depression.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Well, we instructed the Arbitration Court to increase the basic wage.

Hon. G. W. MILES: A prosperity loading was granted in 1928. This State cannot afford to pay its workers more than is paid to corresponding workers in the Eastern States. A democratic Labour Government over-rode the State Arbitration Court, and would not allow this Parliament to have a voice in the matter at all. It went cap in hand to the Commonwealth Government to get this done. So we see another square peg in a round hole which will have to be removed. We are not going to have democracy when it suits this Government and dictatorship when that happens to suit it. The present Government takes credit for having reduced Western Australia's national debt by £126,000.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is the gem of the Speech.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Absolutely! The Commonwealth provided certain sinking fund payments for the States under the Financial Agreement, and from the Commonwealth Debt Redemption Fund liquidated some of the State's liability.

Hon. J. Cornell: It had to.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes. Then the Loan Council refused to allow the States to borrow as much as they wanted to. After that Premiers came back from the Eastern States and blew out their bags, declaring that they had secured certain advantages, that they had obtained so many more million pounds to disburse. Spending has been the curse of the country for donkey's years, and it must stop. The Loan Council prevented the States from raising all they wanted to borrow. If our Government had had its way, instead of the public debt having been reduced by £126,000, it would have been increased by £500,000. The Loan

Council has again reduced the amount the State can obtain, and that is the best thing that has happened to Western Australia. It is a good thing for the country that the wings of the parochial, narrow-minded State Governments throughout the Commonwealth have been clipped. The various Governments have been unable to realise that they cannot continue getting into debt year after year without eventually going bankrupt, just the same as a private individual would do, and it is an advantage that the wings of the State Governments have been clipped by the establishment of uniform finance and the operations of the Loan Council and the Financial Agreement.

I wish to say a word or two about the squealers in Australia. These men ask what England has done. They declare that England has let us down. God bless my heart and soul! Those people have probably never been out of Australia. They do not realise that England kept Australia for us and kept in white for 100 years. Without England we would never have been here. I am one of those who are prouder of being British than of being Australian. Twenty years ago I said—and with pride I say it again—that it was due to our forefathers that we are here in Australia.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Naturally!

Hon. G. W. MILES: Without the British Empire we could not have held Australia for five minutes, yet the squealers ask what England has done and declare that she has let us down. England saved not only Australia but also the whole of our western civilisation. There is no getting away from that fact. I wish to quote two views embodied in a pamphlet headed, "This Riddle. This Paradox. This England." Here is one view, written by Dorothy Thompson, world-famous American writer on international affairs—

You don't think much of the British Empire? No? Well, brother, if Britain goes, write finis over Western civilisation. Or do you think, perhaps, that America can carry it alone? You don't know what England means, my friend Though it slay me, I tell you this England is the last refuge of the civilised soul.

Here is the other view—

British propaganda can no longer deny that the British Empire is breaking up. History records several such instances, and in each the cause was the same. Fatness caused weakness and carelessness, and the ability to defend the Empire was lost. Issuing fresh

propaganda will not alter the fact, even if it prevents the citizens of the Empire from finding it out for a few months.

Who wrote that? Dr. Goebbels? No! That was written by an anonymous writer and published in an Australian weekly paper. Imagine the censor allowing it to be published!

Hon. J. Cornell: It is getting down on Billy Hughes.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Fancy allowing a statement like that to be published in an Australian paper! What has England done for us? What did England do when the Japs entered the war? She told us that if we wanted our men she would release them and the British Navy convoyed every Australian soldier back from the Middle East. Then again, consider what England has done in the way of providing munitions for all parts of the world. I do not want to weary members by quoting many statements, particularly after the excellent speech by Mr. Gibson who, I am glad to say, has imbibed some of the views I have held for many years.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Where are these squealers?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Throughout Australia. The hon. member need not ask where they are. I conclude by quoting the following from the same pamphlet:—

But, if this war has taught Hitler anything, it must surely be that there is a world of difference between initial victories and final victory—especially when he is fighting the British. Indeed, he appears to have realised this years ago, if he meant all he wrote in "Mein Kampf." This article may be fittingly concluded with the following quotation from that work:—

The spirit of the British Nation enables it to carry through to victory any struggle it once enters upon, no matter how long such a struggle may last, or however great the sacrifices that may be necessary, or whatever the means that have to be employed; and all this though the actual equipment at hand may be entirely inadequate compared with that of other nations.

That is what Hitler thought when he wrote "Mein Kampf." And that is what I think today. The British Empire, with the assistance of America, Russia, China, and the Dominions, will eventually come out on top.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West): I understand that the Address-in-reply debate is drawing to a close, but I will endeavour to continue it for a little while. I am glad

to see Mr. Baxter in his seat again. He has been very ill and it is nice to know that he has recovered. He certainly looks much better than he did two or three weeks ago, and I am pleased to see him with us.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Thank you!

Hon. L. CRAIG: I congratulate the two new members. Mr. Gibson has a long record of good citizenship and service to the State, and I am sure he will be of great assistance to this House. He is a man of sound judgment and tolerant views. Mr. Cornish has an outstanding record as a soldier. His moral courage, if it equals the courage he displayed in the 1914-18 war, will be a great asset to the House. Courage is needed in Western Australia today, for it seems to me that the Government and the people of this country are lacking in that respect, and particularly in moral courage.

Some previous speakers have congratulated the Government on having concluded the past financial year with a surplus. I do not know why they did so because a surplus was inevitable. Why it was not very much greater, I do not know. The Government was relieved of its unemployment problem, and must have received an enormous increase in revenue through taxation at the source. I forget how many people were brought into the field of taxation who were previously not included, but there were many thousands. The Government's commitments were tremendously reduced and the revenue with which to meet those commitments was greatly increased. Consequently it would have been deplorable had the Government failed to record a surplus. Every State in Australia has shown a considerable surplus, amounting to several millions, and it is believed that in New South Wales £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 additional surplus has been undisclosed. With its paltry surplus of less than £2,000 the Government of Western Australia has not very much on which to congratulate itself.

A few days ago I was interested to read an article on Australia by a man named Cecil Brown, one of the best-known journalists of America, who spent more than a year in Australia and with our troops in Libya, Malaya and Java. He is a correspondent of the American magazine "Life," which I suppose is one of the most widely read papers in the United States. He wrote a long article, illustrated by many photo-

graphs, and I was intensely interested to read it. If the statements were not true, they would be laughable; but I believe them to be entirely true, and the facts he relates make one exceedingly angry. He writes a good deal between the lines. He says a few nice things about us—that we are very hospitable and that we have welcomed the Americans to Australia, and a few other things that do not mean much. His indictments against the people of this country are something appalling. I have taken a few extracts which I propose to read to members and which I think are mainly true. They are true of this Government. He begins by saying—

Horse-racing, beer-drinking and lolling in the sun are just as typical of Australia as rabbits, kangaroos and boomerangs.

I think that is right.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: He was thinking of city folk.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is a general survey of the people of Australia. He also states—

The Australian in the city loves to talk endlessly. The man from the bush is more taciturn. The Australian's judgment of his country is unbalanced.

I think that is so. Later in the article he says that in order in some way to hide an inferiority complex, the Australian thinks that he is not only as good as other people, but twice as good.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Perhaps it is true.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think this is the worst indictment of the lot—

Politics in Australia afford the distasteful spectacle of small men, more clumsy than venal, grinding small axes. Scores of Australians have told me that if voting were not compulsory, 75 per cent. of the people would not vote.

Hon. J. Cornell: We have not got down to Georgia yet!

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think that many of these statements are true. A war of this kind brings out this sort of thing. I have noticed most of the defects to which the writer draws attention. I have heard the boasting of our people, and consider that it is an attempt to hide a feeling of inferiority.

The Honorary Minister: No fear!

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think it is. Watch carefully quite a decent chap, and it will be found that when strangers are present, especially Americans, he begins boasting.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: There is none of that in America!

Hon. L. CRAIG: There is, but it is not apparent in our American visitors. The writer then discusses the taxability of Australia and Australia's war effort. I hope some members will read the article. It is very clearly written by a man who has a big reputation.

Hon. G. B. Wood: How long was he in Australia?

Hon. L. CRAIG: He was more than 12 months in Australia, and with our troops, and has met everybody of importance from the Prime Minister downwards. He is a man who has moved about quite a lot.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: In the United States!

Hon. L. CRAIG: Not only in the United States. The hon. member would be surprised!

Hon. J. Cornell: Truth is always hurtful.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes. Here is another interesting extract—

The total of individual incomes in Australia is approximately £825,000,000. Of that amount, £560,000,000 represents incomes of £8 a week and less.

He argues that the full taxability of Australia has not been touched. He shows that about £560,000,000 out of £820,000,000 has not been taxed at all, and contends that in time of war all sources of income should be taxed. He points out that the ordinary worker in receipt of wages is more or less willing to be taxed.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Many of us agree with him there.

Hon. L. CRAIG: He goes on to say—

Compulsory loans to the Government would not cause any great protests.

Why the Government will not introduce a compulsory loan scheme I do not know. In my own mind I feel satisfied that had the scheme that was placed before the Australian public been a Labour move and not that of the previous Government, it would have been in force long ago. I make that assertion not by way of an attack on the Government or on the Labour Party. I believe that had that untouched proportion of Australia's wages bill been taxed, it would have had a much greater effect than anything else I can imagine on the curtailment of spending. Moreover, it would have provided a very necessary fund

for the wage-earners in particular for the inevitable depression that will succeed the war period. When I refer to the inevitable depression that we may anticipate, I do not suggest one similar to that we experienced some years ago, but we must remember that hundreds or thousands of people are now earning twice the income they will receive when the war ceases.

Hon. H. L. Roche: The new order will take care of that.

Hon. L. CRAIG: We will leave the new order to speak for itself. Let us be sane in considering these problems. How many people are today earning £8, £9 or £10 a week and will inevitably revert to £5 or less when the war is over? How many thousands of girls are now earning £5 a week? Members must appreciate the fact that they are in receipt of such a wage. There is a call for women to take the places of men on the trams, and a wage of £5 6s. a week is offered. Many girls are leaving domestic service and other avenues of employment in order to secure these more highly paid positions. Inevitably the day of reckoning is coming. Perhaps I have referred to extreme examples, but the fact remains that there are thousands of boys and girls who today are earning big money, and most of them are spending it. In due course they must revert to the normal wage that industry can pay and, I take it, industry must pay the wage demanded. A compulsory loan would have provided the necessary nest egg that would tide such people over a very dangerous period.

Yesterday I was talking to a prominent city man who is associated with a firm of solicitors, one that had amalgamated with other legal firms because of manpower and other difficulties arising out of wartime conditions. I asked him what would happen if the war should end next week and his old employees should return and want their former positions again. His reply was, "We could not take them back. We would not know what to do with them. We know we undertook to give them back their jobs, and the only way we could possibly do that would be to pay each a nominal salary of about £3 a week, and the partners themselves would have to take £3 or £4 a week. We might do that to hold the men, but we would have to sack all the girls we now employ. In any case, we could not do that for very long. I do not know that we could take them all back."

Members will appreciate the fact that those who are now earning fairly big salaries are likely to experience very thin times in the future. The obligation to take people back into industry is certainly an obligation, but it is an obligation only so long as industry can honour the undertaking. Unless work can be found for the people affected, the obligation obviously must cease. Surely that is inevitable. Let members multiply the experience of the firm of solicitors by one hundred or even one thousand, and they will appreciate the seriousness of the problem. What is the Government doing about it?

Hon. J. Cornell: Nothing.

Hon. L. CRAIG: There is an obligation upon both the Commonwealth Government and the State Government to plan now to make provision for some of the difficulties that will arise in the future. Arrangements should be made for road construction, the erection of buildings, the installation of sewerage systems, and so on, because I am convinced that we shall be confronted with a most serious problem when the war ceases. We must remember that so many people have been pampered this time. The soldiers have been pampered during the present war to a much greater extent than during the 1914-18 war. Those members who know anything about the Armistice conditions in Europe after that war are aware that a most dangerous situation arose, particularly in Belgium and France. We had thousands of men in camps and most of them had nothing to do. Classes were started with a view to teaching them trades and so on, and that interested the men for some time, but soon there were riots and mutiny. Anyone who was there at the time knows what went on. We must prepare against such possibilities because the men this time will be much more dissatisfied than they were after the previous war. Despite that fact, I have not been able to obtain any information at all to indicate that the State Government is doing anything about it. To get back to what Mr. Cecil Brown had to say in this article, he continued, and again I think his statement is true—

While Australia called for the United Nations to be more aggressive, to carry the war to the enemy, the Australian policy was purely defensive.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Quite right.

Hon. L. CRAIG: He then wrote that it was extraordinary that America should be

called upon to rush troops to Australia—that is the effect of what he said, and he did not say it in so many words—while at the same time the men of the Australian Military Forces were not to be allowed to go beyond the limits of Australian territorial waters. Surely that is a dreadful thing to contemplate! Before the war had really commenced, Mr. Curtin, who is now Prime Minister of Australia, said that not one Australian soldier would leave the shores of the Commonwealth. True, they were later sent to Libya and Syria, but as soon as there was a hint of danger from the Japs, they were withdrawn. The Prime Minister said Mr. Churchill had agreed that they could go. What else could Mr. Churchill have said, in view of the statements of Australia's Prime Minister?

Then we squealed to America. At the same time we told our own soldiers of the Australian Military Forces, "Because you did not enlist in the A.I.F., you will not be allowed to go beyond Australian territorial waters." Let members think what effect that will have on Americans when they read this article. These statements exemplify what I first suggested when I said that Australians are not yet awake. Mr. Cecil Brown gives some examples to indicate labour conditions in Australia and cites typical instances. For instance, he says—

A ship was tied up next to the freighter on which I sailed from Australia. That ship was carrying war materials to the Middle East. It took a month to load. An engineer conservatively estimated the loading as a five-day job.

In his article he publishes photographs and one shows the heaps of beer bottles outside the camp at Darwin—stacks of them! Another photograph shows the Australian humpers sitting down while the Americans are working like tigers on the same wharf. Then he went on to say—

Another ship brought special timber from the United States. Timber is excellent cargo to handle and pays dock workers extra, but they refused to unload it during the day and would only work at night in order to get overtime pay.

That is published to the world—and it is true!

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: It is absolutely true.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Of course it is true. Think of the position regarding starting-price bookmakers being manpowered.

Have we not reason to be ashamed? I as an Australian, and a pretty good one, too, have feelings of shame.

Hon. G. B. Wood: We knew these things before.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The world knows of them now.

Hon. G. B. Wood: You speak as though you did not know of them before.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Did America know of them?

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not believe all the stories I hear. I am told as many stories as are other members, but my stories are—

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: More amusing.

Hon. J. Cornell: And more pointed.

Hon. L. CRAIG: These statements have been published in a magazine that probably has one of the largest circulations in the world.

The Chief Secretary: What are you going to do about it?

Hon. L. CRAIG: It is the duty of the Government to do something about it. I blame the Government for these things to which Mr. Brown has referred. I may say straight-out that I regard the present Government in particular as being extremely languid. It does nothing at all until public opinion forces it into action. I am not opposed to the Labour Government but I regard the present Administration as definitely bad. I think there is corruption—not in the Government itself but in other directions. The S.P. business is a scandal and I think the police are corrupt. I do not say that all the police are corrupt; I do not know any of them. There certainly must be corruption when men are taken up and fined although they have actually nothing whatever to do with the betting shops or with the starting-price betting. Let members remember what Mr. Gibson stated during the course of his speech. He quoted instances showing that time after time the real occupiers of the premises and the real bettors had not been charged.

Hon. J. Cornell: This House gave the Government a chance to do something last session but another place would have nothing to do with the legislation.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think it comes from higher up. The law itself is strong enough to clean up the evil if it was desired to do so. I do not think there is the desire to clean up the betting evil.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: They are frightened of it.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not know about that but certainly the Government could clean up the evil. In the course of his article Mr. Cecil Brown also says—

An American ship came to Darwin with supplies for our Forces and for the Australians. The need was great; even greater was the need for ships. The ordinary time for unloading the ship was eight days. It took eight weeks.

That was in Darwin at a time when ships were urgently needed! The writer goes on—

The Australian dock men fumbled, fussed, and at the slightest provocation, or no provocation at all, went fishing.

Hon. J. Cornell: They rushed away all right when the Japs came there.

Hon. L. CRAIG: These are very serious charges that have been published to the world by a man of repute. I consider it is time the Government took a hand in these matters. There is no discipline. Mr. Brown quotes an instance when urgent work was required in the interests of the war effort but a holiday was due—and the holiday was taken. He furnishes still another example of a boat unloading a number of Kittyhawk planes. A gateway was too small to allow the Kittyhawks to be taken through and the harbour authorities, or whoever was in control, were approached with a view to getting the gateway opened up and the reply was, "Yes, we can get the gate down but it will take about four days because a holiday intervenes." The American officer concerned replied to the effect that he could not wait that long so he told his men to get a jeep. Within ten minutes the gateway had been removed and the Kittyhawks were being unloaded and taken away.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Similar happenings occurred at Fremantle.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Do not these instances suggest that we are not awake?

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: We know that the Government cannot discipline the unions, so how can we do it?

Hon. L. CRAIG: The Government can do it.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: The Commonwealth Government cannot do so.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It does not want to discipline the unions. I am not suggesting that in peace-time the rights of the unions should not be maintained within reason, but

in time of war we have to give away privileges and regard them as obligations. We are not doing that. These evils which have been growing up during the period of the war should have been scotched at the beginning. We have a vice squad for the cleaning up of the city, but the Government was previously advised about the evil. There was the experience of the 1914-18 war to guide Ministers. The Government was warned months ago, but nothing was done until the evil became a crying scandal and numerous men were diseased. This matter should have been taken in hand at the outset. The Government had all the information necessary; this trouble is merely a follow-on from the previous war. Surely the experience then gained could have been put to use!

Similar remarks apply to the liquor question. The Government did not move until public opinion forced it, until the whole town was screaming out for something to be done. I had not previously witnessed such disgraceful scenes as those I saw in Perth; yet the Government had all the power requisite to check that state of affairs. It was the job of the Government to lead, not to be forced by public opinion. The Government could have been as drastic as it chose so long as it acted fairly. Therefore I say the Government deserves to be castigated. I consider that it has been in power too long and has rested on its laurels.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Is not something being done now?

Hon. L. CRAIG: I believe the matter is being fooled with; I know for a fact that it is being sent from one department to another. The authorities are afraid to send troops to Kalgoorlie on account of the liquor trouble; yet the Government has the power and can clean up this trouble if it likes. But it does not want to do so. So the Government must take all the blame for all the things that have been happening. I support the motion.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (West): I suggest that Mr. Craig has been strongly influenced by the celebrated American journalist he quoted.

Hon. L. Craig: Not at all. He merely confirmed views that had already been expressed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The extracts read by the hon. member showed

clearly that the American journalist grossly distorted certain happenings. The whole story would present a different picture.

Hon. J. Cornell: Much of what that American said is quite true.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That sort of thing happens everywhere. I suggest that it happens when men have to work excessively long hours. They are called upon to do a job, no matter how long they have to work. If they did not do it, there would be serious trouble.

I desire to endorse the expressions of regret made by members at the passing of Hon. J. M. Macfarlane who rendered signal service in the commercial and public life of the State. We have lost some big men recently from this Chamber. We feel their absence keenly, and to me the House does not seem the same. I also join with others in the expressions of welcome and goodwill to the recently elected members, Hon. F. E. Gibson, and Hon. C. R. Cornish, both of whom have earned high reputations for public service, and will, I feel sure, prove acquisitions to this Chamber.

When one considers the immensity and complexity of the manpower problem and the task confronting Australia in successfully preparing to resist and defeat the enemy which threatens to overwhelm the nation, it is remarkable that the marshalling of our forces in the field, in the workshop, and for primary production has proceeded with such celerity, and has met, all things considered, with so little criticism. Mistakes have been many. It took quite a long time for everyone to realise—and this includes people in responsible positions besides ordinary citizens—that the very existence of our nation was threatened.

The Prime Minister, with brutal frankness, told us quite recently, "The number of the American Forces in Australia is less than that of the Australian Forces sent overseas." Australians themselves must be prepared to fight and resist the threatened invasion and take their full share of the war burden in company with the Allied Nations against the world forces, and all that this implies must be done from our own resources with our own fighting men and women supported by a well-disciplined, skilled, working army furnishing the munitions and weapons of war in the workshops of Australia. This army in turn must be fed by a well-organised army of men and

women supplying food and necessities of life to the Defence Forces and the civilian population.

This is a tremendous job, but one which is not beyond the capacity of the nation to perform. The proper placing of manpower, which includes women as well, is another big task. The objective of the national service and manpower organisation is to select and place every man and woman in the job for which each is most suitable, so that every patriotic citizen can give the most effective service. From the commencement of the war until early this year, the apportionment of manpower between the services and industry was achieved by the operation of the schedule of reserved occupations. This schedule was intended to prevent the entry into the services of men whose skilled capacity was considered to be of more value in industry than in the Army. The scheme had only a modest measure of success. It was criticised because it withheld from the services many men who the public thought should be in the Armed Forces, and the Army failed to co-operate effectively when the men were enlisted by using their trade skill. The waste in this direction was calamitous.

The present organisation was formed in February after a conference of Commonwealth Ministers and State Premiers in January, followed later by a conference of State Ministers under the chairmanship of the Commonwealth Minister for Labour, Mr. Ward, at which I acted on behalf of the Western Australian Government. At this conference every State was represented, and it was unanimously agreed that each State would implement Commonwealth policy and give every possible assistance in the successful administration of the National Service and Manpower Office in the respective States. In Western Australia that promise has been faithfully fulfilled, and the closest co-operation exists between the Commonwealth organisation and the State departments. The present organisation operates a revised schedule of reserved occupations—a schedule of industrial priorities which lays down the priority of value attached to various classes of industry and gives a fairly wide margin of discretion to depart in any direction from the schedules. A new measure has been developed in Army Command, and considerable success has been achieved in secur-

ing the placement of tradesmen in trade capacities and in many instances their release from the services where the Army is unable to use them as tradesmen.

Most public comment now seems to centre around the agricultural problems, especially the problem of shearing. Regarding agriculture generally, the position has been allowed to deteriorate to a most serious extent. Agricultural labour had been absorbed, despite the provisions of the reserved occupations schedule. Every person is liable to be called up for medical examination, and at that time those entitled to claim exemption should do so. Large numbers of farmers and employees declined to ask for exemption and, when enlisting, deliberately evaded giving their proper occupation.

While this seriously affected primary production, the men concerned were actuated by a sense of high duty and patriotism to their country, and therefore deserve praise rather than blame for their apparent misrepresentation. Who can blame the young farmer or farm labourer who, inspired by the drums of war, left his humdrum and everyday employment to give his services and perhaps his life in defence of his country? The men from the backblocks make the finest soldiers, and therefore who would dare criticise the Army authorities for holding up the release of, and hesitating to part with, these first-class fighting men? I certainly would not.

In many instances, the men to whom I have referred made arrangements by which elderly relatives, wives and families, neighbours and employees, were to carry on production. A thousand changing circumstances caused the failure of these arrangements, and now some of the men desire to secure release. These applications are dealt with and met as far as possible, but the military position is not such as to permit large numbers of soldiers being released at present. Then came the war with Japan, the return of the A.I.F. and the arrival of the U.S.A. troops. Vegetables became very scarce. For some months no genuine vegetable-grower has been permitted to enter the Army, and many have been released. Dairy produce supplies fell off and producers were forbidden to serve; a number of them have been released. Protection has likewise been given to producers of

meat, wool, wheat, pigmeat, fruit, tobacco and poultry, to apiarists and to other producers.

Another unforeseen factor was the serious shortage of labour for important defence works of an urgent character within the metropolitan area. For a period men were called upon to work long hours on seven days a week. This particular job, with labour very scarce and almost unobtainable, attracted numbers of aliens and others, many of whom were supposed to be working in vegetable gardens. This factor must, of necessity, have contributed to the vegetable shortage.

To assist the Deputy Director General of Manpower (Mr. H. T. Stiffold) in dealing with these complex and specialised problems, the Minister for Agriculture made available the services of Mr. W. Southern, the principal of Muresk College, as his assistant, to take immediate charge of the agricultural work. His first duty was to arrange for shearing. For this purpose a committee of experts, chosen by the following interests, was appointed eight weeks ago, to act in an advisory capacity:—Pastoralists' Association, Primary Producers' Association, Wool and Wheat Growers' Association, Australian Workers' Union, and the Agricultural Bank. The chairman of the committee is the wool expert of the Agricultural Department, Mr. McGarry.

A complaint was made by Mr. Wood about the shortage of shearers. As I already stated, about eight weeks ago an expert committee was appointed to advise the Deputy Director General of Manpower on how the problem of handling the clip could be solved. The committee has met regularly. Plans for zoning were discussed, but were considered to be too late for this season's clip. By wide publicity in the Press and on the air, the committee sought registration of all flocks and of all shearers who had time available. Interference with existing arrangements was not desired, but registration of persons capable of shearing who did not usually shear for payment was urgently requested. The response was good. Some hundreds of flock-owners registered, as well as a number of shearers. Several hundreds of shearers who were in the Army were listed. The State was divided into districts, schemes for the services of the available shearers were prepared and shearing commenced. Requests made to the

Army for upwards of 300 shearers met with a ready response. Apart from officers, non-commissioned officers and specialists, all the shearers will be granted leave from their units. Delay in release of some shearers is unavoidable, as units are scattered and some are in distant places. More than 20 shearers have been sent to the northern areas, in addition to those who were already working there.

Hon. F. R. Welsh: When?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Some time ago. No serious general delay is expected in taking off the clip, although the early spring will cause some difficulty with grass seeds. The committee has advised that the usual number of shearers employed upon the clip in this State is about 400. As the Army is releasing approximately 300 men, it appears obvious that, with those not in camp, an ample number should be available for the present shearing season. A zoning system is proposed for the 1943 clip. The co-operation of the Army authorities has been entirely satisfactory.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Since when?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Since the committee was formed and the organisation started, everything possible has been done.

Hon. G. B. Wood: That has not been my experience.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Stiffold was notified a week ago that fully half the number promised by the Army had been released for shearing, and that a large proportion of the remainder had been forthcoming during the past few days. Those who will not be made available, in addition to officers, non-commissioned officers and specialists, include some who have recently gone abroad or to the other States, others who refused to be released, not desiring to go shearing, and one or two who have met with accidents. Additional names have been submitted to take the place of these, so that, although there will be a further delay, the number will still be in the region of 300. Within a few days, when the shearers get to work in the various districts, the feeling will be very much happier.

The following quotation from a letter received by the Deputy Director General of Manpower, indicates that some people, at any rate, appreciate the difficulties of the position:—

For my part, I want to take this opportunity of congratulating your staff on the

effort put forward. One usually couples delay with Government action rather than the quick response which I must again thank you for.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I personally took the opportunity this morning to thank Mr. Stitfold.

Hon. G. B. Wood: We have no quarrel with him.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Here let me say I think it a grave mistake for members sweepingly to condemn the military authorities. The effect is to undermine the morale of the people. In the rapid mobilisation of our military resources mistakes are inevitable, and instances of men being misplaced must be expected. In my opinion, the administrative head of the Army in this State, Colonel Hoad, is a highly competent officer and administrator. My experience of him is that he is very approachable, courteous and quick in his decisions, with a detestation of tortuous red-tape routine.

Hon. G. W. Miles: For six months some people in my province have been trying to obtain payment for board and lodging given to soldiers and they have not received it yet.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am not aware of that.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I know of it, and I am speaking of my own experience.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Producers, Mr. Wood asserts, are abandoning such industries as pig-raising, dairying and the production of meat. All these industries are completely protected against enlistment or call-up at the present time. Full protection has not always applied, but there has been substantial protection of these agricultural workers. I have already described how large numbers of men from these industries deliberately refrained from stating their correct occupation when enlisting or when called up. I wish to stress the fact that all the problems cannot be solved by asking for release of men from the Fighting Forces. Indeed, release can only be recommended as a last resort.

Hon. L. Craig: Employees are enlisting voluntarily.

The HONORARY MINISTER: What can be done to stop them?

Hon. L. Craig: Some of my employees have enlisted.

The HONORARY MINISTER: They would not be satisfactory workers if they were prevented from enlisting.

Hon. L. Craig: That is so.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Arrangements are being advanced for the early creation of a women's land army. The lady in charge, Mrs. Carlton, has just returned from a conference in Sydney, at which the details of the organisation were hammered out, and the scheme will be launched here very soon. It will absorb the work already done by the Country Women's Association and the W.A.N.S. Committees in country districts will be necessary to look after the welfare of the girls, to supervise housing and other conditions, and to guarantee those who ask for the assistance of the girls. A uniform is regarded as a necessity for these girls, so that they may be retained in this service in the same way as girls are retained in the Air Force and the Army.

Seasonal labour is another prime difficulty which was overcome last year by wholesale releases from the Army. For obvious reasons, this may be impossible this year. The potato crop in some districts was lifted by a labour corps of Chinese made available by the Army authorities. Endeavours will be made immediately to form a seasonal workers' register of persons willing to undertake this work whenever required. They will be permitted exemption from service. During gaps between seasonal work they will be placed upon Civil Construction Corps works and will be paid standard rates of wages.

Regarding secondary industries, the reservations in the schedule of reserved occupations are supported by the principle of protected undertakings. From these undertakings no person may be taken without the permission of the manpower authority. The purpose is to prevent decrease in production in vital industries. Young men are to be replaced as soon as possible by older men or women. The increased use of women in industry is becoming more and more imperative. The Committee of Advice to Mr. Stitfold consists of Messrs. T. G. Davies, General Secretary, A.L.P., G. Keating, General Secretary, W.A. Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees, E. A. Leahey, of Saunders & Stuart Pty., Ltd., and J. Black, of Wigmore's, Ltd., with Mr. W. V. Fyfe, the Surveyor General, as chairman. The committee is studying the problem.

The shortage of manpower is extreme and cannot be otherwise. Australia as a

whole has a much larger proportion of its manpower in the Armed Forces than has Britain or America, and Western Australia has much the highest in Australia. Thousands of men are still required for the Fighting Forces, as well as a regular stream of replacements. The Civil Construction Corps requires more than 1,500 men. Obviously, the future will have many and grave problems solvable only by the closure of many forms of industry, the use of every possible male person, and the introduction to industry of thousands of women not usually employed for wages.

To achieve the best placement of men and women, the functions of the National Service Office, a branch of the Manpower Department, have been enlarged so that now all placements of men, except for agriculture, wharf and maritime and casual labour, as well as of women under the age of 45 years, are to be made by the National Service Office. The object is to divert from non-essential to essential work every possible worker in the State. The War Organisation of Industry Department is linked with this effort by its activities in closing industries and releasing men by simplifying some processes and prohibiting others. Employees may not leave their employment and employers may not dismiss without permission from the National Service Office.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Has that been carried out?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes.

Hon. G. W. Miles: On the part of the employer?

The HONORARY MINISTER: On the part of both employer and employee.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But the employee leaves when he likes.

Hon. L. Craig: That is so.

The HONORARY MINISTER: But this refers to protected undertakings. Of course, an employer may dismiss a worker for misconduct; but an employer may be censured for acting wrongly towards his employee. This involves the use of inspectors to determine the facts upon which a decision is made. These officers have also established a fine record in the smoothing-over of irritation in factories arising often from industrial fatigue or irritating personalities. Members must recognise that when men are working long hours they are liable to get nervy, and their annoyance is increased. The whole scheme clashes sharply against the

legitimate personal interests of so many that complaints are inevitable.

All the work of the National Service Office must be carried out with a ready understanding of conflicting points of view, with sympathy and tact, and an avoidance of any display of compulsion except as a last resort. The penalties for infringement are, of course, heavy, but rarely need to be mentioned. This friendly approach to the personal problem is rooted in the foundations of the policy of this office and is asserted at all times. Any freedom from criticism in Press or Parliament, or employer or employee circles, will arise largely from its practice. This accounts for the small amount of criticism that the office has received to date. Members will understand that in launching an organisation of this character, which is different from the usual freedom enjoyed by the citizens of Australia, it is remarkable that we have not met with more complaints and greater difficulties. Mr. Wood complains that members of Parliament have tried to get men out of the Army but their efforts have not been successful.

Hon. G. B. Wood: At that time, yes.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The system laid down is that any recommendation for release must come from the manpower authorities, and the Army will not act on any other recommendations. Members who have complied with this condition have felt that their claims have received proper consideration, even though in a number of instances it has been impossible to comply with their desires. There is, generally speaking, a jolly good reason advanced when the request is made that a man be released from the Army.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: They are pretty long-winded at times.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It must be remembered that the work involved in the regimentation of all our men and women and the placing of them in the particular job suitable to their ability and temperament, is a totally new task requiring the training of officers for such a responsible job. In peace time there was, unfortunately, always a big reservoir of unemployed labour to choose from, and the task was much easier. I have no hesitation in saying that the State Government has made in every case a wise selection

when asked by the present Commonwealth Government to recommend and second a State civil servant for special work for the Commonwealth authorities. The appointment of the Deputy Director General of National Service and Manpower, Mr. H. T. Stitfold, is a case in point. Mr. Stitfold has tackled this tremendous job with zest, enthusiasm and marked efficiency.

Hon. G. B. Wood: And courtesy. We all agree with that.

The HONORARY MINISTER: He has proved to be a highly capable administrator. The attack by a member in another place on the Deputy Director General was unfair, improper, and totally without foundation. I am in close touch with Mr. Stitfold and he deserves every credit for the way he has mapped out his organisation.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Who said he was not?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Nobody in this House. This is not a one-man job and fortunately the Deputy Director General has had experience enough as a well trained State civil servant to seek and invite the co-operation and assistance of the Premier and his Ministers in the selection of men to fill the key positions in this big organisation. There is a chart in the Chamber which very plainly explains the various departments of the new organisation. A case in point was the appointment of Mr. B. A. L. White as his assistant. Mr. White has a wide experience as an industrial organiser and is a highly competent engineer. His appointment has been extremely satisfactory. He deals with outstanding ability with the many problems connected with the protected industries and the manifold complexities dealing with industry generally. His personality and efficiency are appreciated greatly by both workers and employers in industry.

I must also mention Mr. W. Southern, principal of Muresk College, who has been appointed to take charge of the agricultural work, and Mr. E. S. Baker, a branch manager of the Agricultural Bank, who has a full knowledge of the dairying industry. Both these men will render valuable assistance and be a great help to the manpower authorities.

The work of the Manpower Office is divided into several main sections, each under the control of a specialist and all under the general supervision of the Deputy

Director General of Manpower. The principal sections are:—Industrial and Engineering, including the problems of industry; Agriculture, including shearing, Women's Land Army and casual agricultural labour; the Manpower Office, dealing with exemptions, reservations and hardship claims; the National Register; the National Service Office, dealing with employment; Protected Undertakings, and other individual problems.

The Industrial and Engineering Office, under the control of Mr. White, deals with all problems of skilled labour, the decision as to dismissals and penalties in cases of gross misconduct, and the investigations which are necessary before a decision can be reached. The section handles the appeals which arise either from employers or employees against decisions after suspension and against the decisions which permit or disallow the enlistment of an employee from a "protected" undertaking. The same section also is responsible for promoting industrial harmony and endeavouring to smooth out the difficulties which inevitably arise amongst employees and employers who are engaged on defence work and operating under great stress.

The Agricultural Section, under the control of Mr. Southern, who was seconded by the Minister to assist in this important branch, deals with the shearing plans for the present and future clips, with the promotion of rural employment of women and, in particular, the establishment of the Women's Land Army now about to be launched. It also deals with the provision of casual agricultural labour by the organisation of a Casual Workers' Corps or otherwise, and the provision of the necessary labour for preparing, planting and harvesting various crops.

The Manpower Office, under the control of Brigadier General Martin, has the responsibility of deciding in individual cases and classes of industry, between the demands of the Army and the demands of munitions and civil production. It is the duty of this section to achieve a balance between the vital needs of the Army for young men as soldiers and the production of munitions, food and essential services.

The National Register Section, under the control of Mr. Smith, is responsible for collating the information provided in over 300,000 national register cards. This work

involves a fairly large staff in an intricate and tedious process of sorting, indexing and re-sorting. It involves the classification of men's cards in groups conforming to military classifications, the examination and checking of every card which indicates a form of exemption from Army service, the comparison of the cards with Army records to discover defaulters, the classification of trades so that we shall know what pool of skilled labour still exists in non-essential industry and many other features. The women's cards are being sorted to inform us of the number of women available in various age groups and the nature of the ties, whether home, occupational or health, which might prevent their being invited to assist more directly in the war effort.

The National Service Office, under the control of Mr. Scott, covers the employment of both men and women in the metropolitan area and throughout the country. This section is now responsible for the allocation of employment to all the men in the State, with exceptions limited to rural employment, wharves or maritime employment and casual labour for periods not exceeding three days, and women under the age of 45 years, excluding nursing services and casual employment for periods of 14 days or less. The object of the section is to make the best use of the labour available in the national interest, by diverting labour at every opportunity from non-essential to essential production.

The Protected Undertakings Section, under the control of Mr. Hayward, covers the concerns which are engaged in the production of munitions, and the commodities deemed essential to the defence and civil requirements. Since this office has been started, just under 250 undertakings have been investigated and protection granted. In addition, the whole of the industries concerned in the production of timber has been protected, because of the need for the maximum production for war purposes, and we have in an advanced stage of investigation, the protection of motor repair service stations to preserve our transport network.

A certain amount of criticism has been expressed in the Press but in every case where the State Government has been consulted its selection cannot be successfully challenged, which is proof that the Government has tried to assist the Commonwealth Government by appointing some of its best

officers to key positions in these organisations. As an example of the amount of work done in the placement of men and women in employment, I will give the details of the period from the 1st to the 22nd August. The statistics are as follows:—

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICE			
Operations for period 1st to 22nd August, 1942.			
PERTH-FREMANTLE:			
		Registrations.	Engagements.
Males	749	749	559
Females	337	337	172
		1,086	731

This does not include work done by the day. The 731 placements in three weeks refer to the men and women engaged in permanent work, or transferred from one job to another. Various members have said that their desire is to help the Government in the war effort. I cannot understand their remarks. There is a big field of work where members of Parliament can lead the people in their various provinces. There is so much to be done in each town and village in this State that members of Parliament should take their proper place in leading the war effort. There is too much talking. We should fit into the job we can best do. If there were less talk and more work, the war effort would get on a lot more satisfactorily.

Members: Hear, hear!

The HONORARY MINISTER: In the country districts, where arrangements will have to be made in the next few weeks to organise the Women's Land Army, much work has to be done. We should all help in the successful launching of the Land Army. Members of Parliament will be rendering a great war service in assisting in that direction and organising their people to victory. I support the motion.

HON. F. R. WELSH (North): It was not my intention to speak, but Mr. Miles has touched on a few subjects to which I wish to refer. In common with others, I extend my congratulations to the two new members whom I have known for many years; each will be an acquisition to the House. I have just concluded a trip through the pastoral areas, going as far north as Port Hedland and Marble Bar. We have experienced one of the best seasons for years, and the rainfall has extended over a long period. I am interested in the shearing problem, and there was un-

doubtedly a shortage of shearers in that part of the State. I say that advisedly, for the shortage has made it difficult to complete the shearing in the ordinary time and everyone is behind schedule. We could not get some of the shearers through from Meekatharra, owing to the condition of the roads. Representations were made to the Army authorities—I do not know about the Manpower Office—by different organisations and contractors for the release of men. They were not successful. We therefore shored as best we could with a skeleton staff. In cases where six or eight shearers usually operated, the number was reduced to four, and stations had to handle stock with greatly depleted staff. It was certainly difficult to complete the shearing as in former years.

Added to that, we had blowfly trouble previously unknown in the district. This is the first year, in all my experience, that I have had trouble with the blowfly. The moist humid weather was probably responsible for making the fly more active while the wool was on the sheep. It is difficult to cope with this sort of thing. To my surprise and chagrin I learned today that there is a considerable amount of blowfly strike among the shorn sheep. I did not think that was possible there owing to the dry conditions. Most of the sheep have been shorn, but some of the stations are still shearing. They should have been finished six weeks ago. The rain made the road from Meekatharra impassable and there was no means of transport for seven or eight weeks.

I can support Mr. Miles in his remarks on the present Government's activities in regard to allowing goods to be taken up the coast. The Minister for Lands (Hon. F. J. S. Wise) was one of the prime movers in this matter. Had it not been for the State Government arrangement of shipping space, we would have been practically without stores. The Government thus obviated a serious difficulty. It is not hard to visualise what would take place if a bomb raid occurred or a submarine appeared on the coast and the shipping was taken off. Then we would receive no supplies at all as road transport is not possible at present owing to the boggy conditions.

An essential requirement of the North-West is an all-weather road from Meekatharra to convey stores to the North-West.

The existing road is in a deplorable state. It is torn up for hundreds of miles, and a shower of rain converts it into a bog. In fact, at present it is a road in name only. If the State Government cannot do the work, the Commonwealth Government might do it, maintaining the road in such a condition that traffic will not be interrupted. In connection with the wool scheme the Government has arranged for our clip to be shipped. That, however, applies only to my district and to centres to the south. Further north, in the Kimberleys, it may prove impossible by reason of war conditions.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Some wool can be brought down from Broome.

Hon. F. R. WELSH: Yes, but the shipping is not so regular and not up to standard. The Government is to be commended for having arranged to bring our wool down. I would not have touched on this matter had not Mr. Miles referred to frozen stores and tinned goods for the Army. I may mention that only last week a shipment of potatoes was to be sent to the North, but the potatoes could not be obtained. In the North we have no vegetables except such as are brought by the boats. The northern areas in that respect are not like the southern parts; we cannot get many consignments of vegetables even in ordinary times. However, I have every faith in the Government taking all necessary steps to ensure supplies being sent to the North.

Finally I would like to pay a tribute to the excellent work of the Flying Doctor of the North—Dr. Dicks of Marble Bar, who has an enormous territory to cover. He is in charge of three hospitals situated hundreds of miles apart. Had it not been for his possession of a small plane—and only by the grace of God did he get it!—he could not visit all the patients requiring his services. During the time I was at Marble Bar, the lives of two men were saved by the doctor going out and picking them up. He is doing a really excellent job. He flies his own plane. In every respect he is a very busy man, who never spares himself in any way. I understand that this plane is likely to be called in next month. Then he must have another plane, and it should be a larger one with which he will be able to carry on his good work. At present his plane has a range of only 200 miles. Dr. Dicks visits Roebourne, Marble Bar and Port Hedland, which are hundreds of miles apart and he

could not possibly do so except by air. He is doing wonderful work. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.41 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 25th August, 1942.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2).

HEALTH, VENEREAL DISEASE.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH asked the Minister for Health: 1, Does the Commissioner for Public Health agree that 60 per cent. of the males in the community are suffering from venereal disease? 2, Will he take steps to refute the allegation, if not true, so that eligible females will not be fearful of entering the bonds of matrimony to the detriment of the birthrate?

The MINISTER replied: 1, No. 2, This has already been done in the Press and a copy handed to the Minister for Health.

MINING, GOLD AND BASE METALS.

Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What amount of capital has been made available to Western Australia by the Deputy Controller of Minerals for the development of minerals in Western Australia which may be of strategic value to the war effort? 2, Will the amount granted for this purpose be separate from the £100,000 Federal grant for the maintenance of the gold-mining industry? 3, Does the Government consider that £100,000 will be sufficient to maintain and preserve the goldmining industry in such a state of repair that operations on a pre-war basis would be possible at short notice and without additional huge outlay? 4, Has indemnity already been paid to any mines which have gone out of production through manpower restrictions, or from other war causes?

The MINISTER replied: 1, The Under Secretary for Mines has been appointed by the Commonwealth Controller of Minerals to be his deputy for this State. He has authority to operate upon an advance of £5,000, with a maximum of £1,000 for any one proposition. Where greater assistance is considered necessary, he recommends to the Controller. 2, The minerals expenditure is quite distinct from the Federal grant for the maintenance of the goldmining industry. 3, It is impossible to estimate the total maintenance moneys which will be required to preserve mines during the war period, the duration of which is unknown. 4, Applications are now being received and examined, but no maintenance expenditure has yet been incurred.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Tenth Day.

Debate resumed from the 20th August.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin) [2.21]: My principal purpose this afternoon is to show that next to the successful prosecution of the war, the most urgent problem seeking solution in Western Australia is that provided by the wastage in our greatest asset, namely the industries connected with the land. The commercial outlook for the people of the countryside is dismal in the extreme. On the other hand, as regards the post-war outlook, there I consider the prospects to be rather rosy, especially if we are able, between now and the post-war period, to get all parties in the House to agree in putting those industries upon a far more favourable basis than the present. Today the common attitude seems to be that because there is a war on no civil pursuit amounts to anything whatever. I acknowledge that that appears to be so in regard to many occupations; but I maintain that the war has greatly increased the importance of farming in many directions. Farming is indeed an important part of the war effort, for it means the food and the clothing of the people. The final result of the great struggle now in progress may easily go to the side that commands the most ample supplies of food and clothing. Farming and all its many allied industries, including the processing industries that farming creates, are likely to be, and in my opinion will be, the basis of this State's economic post-war structure. It will be