

-ary. I thought it was the right course to take, but when the season changed, and we found there was more hay cut than was required in the country, these people became entitled to some compensation. The compensation they got was an advance of 25s. per ton, with numerous strings attached to it. I hope that even at this, the eleventh hour, the Government will deal with each of those cases on its merits. Mr. Kelsall, for instance, had a fine crop of wheat. The Minister for Agriculture knows the official to whom this farmer spoke about the matter. I will not mention the official's name. In view of the facts I have stated I ask the Government to extend consideration to the farmers affected. I do not say that it should take the farmers en bloc and give everyone who is landed with hay something. On the other hand, farmers in remote districts who never before cut hay are entitled to something more than an advance of 25s. per ton with all sorts of unfavourable conditions attached to it. But I will not enlarge upon that aspect now.

I am glad to learn from the Speech that the Ministry does not intend to increase taxation. At a time like this that matter should be left to the absolute discretion of the Commonwealth Government. In view of Western Australia's surplus, about which we have heard lately, it is only proper that extra taxation should be left alone as regards this State. Finally, as to the debt structure of the primary producer, a great deal has been heard about primary producers' debts. It is gratifying to know to-day that on account of the drastic times we are facing and will have to face, many people who are against that type of legislation are to-day looking forward to some alteration in the debt structure not only of the primary producers but also of others who have suffered through war conditions. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.51 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Tuesday, 5th August, 1941.*

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

### MOTION—CONDOLENCE.

*The Late G. J. Lambert, M.L.A.*

THE DEPUTY PREMIER (Hon. H. Millington—Mr. Hawthorn) [4.31]: I move—

That this House desires to place upon its records its profound sense of the loss sustained in the passing of the late George James Lambert, a member of this House, and that an expression of the sincerest sympathy of members be conveyed to his widow and family by Mr. Speaker.

During his life, and very early in his life, Mr. Lambert established a fine record of public achievement. Some 37 years ago, when quite a young man, he was elected a member of the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council and served in that capacity for some time. About 25 years ago he was elected as member of this Chamber for Coolgardie, and later as member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie, which seat he held at the time of his death. In addition to his wide general knowledge, he brought to this House a special knowledge of mining and metallurgy. He was also a most enthusiastic supporter of the industrial development of Western Australia. In all these public activities he served his generation faithfully and well. I believe, however, that he would most desire to be remembered for his genial and bright friendship. He was a most companionable man, one to whom we could refer as a "good mixer." During his life he gathered an incredible store of knowledge and experience, and we all know how delighted he was to recount his experiences. We shall remember him in that respect. He also possessed considerable initiative and originality. At times he was

an extremely candid critic, ruthless and almost merciless, but his criticism was delivered with such good humour that it never gave offence or caused ill-will. No one was exactly like George Lambert; he was an original character and will be long esteemed for his personal qualities. He was utterly unselfish. We are disposed at times such as these to dwell on the passing of a friend and comrade with a certain degree of sadness; but on this occasion, I feel we shall all remember our late member as a splendid pal. I believe he would so like us to think of him. Therefore, in addition to the splendid public service that he rendered to the State, we shall also remember him for his geniality and true companionship.

**HON. C. G. LATHAM** (York) [4.36]: I second the motion. One of our regrets is that the friendships which we form in this House, irrespective of political parties, are severed by the passing away of men like the late Mr. Lambert. He was a great personal friend of mine. We were closely associated with each other because of the proximity of our rooms. We, therefore, came into contact with each other much more than do other members who do not frequent the House so much. A few members who continually do their work at Parliament House form a close companionship which cannot exist between members who are not so closely and continually thrown together during the day-time, but only meet when the House is sitting. As the Deputy Premier has said, the late Mr. Lambert was a briny man. Very few knew more about the minerals of this State than he knew. He had the utmost confidence in the State, and I feel sure he would have liked to be spared longer so that he could have exploited our mineral wealth. He did much for the mining industry of the State, from the north to the south. I have seen samples of minerals sent to him, and I know the work he did in connection with them through his association with many companies that were exploiting our minerals. At one time, when Mr. Lambert was in Opposition, I listened to one of the finest speeches on the mineral wealth of this State that I have ever heard. The speech was reprinted in one of the representative mining journals of Australia. Mr. Lambert was noted for

his keen desire to assist the development of the mining industry, not only gold-mining. I agree with the Deputy Premier's remarks about his joviality. He was an outstanding personality. At times he could in this House have been spiteful; undoubtedly he was cynical, but despite all that he had that in his make-up which earned him many friendships. To his widow and family I desire to express on behalf of this section of the Opposition our deepest sympathy. I think Mr. Lambert was married while a member of this House, and I recollect on one occasion his bringing his children to the House. He was a good father and will no doubt be sorely missed by Mrs. Lambert and his two children.

**HON. N. KEENAN** (Nedlands) [4.40]: On behalf of the National Party, I desire to support the motion submitted by the Deputy Premier. Mr. Lambert was known to me possibly longer than to any other member of the House. He was a municipal councillor when I was Mayor of Kalgoorlie. Somehow, I have always felt that, in a measure, the training he had—I shall not say under my guidance—in the municipal council formed the basis for his later public life. At that time he was a man who had a great future as a metallurgist. He had a wide and complete knowledge of mineralogy, and was acquainted with the occurrence of minerals in various parts of Western Australia. Had he chosen to adopt that branch of science for his future career, instead of devoting himself to the public life of the State, he might have died a very wealthy man. So, from the very outset, it may be truly said of him that he was prepared to make sacrifice of his personal interests in order to embark upon a public duty. Had he not adopted that course, he would have attained much greater affluence in life. Now he has gone from amongst us, and the motion before the House is one of condolence with his family as well as one expressing our appreciation of his merits. Of course, George Lambert had faults, but so have we all. However, he had the singular good fortune that his very faults were of a nature that endeared him to those he met. The exercise of his gift of making, as the Deputy Premier said, cutting comments or chiding remarks was almost always accompanied by a smile that

robbed his utterances of all hurt. Indeed, I seldom heard him criticise unless there was warrant for that adverse comment. After all, if there is something deserving of criticism, we must adopt that course even if the procedure involves us in creating, for the time being, personal enemies of those we must criticise. Again I say the late George Lambert had singular good fortune in that the faults he had can all be easily forgotten and his virtues always remembered.

**MR. STUBBS** (Wagin) [4.43]: As one who has been associated for over 30 years with the Legislative Assembly, I wish to pay a humble tribute to the memory of a good man. On hundreds of occasions between 10 and 11 o'clock in the morning, the late Mr. Lambert was accustomed to enter the writing room attached to this Chamber, to open his correspondence at the desk adjoining that at which I was sitting. I say frankly that had that man devoted his time and talents to metallurgy, which subject he had studied for many years, he would have been a very rich man. However, for nearly 25 years he preferred to be a humble unit in the Parliamentary life of his adopted State. Above and beyond all that, George Lambert had the most pronounced kindness of heart of any man I have ever known. Why do I make that assertion? I do so because I had ample opportunity to become aware of the fact on scores of occasions. Many a time would he place correspondence on my desk and ask me what I would do if I had received such communications. I gave my personal opinion regarding what I would do. Sometimes George Lambert doubled, and ever trebled, the assistance that I had suggested, and I know that each time he sent away that assistance it was to help some unfortunate family. The world was richer for the presence of a man of his character and all the poorer for his departure. I merely add that I hope his widow and family will never want. I am glad of the opportunity to pay my humble tribute to a good man.

Question put and passed; members standing.

#### CHAIRMEN (TEMPORARY) OF COMMITTEES.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I desire to announce that I have appointed Mr. Withers, Mr. J.

Hegney and Mr. Seward to be temporary Chairmen of Committees for the session.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

##### *Transport of Perishable Products.*

**Mr. SAMPSON** asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Having in view the inability of a number of primary producers, on account of petrol rationing, to forward eggs, fruit, vegetables and other products to markets by motor vehicle, is it his intention to ensure that the same careful handling that is provided by motor hauliers will be ensured when products are sent to market by rail? 2, Is he able to give an assurance that forwarding charges will not exceed those hitherto levied when transport has been made by motor truck?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: 1, Not being aware of the conditions under which the motor hauliers operate or of the charges they make, the Government is not in a position to reply to the questions asked, but the hon. member may rest assured that the same careful handling which the railways have always given the produce mentioned will continue. 2, Answered by No. 1.

#### QUESTION—TROLLEY BUSES.

##### *As to Use of Trailers.*

**Mr. NORTH** asked the Minister for Railways: In view of the difficulty experienced by the various experts in solving the problem of inadequate transport, during peak periods, for Claremont and Nedlands bus patrons, why should not trailers be constructed locally, and hauled by the trolley buses?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: The power equipment of trolley buses or motor buses does not permit of their hauling a loaded trailer.

#### QUESTION—PACIFIC PROBLEMS.

##### *Reference by Sir F. Eggleston.*

**Mr. TONKIN** (without notice) asked the Deputy Premier: 1. Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the paragraph appearing in to-day's issue of the "West Australian" under the heading "Pacific Problems," in which paragraph Sir F. Eggleston

is reported to have stated his preference for the bombs in Chungking to the stink bombs of Australian politics? 2. Will the Government take steps to see that one who thinks so little of, and talks so disparagingly about, Australian politics is relieved of the obligation to represent Australia in another country?

The DEPUTY PREMIER replied: My attention has been called to the paragraph in question. The matter will be considered by the Government.

### SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

On motion by the Deputy Premier ordered: That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 4.30 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m., if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m., onwards.

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

On motion by the Deputy Premier ordered: That on Tuesdays and Thursdays Government business shall take precedence of all motions and orders of the day.

### BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1) £2,500,000.

#### *Standing Orders Suspension.*

On motion by the Deputy Premier resolved:—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day, and to enable the business aforesaid to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Have you received a Message from the Lieut.-Governor, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER: Not yet!

Hon. C. G. Latham: You cannot proceed with this business without such a Message.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are waiting for the Lieut.-Governor's Message now. As it has not yet arrived I shall leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells, which I hope will be in about 30 minutes' time.

*Sitting suspended from 5.3 p.m. to 5.38 p.m.*

### *Message.*

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

The House resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Withers in the Chair.

**THE DEPUTY PREMIER** (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [5.39]: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1942, a sum not exceeding £2,500,000.

Supply is needed to meet State requirements pending the passing of the Estimates. The Estimates are being prepared and will be submitted to the House at an early date. Expenditure is being closely watched and savings are being effected wherever possible. Owing to war conditions, increased expenditure in some directions is unavoidable. We must make provision for the basic wage increase, for increased cost of materials, for concessions in railway fares to soldiers, for the pay-roll tax under the child endowment scheme and for the protection of public property. The amount sought is the same as that granted under No. 1 Supply Bill last year, namely £2,500,000 and is made up as follows:—

Consolidated Revenue Fund .	£1,850,000
General Loan Fund ..	350,000
Advance to Treasurer ..	300,000
	<hr/>
	£2,500,000

The expenditure for the first three months of last year was £1,740,719 excluding expenditure under special Acts amounting to £1,133,333. The latter amount included interest and sinking fund payments, etc. The amount from General Loan Fund will be required to meet expenditure on essential services in conformity with the arrangement made with the Commonwealth Government. The Advance to Treasurer is to provide funds to meet immediate requirements which, for the time being, cannot be cleared or charged to votes. Last year it was estimated that there would be a deficit of £166,697, whereas the year's operations showed a surplus of £11,111. The actual revenue last year was £11,432,068 compared with the estimate of £11,217,152, an increase on the estimate of £214,916.

Usually when Supply is sought we are asked why the money is required. The amount of £2,500,000 represents about one-fourth of the year's requirements and we have to make arrangements to pay that sum out of Consolidated Revenue. The amount of £1,850,000 is being expended on the ordinary services of the State. I made some inquiries about this matter because there is often a disposition to assume that the Government, in moving for Supply, is asking for a blank cheque. That is not so. We are at the beginning of August and, of the £2,500,000, about one-third has already been expended on the warrants of the Lieut.-Governor. For instance, members have received their salaries for the month of July. The balance is required to carry us over the next two months.

Hon. N. Keenan: Salaries do not account for the whole of that money.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: No, but consider the railways, a very big spending department! All the money earned by the railways is paid into Consolidated Revenue and can be paid out only on the authorisation of the Lieut.-Governor. Money is required to meet the expenditure of such a department because its earnings are being paid into Consolidated Revenue, and can be paid out only on the warrant of the Lieut.-Governor. The £350,000 from General Loan Fund represents about one-fourth of the total that will be expended over the year.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Less than one-fourth. You spent close on twelve millions last year.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: No. I am speaking now of Loan funds. The Loan funds will not be as heavy; this £350,000 represents about one-fourth. It depends on the works already authorised, such as the Stirling Dam, the extension of the sewerage system, water supplies and drainage and certain buildings, all of which works are now in progress. The advance from the Treasury, as I pointed out, is for items which cannot be identified for the moment, but are afterwards sorted out. Therefore, when it is suggested—as was suggested on the last occasion—that this is a blank cheque, I take the earliest opportunity to point out that we are asking for Supply for three months of this financial year, one month of which has already expired. The money is required for the ordinary services for this period.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [5.47]: I draw attention to the fact that this is a Committee of Ways and Means, and that it is the one chance we have to express our opinions on this matter before the preparation of the Estimates. I appeal to members to take this opportunity to direct the Government how the expenditure should be incurred. If members will do that, they will be carrying out their obligations to those who elected them to Parliament. True, year after year a Supply Bill is brought down. It is also true that an advance is made to the Treasurer before the Estimates are submitted to the House. I cannot recall an instance when that advance has not been made. On occasions there has been stubborn resistance by the Opposition. I do not propose on this occasion to offer stubborn resistance, but it is time members realised their obligation to the people who elected them. Despite what the Deputy Premier has told the House—he said that the advance was for one-fourth of the year's requirements—unless the Government is going materially to reduce expenditure in comparison with that for last year, that statement is not correct. The expenditure from Consolidated Revenue last year—not from Loan funds—was, I remind members, £11,420,957.

Mr. Cross: Essential services must be carried on.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am not going to have the hon. member on the back Government benches trying to inform me on something of which he knows nothing.

Mr. Cross: That is your opinion.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Deputy Premier is asking for a sum of £1,850,000 from Consolidated Revenue and £350,000 from General Loan Fund. Members will see that, on last year's figures, that sum represents only about two months' Supply, unless the Government can satisfy the Opposition that expenditure is going to be materially reduced. For that reason I have risen to appeal to members to express their views on this subject. Surely it is our responsibility to direct the Government how to expend money which is collected by taxation and other means from the people whom we represent.

Mr. J. Hegney: Give us an indication of how we are to do it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Do not be in a hurry. There is still half an hour before we

adjourn for tea, and we shall have a couple of hours afterwards. We on this side of the House are not here to put forward a policy on behalf of the Government, but to criticise and try to assist the Government in every way possible. If the hon. member is patient enough, we will endeavour to put forward suggestions by which we think expenditure can be reduced without detriment to the people, of whom the hon. member is a representative in this Chamber. Year after year, as the Revenue and Loan Estimates are submitted to Parliament, we hear members on the Government cross benches clamouring for more money to be spent in their districts.

Mr. J. Hegney: You do, too.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I doubt whether the hon. member has ever heard me make one request for a pettifogging requirement of my district, which gets a fair deal from the Government in proportion to the amount of the revenue, although I do not say my constituents are satisfied. The member for Canning (Mr. Cross) would not be satisfied if all the revenue of the State was spent in his district. The cost of returning him to this House, as far as the electors generally are concerned, is out of proportion to the value they receive.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Hon. members must keep order.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I must reply to these interjections. My main consideration—and I know I am expressing the opinion of Country Party members—is to curtail expenditure without doing injury to the people of the State, and to try to prevent wilful waste. That is the greatest war effort we can make. The people this State taxes are taxed also by the Commonwealth Government. We know that today every effort is being made to raise sufficient money to meet the expenditure required in order successfully to end the war. A terrific load is in consequence being placed on the people. I do not speak for all my colleagues on the point I now make, but my opinion is that we should extract the last shilling possible by means of taxation to meet the war expenditure; that is, without unduly impoverishing the people.

Mr. J. Hegney: We are getting close to that now.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The war must be paid for. Is it not far better to raise money

by taxation than to place on the people a crushing burden of interest that would have to be paid on loan moneys? Even so, we cannot raise sufficient money by means of taxation. The amount that the Federal Treasurer must find to finance the war is stupendous.

Mr. J. Hegney: Three hundred millions!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is well over that sum, and yet the money must be found by the seven millions of people comprising the population of Australia. The only means by which the money can be raised is by taxation and loans, except, I regret to say, another method which is being adopted. There is taking place to-day a certain amount of inflation, which to my mind is the cruellest form of taxation. It affects not only middle-class people, but also the worker, the man who has saved a few pounds for his old age and for his wife and children. He suddenly finds that he has only half the value of that which he has saved. I appeal to hon. members to give a lead. While I admit that most of the brains of the Labour Party are to be found on the front bench, I do not think all the brains are there. Consequently I urge members on the cross-benches to get behind their Government; to express themselves and see how far they can assist in preparing an estimate that will leave the field of taxation as wide as possible for the National Government; and at the same time provide sufficient money to meet the requirements of this Government, after having satisfied themselves that there is no extravagant expenditure. I do not wish to weary members by quoting many figures, but I do desire to give some from our own returns in order that they may have an idea of the terrific taxation imposed by the present Government. The figures I give will satisfy the House that the taxation levied on the people of this State is not justified. I happen to have occupied a seat on the opposite side of the Chamber for a short period, and I know how difficult it is to check expenditure with departmental officers. They know what the people want and they try to give it to them to the best of their ability, but it all costs money. I repeat the words of an old sage who said that Parliament does not exist to give the people what they want but what is good for them. Surely that was a wise statement.

Mr. Cross: Cromwell said that, did he not?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We are not in this place to put our ear to the ground to find out what is wanted by the people, but to lead the people in the right direction. We should try to ascertain how it is possible to meet the reasonable requirements of the public with as little expenditure as possible. The figures I am about to quote reveal the extravagance of the present Government and the extremely high taxation it has imposed. In 1932-33, the year that the change of Government occurred, taxation collections totalled £1,128,515 and that year we had a deficit of £864,081. Those figures total £1,992,596. If this year's taxation collections are considered, it will be found that they amounted to £1,999,098 more than those for 1932-33 or double the amount that was expended from Consolidated Revenue plus the deficit for that year. Those are astounding figures and should be borne in mind. Members will find that taxation has increased tremendously.

The Deputy Premier: Why not edify the House by quoting your deficit for the two years prior to the change of Government?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will quote them. I brought them in case the Deputy Premier wanted me to quote them. I will give figures from the returns if the hon. member will be a ready reckoner and add them up. The deficit for 1931-32 was £1,557,896. At that time we had to pay a full rate of interest on all our debts. By legislation that interest has since been reduced 22½ per cent. I intend to give the revenue figures in order that members will see that there was no extraction both ways.

The Deputy Premier: There was another one and a half millions the other year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I will give the Deputy Premier the other figure too.

The Deputy Premier: We may as well have them all.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The figure for the previous year was £1,420,539. Let us see what we took by way of taxation in those years. I intend to give the figures relating to expenditure on people who were thrown out of employment at that time.

Mr. Cross: Do not forget the 20 per cent. cut in salaries that year. You took that as well.

The Deputy Premier: I think you have stirred a quagmire.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Deputy Premier is also unnecessarily inquisitive. However, we shall see that he has the figures he requires. It is nice to have these returns; they are so handy. I daresay members would acquire a wealth of knowledge if they would only consult the returns.

Mr. Rodoreda: Why not leave this till the Address-in-reply?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: This is a more appropriate occasion on which to deal with the matter. In 1932-33 the expenditure was £8,332,153 and in the previous year, when the big deficit occurred, it was £8,035,316.

Mr. Cross: That is without the 20 per cent. cut in salaries, too!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: To obtain a fair idea of what expenditure took place, it is well for us to know what had to be found to assist those who were unemployed. For 1931-32 no less a sum than £653,031 was expended in unemployment relief. The next year £357,721 was spent. Since that time, as I have pointed out, a reduction of interest of 22½ per cent. has been effected by Act of Parliament and otherwise, so that charges against Government revenue to-day are not nearly as high as they were at that time. I have referred to those figures because it is time members realised what is occurring. Slowly and surely the State indebtedness is growing and taxation is increasing out of all proportion to the increase in population. That is a very serious matter in a State like Western Australia. In 1932-33 the taxation collections were £1,128,515. Last year they totalled £2,996,054. There was a deficiency of £146,825, which made a total of £3,142,879. This year there is not a deficit but a surplus of £11,111, the revenue amounting to £3,127,604.

Mr. Rodoreda: That is from taxation.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: From taxation alone. That is a very substantial sum. Repeatedly we complain that manufacturers do not establish themselves and their undertakings in Western Australia. There is a very good reason why that is so. Apparently this State is endeavouring to out-distance every other State in the matter of taxation. I have not perused the latest returns, but I understand the only State where the taxation is heavier than in Western Australia is

Queensland. In such circumstances people will never be encouraged to establish manufacturing here if they know they can manufacture their goods elsewhere, ship them to Western Australia and even then save money. In consequence of this, our people are the sufferers. For that I blame the Government.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Our sparse population has a good deal to do with that position.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It has very little to do with it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It has all to do with it.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I shall remind the hon. member of a few things if he will but remain in his seat long enough to enable me to do so.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I will not remain here to listen to nonsense.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The hon. member need not expect to hear nonsense from members sitting on the Opposition side of the House. My earnest desire is that members generally will interest themselves in the finances of the State, and that they will recognise the factors that make for success or failure. I am aware that this one factor does not determine whether we shall attract population and whether we shall make a success of our industries, but I know that those engaged in our primary industries do not enjoy a position similar to ordinary business people who can close their establishments, go elsewhere and still trade with this State. Our primary producers are carrying a load that is becoming unbearable. I admit that the State is confronted with some additional expenditure. Our interest bill has increased, roughly, by about £12,000, our sinking fund charges by £35,000, and the cost of exchange by about £5,000. The great bulk of that added cost has been offset by the reduction in the amount required for the employment of relief workers, for which purpose money was usually provided from Consolidated Revenue. I contend, rightly so, that the duty devolves not only upon the Government to closely scrutinise expenditure, but that it rests with every hon. member. The best contribution we can make to the war effort is to reduce our expenditure in every possible way, thereby leaving the major field open to the Federal Government to impose taxation for war purposes. I have a suggestion to make, and I trust the Government will give due consideration to it. As I

have said, a duty devolves not only upon the Government but upon each one of us to assist in a strict supervision of our finances. With that end in view, I suggest that an honorary committee be set up comprising five members, representative of both sides of the House, to investigate Government and departmental expenditure with a view to ascertaining whether there is avoidable waste. I am positive that if we conduct such an investigation, we shall find that waste occurs. I am sure that Opposition members will give their services free for such a purpose. On the Government side, I am positive there are members quite competent and willing to assist along these lines. We are all aware that Ministers have their time fully occupied in their departments, and cannot be expected to go round looking into matters with a view to determining whether money is being spent foolishly. On the other hand, many members know and see, as I do, where waste goes on and where economy could be exercised.

Mr. Rodoreda: Name one instance! You say everyone can see them.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does not the hon. member know of such instances?

Mr. Rodoreda: No!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then the hon. member's eyes must be shut.

Mr. Rodoreda: Tell us of one instance?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If proper control were exercised over the use of Government motor cars, a considerable sum of money would be saved annually, in addition to which the quantity of petrol consumed would be appreciably reduced. Repeatedly along the Stirling Highway one can see a Government car proceeding with a single officer. Five minutes later another Government car will pass, and still another, all three going in the same direction. Does any member suggest that some little organisation could not obviate that practice, without doing injury to anyone? The member for Rockbourne knows that is true.

Mr. Rodoreda: I wanted the information from you; you made the statement.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I think the suggestion I make is worthy of the Government's acceptance. Were that course adopted, it would represent a contribution on the part of members of this House, and would be an indication that we are prepared to assist the Government at a time



when the fullest possible assistance is essential. I do not suggest that the committee should be inquisitorial. It would ascertain whether full value was received for the money expended and that waste was avoided. I think that if the matter were gone into fully we would probably be able to relieve the people of expenditure totalling close upon £1,000,000.

In view of the financial results obtained during the year ended the 30th June last, the people have surely awakened to the fact that the statements made by the Premier on the hustings regarding taxation relief, were simply misleading. I refer particularly to his promise that the Government would abolish the financial emergency tax. At the time, the people would not believe the statements of Opposition members when they assured them that the effect of the Government's proposals were not along the lines the Premier indicated. There has been no abolition of the financial emergency tax, and under the Government's proposals taxation has been greatly increased. In fact, the people are paying taxation twice over in respect of the one income. The financial emergency tax was collected at the source, and is now being collected under another name. The people realise that they are being taxed at the source just as they were before, but the impost is now called an income tax.

Mr. Cross: Who introduced the financial emergency tax?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Now the people know that they were misinformed and that a lot of dust was thrown in their eyes. I remember once reading a statement by Edmund Burke, which seems to be very apt in the light of the Government's taxation methods. Burke said, "People never give up their liberties but under some delusion." That they were deluded regarding the financial emergency tax is evident. They were deluded then if ever they were deluded at all. The effect of the Government's action is that instead of paying a financial emergency tax plus an income tax, the people are now required to pay an income tax, the amount of which is far in excess of the aggregate of the two earlier taxes. That represents mere misleading of the public, and they will not forget it. They are now taxed twice in respect of the one income, a course unheard of in the past. I know that the Government must be

provided with funds. It is necessary to grant supply pending the presentation of the Estimates. I hope we will have the Estimates before us at an early date, and that departmental officers, despite their being hard pushed to it because of depleted staffs due to enlistments, will send in their returns promptly so that the Auditor-General may be in a position to advise Parliament regarding the financial position of the State. We should have his views upon the expenditure incurred prior to the Estimates being placed before us. The Auditor-General is the only officer we have to advise and direct us, and I hope we shall be able to peruse his report at an early date. I do not propose to offer any objection to the Bill. I assure the Government that my suggestion regarding a committee of members is proffered in good faith. If such a committee were appointed, we could ascertain whether it was possible to reduce State expenditure, and thereby enable the Government to collect more funds without injuring our war effort.

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

**THE DEPUTY PREMIER** (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [7.30]: The Leader of the Opposition has used this motion as a vehicle for making an all-round attack on the policy of the Government. I would not take so much exception to that were it not that he accused the Premier, on the hustings, of misleading the people. In what way did the Premier mislead the people?

Hon. C. G. Latham: I told you.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: I will tell the hon member what the Premier said on that occasion.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That speech is not in "Hansard."

The DEPUTY PREMIER: What the Premier said was that from the amalgamated taxes he would have to get as much revenue as he was collecting from the then income and financial emergency taxes.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Unfortunately for you, I shall be making another speech presently.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: Then the hon member will have to speak a little nearer to the facts. Let us get the position clear by referring to the Premier's statement in

"Hansard" of the 2nd November, 1939, page 1689. He said—

At the present stage, however, I think we are able to give some indication of just what kind of taxation measure is likely to be introduced in order to raise about the same amount of money as is being raised at the present time under the Financial Emergency Tax Act and the Income Tax Act.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But that was after the election. I am referring to his speech on the hustings.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: That is what the Premier said in the House.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Yes, after the election.

Mr. Abbott: When the results had been achieved.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: No; the measure still had to pass this House.

Mr. Thorn: A pity it did not have to pass the electors.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: On page 1690 of the same "Hansard," the Premier is reported as follows:—

Nevertheless, I have been informed by the Taxation Department that the proposed rates will, in ordinary circumstances, return not quite but almost an amount equivalent to that raised by means of the two taxes at present.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That was after the election and not at the time I am referring to.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: I will deal with that also. The Premier is responsible for what he said in the House.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Not on the hustings?

The DEPUTY PREMIER: The Premier also said that naturally, if we received less under the proposed new tax, the deficiency would have to be made up in some other way. That is how the Premier misled the people, according to the hon. member. On the hustings the Premier did not suggest otherwise.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I shall get the report.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: The Premier did not say—and the hon. member cannot show me that he did—that he was going to collect a smaller amount by means of the amalgamated taxes than he was collecting by way of income tax and financial emergency tax. If we take a fine point, would anyone suggest that the financial emergency tax was not abolished? Of course it was abolished.

Hon. C. G. Latham: In name!

The DEPUTY PREMIER: There is only one tax now.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And that includes the financial emergency tax.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: That is what we told the electors last time and will tell them this time.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They will not believe you.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: We told the people that a man with family obligations would receive concessions under the present income tax, and this would mean that somebody else would have to pay more. Take a man on £300 a year! A single man under the old system paid £9 13s. a year, and under the present tax he pays £15. Thus the single man pays more. The Premier on every occasion said that the single man would pay more, and every one of us said so on the hustings. Nobody suggests that a single man should not pay more. Under the old system, a married man on £300 a year paid £6 5s., and under the new tax he pays nothing. That is what we told the people would happen. The whole difference in the taxation arrangements was that the family man should receive the advantage of the income tax allowances and that the single man should pay more. On certain higher incomes, also, a greater amount of income was assessed. The result has been that a similar amount of tax was collected. That was the forecast; that was the aim; and Treasury officials were instructed to draw up a schedule that would produce an equivalent amount of taxation.

Hon. N. Keenan: Did you get the same amount of taxation, or more?

The DEPUTY PREMIER: I remember the Premier being warned by the Leader of the Opposition that he would not get an equivalent amount. As a matter of fact, I think he received a little more.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Considerably more!

The DEPUTY PREMIER: The hon. member's forecast was that the Premier would not receive enough.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But he increased the amount afterwards.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: No!

Hon. C. G. Latham: After the first return, he did increase the rate.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: The rates shown by the Premier were those that were eventually adopted. Under the rates placed

before the House, the Leader of the Opposition forecast that the Premier would not receive an equivalent amount.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That was on the first lot of figures.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: Probably the Premier found some additional taxpayers. Take a man on £350 a year! A single man was increased from £13 2s. 6d. to £18 4s. 7d.; a man with two children pays only £3 3s. 7d.; and a man with three children pays £8 15s. less than he paid under the dual taxes. As a matter of fact, a married man with three children on £350 a year was relieved of the payment of income tax. Right though, that is what we said would happen. There was no misleading the people. There was no need to vary that statement, because it was true, and I am positive that that is what the Premier told the people. He did say that the financial emergency tax would be abolished, and it was abolished. This abolition of the financial emergency tax had been asked for persistently for a good while, because it was an inequitable tax.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Your Government continued it for six years.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We had it for only one year, and you had it for six.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: Since the Leader of the Opposition goes back to ancient history, I will tell him what his Government did. His Government was afraid to impose additional taxation until the last month of its existence. Then it imposed a most inequitable tax—a flat rate for the man on 15s. a week and for the man on £15 a week. I mention this because the Leader of the Opposition has held up his Government as a shining example of what the present Government should do. The example set in those three years was not one to be recommended to Australian Treasurers, for it meant going back to the extent of £3,000,000 in three years. I, of course, cast no slur on the hon. member's Government, but I wonder at his calling attention to the matter.

Hon. C. G. Latham: If you had been in office, the amount of the deficit would have been doubled.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: The cost to the Treasury in interest alone for the deficits incurred, apart from sinking fund, would be £160,000 a year. That was the

legacy left from those desperately trying times. I do not, therefore, call attention to the matter. But we are not going to have this put up to us.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You people left us that legacy.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: When we had an opportunity we altered the incidence of that iniquitous tax, which fell even on sustenance workers. They were given a few shillings a week and taxed even on that amount.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Do you want to continue this? If you do, we will tell you about the value of the pound then as compared with what it is today.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: We are not going to have that kind of thing fired at us. Especially do I take exception to the statement that our Premier misled anyone. I think the Premier's strongest recommendation to the people of the State is that he is an honourable man, and that every statement he makes is a plain statement. He does make himself understood. He did so in this instance, and the people understood him. The family man who paid £8 15s. per year in financial emergency taxation knows that he pays nothing to-day under the amalgamated tax; and so he does not consider that he has been misled. Neither has the single man been misled, for he was told that he would have to pay more. Our concern was for the man with family obligations.

Now as to this Supply Bill! I am not sure what the Leader of the Opposition wants. First of all he asserts that there is extravagance and then he says we are not asking enough, that this amount will not see us through.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You know, on last year's expenditure, that it will not. Take your own figures.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: There are amounts which are not taken into account in the whole of the expenditure. Last year the sum asked for was sufficient to see us through. This year we are not asking for an increase—£2,150,000 Treasurer's advance and the advance from Consolidated Revenue. But there are other amounts which are spent throughout the year, such as the amount of £1,138,333 under special Act for payment of interest and sinking fund and so forth.

Hon. C. G. Latham: For that, one-twelfth is set aside every month.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: Is the Leader of the Opposition sure of that?

Hon. C. G. Latham: Yes. At any rate, it used to be set aside. I do not know what is done now, but I think, if you inquire, you will find that it is done. Your monthly statements, I believe, show it.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: That would be the amount last year, and it was deemed sufficient. This is an account presented by the Treasury officials, and they make it up, after their experience of last year, on this basis, to an amount of £2,500,000. I do not think there will be any difficulty in getting through. As in the case of every Supply Bill, this measure is presented because it is considered that it will see us through until the Annual Estimates are presented. When the Estimates are presented in detail, then will be the Opposition's opportunity to object to any amount of expenditure under it and to suggest economies.

Hon. C. G. Latham: No! Now is the time.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: On the contrary, the time will be when a detailed statement has been made.

Hon. C. G. Latham: After the money has been spent?

The DEPUTY PREMIER: This Supply Bill asks for a lump sum to meet expenditure, and the Bill states what the expenditure will be, based on the normal expenditure of a year. It asks for one-fourth of that total expenditure. However, when we are dealing with Estimates the position is entirely different. Then attention can be called to the means of saving a million pounds.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Will the Treasurer accept the advice to have a committee?

The DEPUTY PREMIER: Every item of expenditure, every work authorised, is examined not only by the Treasury officials but by expert officers of the departments. As the Leader of the Opposition is aware, before any expenditure is embarked upon the utmost care is taken to have the matter carefully examined by the departmental experts. I do not know what can be done by a committee, but the matter is one that can be taken into consideration. I believe the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) last year suggested a committee to go into the question of the Employment Department. But we have to remember that the Government must take the responsibility of all this expenditure and the responsibility of

policy. So that although the proposal put up by the Leader of the Opposition can be considered, I would like him to suggest in what way economies can be made in the expenditure for the current year when the Estimates are brought down. There is nothing to go on now. All we are asking is that in the meantime the necessary finance for the first quarter of the financial year shall be made available, as regards not only money from revenue and Advance from Treasurer, but also the authorisation of what is expected to be the expenditure from loan funds for the next two months.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

#### *In Committee of Ways and Means.*

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Withers in the Chair.

**THE DEPUTY PREMIER** (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [7.50]: I move—

That towards making good the supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1942, a sum not exceeding £1,850,000 be granted out of Consolidated Revenue, £350,000 from the General Loan Fund, and £500,000 from the Public Accounts for the purpose of temporary advances to be made by the Treasurer.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

#### *Bill Introduced.*

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced and read a first time.

#### *Second Reading.*

**THE DEPUTY PREMIER** (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [7.52]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. C. G. LATHAM** (York) [7.52]: I did not intend to speak again, but I desire to correct an impression that hon. members might have gained from the speech of the Deputy Premier, who I know did not intend to mislead the House. I have before me the "West Australian" newspaper of the 23rd February, 1939, and so that members will

have an idea of what I meant, I propose to read the following, under the heading of "Taxation":—

At the elections of 1933 there was no greater issue than the iniquitous financial emergency tax, under which the Nationalist-Country Party Government levied taxation at a flat rate. On its return to power Labour lost no time in redeeming its pledge to replace this tax with a measure conforming as far as possible to the fundamental principle that taxation should be levied according to ability to pay.

While these steps vastly improved the financial emergency tax, the Labour Party had always regarded this tax as a temporary expedient to be abolished as soon as the financial position permitted. It must not be allowed to become a permanent part of the State's taxation system. Labour believed that the time had arrived for this reform to be effected, and for all taxation from income to be levied under the scientific principles of the Income Tax Assessment Act, which made allowance for domestic and other responsibilities. The advantage to the taxpayer and to the State of collection at the source could be retained.

These proposals were submitted to Parliament last session, and after passing the Legislative Assembly were rejected by the Council. Of all the Nationalist and Country Party members in both Houses, only one voted for the Bill. There was thus a fundamental difference in the policy of Labour and the Opposition.

Labour was, therefore, asking for a mandate from the people to abolish the financial emergency tax and collect the money required, at the source, under the provisions of the Income Tax Assessment Act.

The new Income Tax Assessment Act passed by the Labour Government two years ago had greatly simplified taxation assessment and brought it, as far as possible, into uniformity with the Commonwealth and the other States.

The Premier said that Labour was asking for a mandate to abolish the financial emergency tax. The Labour Government abolished only the name.

The Deputy Premier: No!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes! The tax was still there. I notice, if I may be permitted to say so, that the Deputy Premier did not reply to the statement I made that taxation had been imposed twice on the same income, once by the financial emergency tax at the source, and again the following year by income tax at the source. I make this reply merely because the Deputy Premier took me up on that point. He also said that a sum of money is not set aside monthly for interest and sinking fund.

The Deputy Premier: I said I was not sure of that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If the Deputy Pre-

mier is not sure, perhaps he will allow that I am right.

Mr. Cross: You might be wrong.

The Deputy Premier: I am not sure.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: In this statement which I hold—it is a Government document—the following is set out:—

Interest, overseas expenditure	
for the month of June, 1941	£149,082
Other interest .. .. .	128,012
Sinking fund .. .. .	32,635

I did not say the Minister had not sufficient money; I said he had not sufficient money for three months, taking last year's expenditure as a basis. If the Minister is prepared to say that this is a quarter of the expenditure for the whole year, I will accept his statement. He must not, however, expect me to concur in the passing of a Bill for a further sum. I say the amount mentioned by the Deputy Premier is insufficient, because the expenditure for the month of June was £1,809,315. The Deputy Premier is now asking for the sum of £1,850,000 out of Consolidated Revenue, which I say is insufficient. I am well aware he did not intend to mislead the House, but he could not possibly save more than a million pounds. For once, he and I are in agreement in our desire to reduce expenditure. No doubt, before the Estimates are passed, another Supply Bill will be brought down. That has been the custom and I have no objection to it. I object to the Minister saying that these points ought to be raised when the Estimates are introduced. This is the time we ought to advise the Deputy Premier, before the Estimates are prepared and brought down. Every member of this House is under responsibility in that direction. Every member represents intelligent electors and ought to express his views on this subject. He should tell the electors whether he is satisfied with the taxation levied.

Mr. Raphael: I am not satisfied.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I know the hon. member is not; therefore let him help me in the attempt to get it reduced.

Mr. Raphael: I would like it abolished altogether.

Mr. Thorn: So would I.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Some of the taxation the State is levying upon the people to-day should be reduced.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.***Second Day.*

Debate resumed from the 31st July.

**HON. C. G. LATHAM** (York) [8.3]: I had thought we might dispense with the Address-in-reply this year, because although the session may have been shortened if we had discontinued the debate, we would have been able to get down quicker to the business that will come before the House. If anyone is expected to speak on the Address-in-reply, unfortunately it is the Leader of the Opposition. I want to pay myself the compliment of holding a record as Leader of the Opposition in this State. I have occupied that position longer than has anyone else.

Mr. Cross: You are quite welcome to the job.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I find it difficult sometimes to introduce a new vein into the speeches made by me from this side of the House. Looking into the situation carefully, the House will, I think, agree with me that there are three most important matters to which we might today turn our attention. The first is to ascertain what effort we can make towards helping the National Government in the successful prosecution of the war. Whatever we can do, whether by legislative or administrative action or by voluntary work, we should do. We should make use of Parliament as much as possible in this respect. The second matter to which we should give consideration is one we have already discussed to-night. I refer to the financial aspect. Thirdly, we need to examine the position of people who are engaged in primary production. Unfortunately, with the turn of events consequent upon the war, people are producing many commodities that they will have some difficulty in disposing of. That will be a problem. Although there will not be an immediate market for their goods, these people must live and carry on their industries. A good deal of thought will be necessary to enable a policy to be

formulated that will not only help them, but will also give them encouragement to keep going.

A further point is that we must see what we can do towards framing a post-war policy that will provide for adjustments that must be made after the war, and to deal with problems that will confront us in placing people who come back from the war and those who might find themselves deprived of the opportunity to earn a living on account of the cessation of the war business in which they have been engaged. If we turn our attention this session to those matters we will have a full-time job, and that is why I would have liked to see the Address-in-reply dispensed with. It would not be easy to abolish the Address-in-reply by legislation, but it might have been done by a resolution of the House.

The Lieut.-Governor's Speech was an extremely lengthy one. While it contained much interesting information, submitted to the public in an attractive way, it did not contain a great deal that was not already public knowledge. I intend to quote portions of the Speech. At one stage reference was made to war work as follows:—

The greatest credit is due to the men who are giving so freely of their knowledge, time and skill to ensure that everything will be done to support the fighting services with the best that can be supplied.

I do not know why the Government went to the bother of having that sentence included in the Speech, because that is a responsibility we all have to accept. It is no compliment. What we who have protection in Australia and are living under peace conditions are asked to do, or any contribution we make, is nothing compared with what the men overseas are doing for us. It would have been far better if that statement had been omitted from the Speech.

The Deputy Premier: I thought that was a graceful acknowledgment of honorary work.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is not. Surely we have some contribution to make. I do not think for a moment it was expected that those people should be selected for special credit. In the section dealing with finance I notice it is mentioned that an amount of £36,128 was spent last year from the vote providing for unforeseen expenditure to meet war precaution measures. I have attempted to ascertain from the ac-

counts that have been submitted from time to time how this expenditure was incurred, but I can trace no reference to it and I am sorry the Government did not give us a little more information about it. That is an interesting item. What is the good of mentioning it unless details are given to show us how the money was expended? Dealing on page 5 with secondary industries the Speech, referring to machinery manufactured here, states—

Machines previously imported are now being manufactured successfully within the State, including electric motors, special purpose lathes, tool holders, rockdrill parts, conveyors, water meters and concrete mixers.

Most of those things have been made here for a long time. I regret to say I do not think we are turning them out fast enough. I am not blaming the present Government for that, but I do blame the past policy of the Labour Government. We have material, but we have not trained men capable of doing this work. If the position is examined closely it will be found we are responsible for that position. The trade unions in particular and we, through our legislation, have discouraged the training of young men for this sort of work. The field for apprentices is so limited in Australia, and particularly in this State, that when we find ourselves in a crisis such as that with which we are now faced we have not the necessary trained men. To me it is disgusting to find that, even in the building trade, there is a shortage of skilled labour. We should have plenty of trained men, but today little is done, apart from ordinary labouring. Even if a trained man has to go back to labouring, he will not be the worse off for that. Should the opportunity arise to enable him to apply his knowledge and training, so much the better.

The Deputy Premier: There are no men available in the Eastern States.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No! I repeat now what I have said on former occasions. It disgusts me to know that foreigners are able to come here and engage in certain classes of work. They undertake the work and our men do the labouring. This is one of the post-war problems to which we should give consideration now. If it is impossible to train men in any particular trade, we should provide vocational training.

The Deputy Premier: I assure you the Government is not employing those foreign-

ers. If they are employed, it must be by contractors.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Probably that is so; they are employed by contractors and, possibly, by private individuals. I do not charge the Government with doing so. I am anxious that we shall provide the requisite vocational training. If a man who is employed to clean our streets has been educated, and has learnt a trade, he will certainly clean our streets better than will a man without education and without a trade. I have always claimed that we should give our young men an adequate training. Do not let them be idle! The great advantage our common enemy has at present is the number of trained men at its disposal. In Germany, young men are placed in camps where they are trained thoroughly and efficiently. Thus a complete machine is operating against our Empire. While the adaptability of our men is, I believe, far superior to that of any other race, the period available for their training is all too short. We are endeavouring to train men to be qualified engineers in a period of six months, and it simply cannot be done. I am disappointed that we are not turning out more machines than at present, and the explanation is to be found in the lack of skilled operatives.

The next matter to which I shall refer concerns the department of the Minister for Labour and Industrial Development. I am glad to have some information, but in some respects we should have more. For instance, we find in the Speech the announcement that two new fish-canning factories have commenced operations, one at Geraldton and the other in Perth. I have no doubt that the Geraldton factory will be financially successful, because the proposal is to can crayfish to take the place of an article imported from Japan. I understand that large quantities of Japanese lobster and crab-meat were imported, and in that instance the Geraldton factory will provide a local product for which there should be a great demand. A previous attempt to establish a fish-canning factory proved unavailing because it could not compete with the imported article. On the other hand, I think the Minister should look more closely into the proposal to establish a fish-canning factory in Perth. Today fish in the metropolitan area is so highly priced that the ordinary working man cannot possibly buy it. I am afraid we shall

aggravate the position if we are to put into cans what fish is available. I have watched the rise in the price of fish, and, therefore, I consider the Government should be very careful regarding this particular project. I understand it is intended to can herring, for which 4d. each has to be paid to-day.

Mr. Raphael: You are a bit mixed! The proposal is not to can sea herring, but Swan River herring.

The Minister for Labour: And Swan River herring cannot be sold at all to-day.

Mr. Raphael: No, not in the retail shops.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Here, then, is information that I am prepared to accept. When I discuss this proposal with people, the first thing they say is, "It is all right to can fish, but we cannot get enough to eat as it is." They are right when they make such a statement. Of course, if canning results in making palatable fish that otherwise would not be consumed, it is a different matter.

Mr. Raphael: That is the position.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I notice that we have a lot of experts in this House! I understand that the canning process softens the bones of fish, and hence makes possible the use of some that would not otherwise be sold.

Mr. Raphael: Why do you not discuss the matter with Mr. Fraser?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Fish is an important article of diet, for it contains some elements that are necessary for human life. I hope we shall do everything possible to enable our people to secure adequate supplies.

Mr. Berry: There are millions of fish at Shark Bay. Why not bring them down to the metropolitan area?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That was tried, but the price was found to be too high.

Mr. Berry: Why not make an effort in that direction?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: A little while ago I sent a man to the Minister with a proposal for financial assistance to enable him to carry out fishing at Onslow. The finance he wanted was to enable him to purchase refrigerating plant so that he might bring the fish down by boat. He was not successful in his request for assistance. That man told me he could supply fish to the metropolitan market at half the price charged then. His trouble was that by the time he had bought his boat and procured his nets and other gear, his capital was gone.

Mr. Sampson: Up to the present, all attempts to establish this industry have failed.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We have a wide variety of industries referred to in the Speech, and from the manufacture of machines and the establishment of fish-canning factories, we come to gas producers.

Mr. Raphael: That should appeal to you!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We find in the Speech the following statement—

The producer gas industry has continued to make progress. There are now over 3,000 plants in operation on motor vehicles in this State, which is more than the total for all the other States put together.

Does that mean that there are 3,000 plants manufacturing gas producers, or that there are 3,000 motor cars with gas producers installed?

The Minister for Labour: It means that 3,000 gas producers have been installed on motor cars.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then the statement in the Speech is badly worded! I am pleased that Western Australia leads the rest of Australia regarding the use of gas producers. The trouble we experience in this State is that, immediately we want something, we are confronted with a shortage. The difficulty now is to secure charcoal supplies. The Government is doing something in that matter, but I do not know how long it will be before we can secure adequate supplies.

The Minister for Labour: It will take three weeks.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does that mean that in three weeks' time sufficient charcoal will be available?

The Minister for Labour: Yes.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Then Western Australia has made a much more successful attempt to provide a substitute fuel for transport purposes than has any other State in the Commonwealth. But here again we are hampered because of the lack of skilled labour for the manufacture of gas producer units.

Mr. Rodoreda: The difficulty is to secure steel plates.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I think supplies are available, because I know of one man who has a contract for 800 gas producers. He told me he had made arrangements for the supply of steel plates, but his trouble arose from the lack of skilled labour to enable him to turn the units out sufficiently



quickly. There may be some difficulty in procuring the necessary equipment to fit the producers to the motor cars. However, we can do a great deal better, because we have the scope here for the industry. Incidentally, I hope we can rely upon the information supplied by the Minister for Labour, because in a little while I shall challenge a statement he made in this House in 1939 without, I think, recognising the responsibility that should attach to such a statement.

Mr. Needham: It has taken you a long time to issue your challenge.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The reason for doing so has only just cropped up. I accept the Minister's statement that we can speed up the production of charcoal. This will help materially. Now I come to the paragraph of the Speech dealing with the mineral wealth of the State, as follows.—

Attention has also been given to the possibility of local phosphate rock deposits being made available to meet the phosphate requirements of the State.

I do not know how seriously we may take that statement. Over a very long period there has been a great deal of investigation into the possibility of developing local phosphate deposits. Investigations have been made of deposits in the Esperance district and of other deposits on the northern coast towards Geraldton, but neither seems to have been sufficiently attractive to warrant development. When we consider that our requirements of phosphatic rock have to be loaded into ships, conveyed over the water to this State, unloaded here and then transported to the country, there would seem to be a good margin for working a local deposit from which the rock could be railed direct to the works. If we have a suitable deposit of phosphatic rock, let us use it as quickly as possible. If the Minister will tell me where such a deposit exists, I will undertake to get sufficient labour amongst the farmers to develop it.

The Minister for Labour: We are told that the farmers are short of labour.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Their present job is unattractive, and if the Minister can make the production of superphosphate attractive enough by enabling them to get phosphatic rock at a price that will pay, sufficient labour will be forthcoming. The trouble is that the farmers read such a statement as the one I have quoted. The

Government says the phosphate is there and is being investigated. I do not think the Government should say that. We should make sure that it is there.

The Minister for Labour: Surely it should be investigated!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does the Minister know of any new supplies?

Mr. Berry: A trial was made of some rock from the Geraldton district.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, but there is very little of it. Some time ago a concessionaire found that the deposit was not profitable. In view of the price being paid and the difficulty of getting superphosphate, if the Government knows of a deposit that is worth developing, it should get on with the job. We should not talk until we know that it is satisfactory.

Mr. Patrick: The biggest deposit in the Commonwealth is in the home town of the Minister for Labour, but it is of low grade.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is in South Australia. Another paragraph of the Speech reads—

The disposition of shipping must, therefore, be made in accordance with the best interests of the war effort, and in this connection the food requirements of Britain take precedence over all other considerations.

That relates to the difficulty of getting shipping to transport our surplus products overseas. It is only natural in time of war that the authorities in control of shipping should utilise tonnage to the best advantage by securing the bulk of requirements from countries whence the journey is shortest.

We are informed by the Speech that additional road motor vehicles are in use and further units are on order. Are those vehicles run with gas producers or petrol?

The Minister for Railways: Petrol! We are trying out the gas producer.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The gas producer has been tried out on the buses for a long time. Buses so operated are running into your electorate, Mr. Speaker, and they have been on the road for a long time. Surely there is no need to try them out on the roads around the metropolitan area! If they were intended for use in the country districts, some trial might be necessary. I appeal to the Minister to help in this direction because this is a contribution that we can make to the war effort. If we are going to employ additional buses, let us use the local fuel.

The Minister for Railways: We have two or three such buses.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: In a paragraph dealing with the North-West we are told—

Due to war conditions, canning is being undertaken, and the Wyndham Meatworks may be expected to participate in this scheme next season.

Not long ago, perhaps 10 or 11 years, meat was canned at Wyndham. What has become of that plant? Why is it not being used?

The Minister for the North-West: Because there was no market for canned meat.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Can we make sausages at Wyndham? I understand there is a big market for them. I believe that 18,000,000 yards of sausages are required.

Mr. Cross: Only because meat is too dear.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The hon. member made a promise not to interject, but I knew he could not keep it. I understand that a private concern is erecting a refrigerator plant at Derby. Does the Minister know anything about it?

The Minister for the North-West: No!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does the Minister for Lands know anything about it?

The Minister for Lands: It is at Broome.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: What do the promoters propose to do? Are they going to cut into our business at Wyndham? We have very little business there now.

The Minister for Lands: They cannot operate in the same territory because of restrictions on account of disease and so forth.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: What is to prevent the cattle being taken along the coast to the north?

The Minister for Lands: Growers cannot send cattle from the north if they are now supplying Wyndham.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Some years ago there was difficulty in getting any cattle from the Kimberleys. One genius drew a line across the north and left the pastoralists beyond that line to starve. That has been altered. Seemingly there has been only sufficient business to keep one freezing or chilling establishment supplied. This matter should be carefully considered. I believe that power exists to control such an undertaking. If we have that power, we should know something of what is being done at Broome.

The Minister for the North-West: You would not suggest that no encouragement should be given to the promoters?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Government, with the liability it is carrying and has been carrying at Wyndham for years, should not make conditions worse by giving encouragement to somebody else to compete for the few cattle that are available. I will investigate this matter even if I have to make a trip north after the next elections. Under the heading "Native Affairs," we are told—

The Carrolup Settlement in the Katanning district has been re-established and now comprises 100 children and 80 adult natives. Every endeavour is being made to make it self-supporting in food.

I do not know to what extent it will be made self-supporting. The Carrolup Settlement was at one time used by the State as a native reserve. It was unprofitable at the time it was disposed of, and I think the State lost a fair amount of money by backing the farmers on it. They were glad to get out and let the Government have their land. The Government purchased it and now proposes, with the aid of half-caste labour, to make it self-supporting. We shall see whether it is. If it turns out so, it will be the only venture the Government has made self-supporting. It will be worth watching. The Minister for the North-West might tell us exactly what is spent there, how much is spent per head of the population there, and the capitalisation of the settlement. Then we will have some idea of the actual cost.

The Minister for the North-West: The matter will bear investigation.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We have plenty of good Crown lands that can produce something, and that is the kind of country we should put the natives on. Far too many natives to-day are becoming mendicants because they cannot get work to do. We ought to act in exactly the same way as New Zealand has acted with regard to its Maori population. That can be done, but it cannot be done on the type of country at the Moore River settlement and the Carrolup settlement.

The Minister for the North-West: You did the same thing, did you not?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No! It was done long before either the Minister or I was thought of. It seems as if everything is to be blamed on to me. I am like the young boy of the family. However, this young boy is beginning to kick. I have already

dealt with the subject of technical education. I am indeed glad to learn that the Government will do something in this respect. Let us do as much as we possibly can. Do not let the boy leaving school stand on the street corner. It is our responsibility to make of him a citizen, to give him the opportunity. Money will have to be found for that purpose. If a young fellow who desires to become a tailor or a plumber finds that he cannot get such employment, he will drift into the easiest kind of vocation. I appeal to the Government to carry on that work as fast as it possibly can.

Mr. Sampson: The Government has not started yet.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: In this morning's paper I notice an alteration is proposed regarding the Premier's Department. I hope this was arranged before the Premier left. I do not like to think that immediately the Premier goes out of the State, the Deputy Premier says, "I will make an alteration." What I fail to understand about the alteration is the Government's reason for waiting until a man retires before starting to economise. Either there was no justification for the Premier's Department before the alteration was suggested, or there is justification now. The Premier's Department is to be made a sub-department of the Treasury. That is most extraordinary. The head of the Premier's Department was one of the very highest-paid civil servants in Western Australia. Now we suddenly find that we were paying a man a very high salary to control that department, whereas there was no need whatever for the department. I do not know whether the Premier's Department should be made a sub-department of the Treasury. The Government knew for years that the department existed, but made no effort to turn it into a sub-department. A committee could go into that matter, and probably save a good deal of expenditure.

Mr. Raphael: You know the saying, "Governments come and Governments go, but Shappy goes on forever."

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Mr. Shapecott is an extraordinarily able man, and has been a great help to every Premier under whom he has served. But immediately the present Premier goes to a conference, an alteration is made.

The Deputy Premier: I assure you it is done with the knowledge of the Premier.

Mr. Hughes: We are not going to risk another Shapecott!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Usually a party holds what is called a pre-sessional meeting or caucus meeting. On the 30th July a caucus meeting was held by the Government party.

Mr. Wilson: How do you know?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not know of my own knowledge. I am in the building, but I do not know all the secret proceedings that go on. I am not taken into the confidence of the Government to that extent. In the "West Australian" of the 31st July appears the following, under the headings, "State Labour Party—Petrol Legislation Problem":—

At the conclusion of the pre-sessional meeting of the State Parliamentary Labour Party yesterday afternoon, the chairman (Mr. W. D. Johnson, M.L.A.) said that reference was made to the need for members to be in attendance at the opening time of each sitting of Parliament in the forthcoming session, and to take part in all divisions.

What a bad example was set to the members of the Labour Party on that first day! The statement I have quoted appears in the morning paper, and yet, when the House met, the hon. member himself was not present. His advice should be taken, but it would be far better if the hon. member himself would lead his party into doing the right thing. He is not in his seat now. I am rather struck by the fact that this advice was deemed of sufficient importance to be given to the public. The hon. member himself is the greatest offender in that respect.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition must not reflect on the hon. member.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am not reflecting, Sir. I only wish to say that all of us are at fault sometimes.

Mr. Needham: You must be bankrupt of ideas.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: In answer to the hon. member interjecting I say that this was deemed of sufficient importance to be given prominence in the leading newspaper of the State. Then the hon. member says I am bankrupt of ideas. The other side is bankrupt, if that is all its members can put up. If the Labour Party is to have a mouthpiece

to speak for it, let us have something that is sensible and true. The report continues—

Mr. Johnson said that during the meeting there was some discussion of the serious effects of petrol restrictions, particularly in connection with the goldmining industry and the North-West and generally on the industries of the State.

Surely the hon. member knows that there is no restriction on petrol in the North-West. If he does not know that, his knowledge is extremely limited.

The Minister for the North-West: The restriction there is the restricted shipping.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Who is to blame for that? The Government owns the vessels running on the coast. The statement I have quoted was intended to convey to the public that the Commonwealth Government was imposing restrictions on the North-West, whereas it was not doing so. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. The knowledge of shipping on our coast, and of the North-West, possessed by some members on the Government side of the Chamber is extremely limited. Nearly all our petrol supplies come from the North and are delivered on the coast. That is what was done on the ship by which I travelled. It cannot be done just at the moment, because there is now a restriction of shipping between Sumatra and this State. It is wrong to mislead the public.

Mr. Fox: When did you travel on an oil ship?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I did not say anything about that. However, I do know that cases of petrol were sent down here from up there. As regards goldmining, arrangements have been made to ensure that the people engaged in that industry shall have sufficient petrol for their industry. The Commonwealth Government realises that prospectors and miners in isolated positions where water has to be carted must be supplied with petrol; and petrol will be supplied to them.

The Minister for Railways: But they are not getting sufficient.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I believe they will get sufficient if they write in for it. The Minister can hardly expect the Federal Government, or any other Government, when there is such a scarcity of petrol, to say merely, "You can have all the petrol you want." So long as the petrol is used for the industry, it will be supplied. We have that assurance. The only people who will be given an increase in the allotment that has

been made to this State are those engaged in the primary industries.

I am sorry the member for Hannans (Mr. Leahy) is not present. He moved the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply on Thursday last, and in doing so repeated statements that are being made persistently by certain sections of the community. Unfortunately, some people are likely to believe those statements. I propose to quote from the speech of the hon. member and then to give the House my views. The hon. member spoke about the men who were going overseas and, after eulogising their patriotism and calibre, he said—

The only regret I have is that our immense coastline is left undefended, and that appears to be rather contradictory. Our population is equal to three persons to the square mile, yet our men are sent overseas to act as shock troops.

Later, he said—

Does that mean we shall have to find someone who will come in and defend our shores in order to prevent that foe from entering the back door of the Commonwealth of Australia? To me there appears to be something radically wrong with the whole system. I know and admire the spirit that makes our men go overseas as shock troops. I admire that spirit. We must remember, however, that we have something at home to protect, and that we are opposed to the most perfect fighting machine the civilised world has ever known.

The reason those men have gone overseas is to protect Australia. There is no other object. They prefer not to wait until the enemy comes to Australia, but to stop him wherever they can. The men who have gone to Malaya, to the Mediterranean and to the Middle East, have gone there because they believe these are the best places in which to fight the enemy. Should we keep our men in Australia and say to the rest of the world that we are prepared to defend our country by our own efforts? We could not do so. The hon. member has not got the right grip of the subject. Our men have gone overseas to the bottle-neck in the British and Dutch East Indies in order to defend Australia. We commend our soldiers for going there. They were not sent, they volunteered. The only compulsion is that men must be trained in Australia to defend Australia, and with that everyone agrees. I desire to make it perfectly clear that our soldiers who have gone to the Mediterranean and other places have gone there because they believe those are the best places in which

to attack the enemy. Anyone who has seen active service knows full well that the last thing we want is to have the war brought to our own shores.

The member for Hannans also spoke about our gold production, and we all agree with him that the goldmining industry plays an important part in the welfare of the State. He said—

Every ton of ore broken in 1940 averaged to the State £2 17s. 4d. During 1940—this will be news for Country Party members and others . . .

Country Party members have always assisted the goldmining industry in every way they could. We accept responsibility in that direction, because we know full well the importance of the industry. All that we attempted to do was to prevent the Labour Government from tying up big reservations. The Government at one time made big reservations for the benefit of a few people who desired to prospect the reservations at their convenience and to shut them against prospectors. The member for Hannans also referred to phosphates. The Government might ascertain from him where these phosphates are located, so that they can be profitably exploited. Dealing with the search for petroleum in the North, I am sorry the Minister for Mines is absent, as I would like him to give me some information that has evidently been supplied to him. He said the Government was assisting to a considerable extent the Freney Kimberley Oil Company. That company is engaged in an extensive boring programme which, if successfully carried out, will prove most beneficial to the State. From the plan that was put before members when the Bill was before the House, and from some papers which I asked for last session, we found that one company had been given a reservation of 154,000 square miles, and that that reservation surrounded the area being prospected by the Freney Company. The latter company claims to be the pioneer of oil searchers in this State. That is admitted, and it has spent a great deal of money in the venture. I want to know the name of the foreign company, or the wonderful company to which the Minister referred. He said it was one of the biggest oil companies in the world, and had taken up an immense area to explore for petroleum in payable quantities. I want to know what that company is doing. From the information

I have, that company is not doing nearly as much as is the Freney Oil Company. The former company is sitting on its reservation with the object of letting the smaller company proceed with its boring and, if it is successful, of reaping the benefit. This is unfair treatment. I am sorry the Minister is not present to say whether I am right or wrong. I will be the first to make amends if I am wrong. I am aware the State Government has assisted the Freney Oil Company financially.

The Deputy Premier: Why did not you ask the Minister that question before broadcasting your statement?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The information was supplied last year.

The Deputy Premier: You say that this company is sitting down waiting for the Freney Oil Company to prospect. You will find that that is all nonsense. Ask the Minister a question.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Would you like all such questions to be submitted on the opening day? The Government will get plenty of questions, if that is all the Deputy Premier wants. However, I do not think it desirable to ask those questions now. I think we might discuss the matter dispassionately.

Mr. Patrick: It was said that it would take three years to make a survey.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am not here to defend the Commonwealth Government in its method of taxing gold. I think it is wrong, but it is admitted that one kind of company cannot be taxed to the utmost of its profits while another company is exempted. There is some inconsistency and I know that is the opinion expressed by a number of members in this House. I propose to quote the member for Hannans. He began with a remark that annoyed me. He referred to "the colossal cheek of the Commonwealth Government in imposing an iniquitous tax upon production," and stated that in doing so "the Commonwealth Government attempted to do more to kill the goldmining industry than anyone else has done in the past 20 years." Then, referring to "a tax imposed on all production," he said —

A measure of assistance has been secured in that the prospector or the man working a low-grade proposition has to realise a return of at least 25 ounces before the tax is applicable to his output. We had considerable difficulty in obtaining even that concession.

The Deputy Premier: You could not advocate a special tax on primary industry.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Does the Minister want me to believe that? He was a member of the Government that proposed a special tax on the fruitgrowers of this country. I think the figure was 2s. 6d. an acre; a terrific amount! As I told the Minister previously, we are here to do the right thing for the people, and not what the people want us to do. I object to the method the Commonwealth Government has adopted to tax these people. It is not right. But let us be consistent. If huge profits are made in any industry because of the war, and it is right that the Commonwealth Government should tax those increased profits, why should gold-mining be exempted? Why should money be sent to shareholders in the Old Country? That is wrong. Why should they be exempt from taxation? The method is at fault. At the same time, they should not be free from taxation.

Let us see exactly what the position was. I found that last year the gold won was 1,154,843 fine ounces. Gold was at £9 an ounce till the 25th August, 1939. It then rose to £10 6s. 7d. and, after the declaration of war on the 5th September, it immediately rose to £10 12s. 1d. We know very well how important gold is when war occurs, and in this instance the price increased immediately in anticipation of the war, and after war was declared it rose to £10 12s. 1d. The Commonwealth Government was the only purchaser of gold. Let us remember that. It fixed the price at £10 14s. an ounce. It said that anything over £9, which was the price on the 25th August, 1939, it would share on an equal basis with the mining companies. While I consider that is a wrong basis, do not let us forget that the tax is not a tax on £9, but a tax on excess profits of 50 per cent. over and above £9.

The Deputy Premier: The higher the price paid, the lower the average grade of ore that can be treated.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I know that. I want the Minister to wait. There must be a profit of 30s. per ounce before the tax operates. Is that correct?

The Deputy Premier: How do you know that it is a profit?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Because they determine it. How does the Minister know the profit the Government taxes in its or-

inary taxing methods? There must be a profit of 30s. an ounce before the tax operates. That statement is correct.

The Deputy Premier: It is wrong.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The first 25 ounces are exempt. That is to assist the small prospector. Surely the Minister does not object to that?

The Deputy Premier: No!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I should not think he would. There must be a profit of 30s. per ounce before the tax is imposed. We hear a lot about the Federal tax on gold and my contention is that the Federal Government uses the wrong method. But it is just as much entitled to take a tax from profits on goldmining, where the profit is earned because of the war, as it is to tax profits earned in a somewhat similar way by other concerns. I repeat, they have to make a profit of 30s. before they are taxed.

The Deputy Premier: No! You do not know what it cost to get that gold.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But they know.

The Deputy Premier: No, they do not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Of course they do!

The Deputy Premier: Not at all.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The mining companies know what it costs. I now propose to tell the House what tax the State imposes on gold mining.

The Deputy Premier: We built up the mining industry, and the Commonwealth reaps the profits.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not know whether we are responsible for the increased price of gold. I do not think the Government can take that credit, but it was the increased price of gold that built up the mining industry in this State; that, and nothing else. Until the price of gold went up, the production of gold was gradually dwindling; but, immediately the price increased, up went the production.

The Deputy Premier: We supplied water at no cost during the bad period.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We supplied water in the endeavour to maintain the industry, but that was insufficient. The great attraction is the return for produce in pounds, shillings and pence. That was what led men to continue working on low-grade shows. Let me return to the mining taxes imposed by the State. There is a company tax of 2s. 6d. in the pound on profits.

The Deputy Premier: On profits!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I used the word. There was no need for the Deputy Premier to repeat it. I have stated that I think the Commonwealth's method is wrong, but that I consider the Federal Government quite as justified in imposing a tax on gold as in imposing a tax on any other industry whose profits are due to the war. There is also a State gold tax of 1s. 4d. and a hospital tax of 1½d. On adding those together, it will be found that there is roughly a 20 per cent. tax imposed on goldmining profits by the State Government, but we say nothing of that.

The Deputy Premier: The Commonwealth Government taxes the output.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It taxes only that over £9. Do not let us mislead the public. It is the amount over and above £9 and not the output.

Mr. Doney: You are showing that the State tax is heavier than the Commonwealth.

The Deputy Premier: No, do not say that.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is higher. It is taking more from the industry.

The Deputy Premier: The State?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes! Let the Deputy Premier ascertain what the company tax and the goldmining tax are bringing in.

The Deputy Premier: The Commonwealth is taking nearly a million a year.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Turning to another matter, I have some notes which I prepared last night regarding traffic fees, but the Minister has forestalled me by the announcement in this morning's paper about what he proposes to do.

The Deputy Premier: For months we have been pressed to make an announcement.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am very glad an announcement has been made. May I ask the Minister when drafting the Bill to give consideration to certain matters. Primary producers have been directed to get their carting done as cheaply and with as little cost in imported fuel as possible. I ask the Minister to make provision for occasional licenses, if I may so designate them. What I contemplate is a month-to-month license to cover the period necessary to enable farmers to cart their produce by means of trailers. The producers cart their wheat and wool over a very short period, less than a month. Recently a man told me—and I believe his statement—that he could, by at-

taching a trailer to his Chevrolet runabout, cart three tons a day, but to enable him to do so he would have to pay a license fee to cover the full year although he required to use a trailer for only a month.

The Deputy Premier: Could he not take out a license for a quarter?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: What I ask is that provision should be made for an occasional license to cover a period of a month or so. Of course, this will not affect the metropolitan area but only the country districts. Such a provision would materially assist the producers. I do not wish to move an amendment when the legislation is before the House, and for that reason I hope the Minister will give some consideration to my suggestion.

The Deputy Premier: Have you consulted the local authorities?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes. Some of them have written to me on this matter, because they desire some relief to be granted to the producers.

The Deputy Premier: They have written to me too, and I can show you the correspondence.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I know that some who are making use of gas producers are complaining about the high fees charged by the Government. Some relief is to be provided, but these people should be reminded that the man who uses petrol also pays high taxation, the proceeds of which are used for the maintenance of our roads. At the same time the people I have in mind will make a far greater use of the roads than those who run their vehicles on imported fuel. The farmer should be encouraged to use trailers and the provision of an occasional license would have that effect. To get produce to the market as quickly as possible is essential, and if we are to convert some of our wheat into power alcohol we must assist in making that possible as cheaply as we can.

The Deputy Premier: A charge of half-rates for a trailer would not be serious.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: There is no such provision.

The Deputy Premier: Not for trailers?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No, there is for trucks, but not for trailers. For a long time various road board authorities have written to me urging that something should be done.

The Deputy Premier: I will go into this matter.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am glad that the Minister will do so because assistance along the lines I suggest will prove beneficial during the short earthing period.

I do not know whether the Minister for Lands proposes to take action in the matter, but I would like statutory power given to local authorities, or to some other organisation, to set up local committees in various districts to look after the interests of the men who have enlisted for service overseas. I do not want any such movement confined to the country areas; its application should be as wide as possible. Such local committees could look after the interests of men during their absence. When the soldiers returned from the 1914-18 war, they found that their properties had suffered, their plant had been stolen and their farms looted. We should see to it that that experience is not repeated. The interests of those now on active service should be conserved. For instance, if a man has a business and leaves his wife in charge while he is overseas, some authority should be available for her to consult so that her husband's assets would be maintained. On the goldfields this would apply to prospectors who have enlisted. I believe that returned soldiers and other local people could form a committee with the object that I have indicated. I trust the Government will consider this suggestion favourably.

There is one other matter to which I desire to refer. I propose to leave to individual Country Party members the task of dealing with conditions that prevail in their electorates. The Minister for Lands knows the position regarding markets for the products of the wheatgrower, the meat-producer and the butter people in the South-West. A difficult problem will confront us in the future, and we must provide that as much as possible of those products is consumed locally. Unless that is done, the position will become extremely serious. While the Commonwealth Government has heavy responsibilities to shoulder at the present juncture, so has the State Government. Both the Commonwealth and the State Governments will suffer if the producers go to the wall because of the impossibility of securing markets for their output. I trust the Minister will be able to furnish some idea of the

intentions of the Government on this matter. The Commonwealth Government has guaranteed a price for wheat this year, but I do not know what is proposed regarding the future. Only a small quantity of our wheat will be utilised for the production of power alcohol.

Earlier I informed the Minister for Labour that I proposed to attack him. The next time he gives the House information I trust he will satisfy himself that the advice he has received is correct. When the fair rents Bill was before the House for consideration, I pointed out that it contained one provision, the effect of which would be to extend the period of leases. The Minister informed me that that was not a fact. Since that legislation has become operative, I understand that some of our legal authorities say that Parliament definitely did extend, by means of that measure, leases beyond the period for which they were granted. The Minister said that he had consulted the Crown Law authorities who had informed him that beyond doubt the Bill would not extend the period of leases. Now we find that the effect of the legislation has been to extend them. Either the Minister did not consult the proper Crown Law officer or he did not make the necessary inquiries. He gave me an undertaking that he would look into the matter and, if necessary, have an amendment moved in the Legislative Council. That course was not adopted. Now I understand a number of Supreme Court actions are to be launched. Parliament should not pass legislation having any such effect. For instance, it was not intended to extend the leases for hotels, which form of business to-day is probably more profitable than is any other in the State, beyond 1941, when they normally would have expired. It was never intended that those leases should be extended indefinitely. We should remedy that position, and I hope the Minister will do so. The mistake is his.

Mr. Hughes: A tenant can terminate a lease when he chooses.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not want the tenant to do that; I want the landlord to have that right.

Mr. Hughes: So that he may charge a higher rental under the new lease?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It would not have that effect, because rents were fixed as at August, 1939.



Mr. Hughes: If you take the provision out of the Act, that will not be so.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It was not intended to extend leases in such a manner.

Mr. Hughes: Of course it was.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Evidently the member for East Perth knew the position when I drew attention to the point, but he had nothing to say about the matter. I have looked up the "Hansard" report of the debate, and have ascertained that the hon. member had nothing to say at the time. In the meantime the hotel business has become very profitable.

Mr. Hughes: The member for East Perth is not in favour of increasing rentals.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Nor am I, and that is why I supported the legislation, but I do not think that leases should be extended beyond the period of the contract, unless there were good reasons for that course. In some instances the leases were sold before we passed the measure, but the tenants will not hand over.

Mr. Hughes: The Supreme Court could compel them to do so.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not intend to argue the matter further. One case was decided in Bunbury and the probability is that the fair rents Act was pleaded as a statute bar, but that was overridden by the judge. Other States, in framing their legislation, excluded certain leases, and we should have done likewise. As regards the extension of the leases, we could have left the rental part as it was before.

The Minister for Labour: When the lease expires, the landlord takes possession.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But some lawyers say otherwise. If the Minister consulted some of the Crown Law officers, I think they would give a similar opinion.

I hope the Government will accept the offer I have made. We on this side of the House desire to help in every way possible. Our first thought is to do all we can in an honorary or other capacity to assist the war effort. We shall assist the Government to the fullest extent to cut down expenditure by preventing waste, so that we shall have the full benefit of the money raised by taxation. We desire to help the primary producers, who probably find themselves in a worse plight than ever before. Anything we can do to assist in

matters of post-war rehabilitation will be done. I hope the Government will accept my offer on behalf of this side of the House.

On motion by Mr. Needham, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.12 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 6th August, 1911.*

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

### QUESTION—DEFENCE, INTERNEES.

#### *Harvey, Land Clearing, Potato Growing.*

Hon. H. V. PIESSE asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What area of land has been cleared by internees in the Harvey district? 2, How much of this cleared land has been planted with potatoes for the spring crop? 3, What action has been taken by the Government to assist in the planting of these crops? 4, Has the Government full knowledge of the situation regarding the planting of these crops?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, We have no authentic information but understand about 55 acres have been cleared. 2, It was intended to plant 46 acres but our last information was to the effect that 22 acres have been planted. 3, The Department of Agriculture was asked for and gave advice in respect to the suitability of soil, preparation of seed and methods of planting. 4, Yes. A protest was lodged when it was considered that the area to be planted would produce crops exceeding the likely requirements for the internees' camp.