

the House of Review. Perhaps the most conspicuous is that the Legislative Councils of South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania protected the people of Australia against the surrender of their self-governing rights for a long period of years; and the people of Australia wanted to be protected in that way. It was not the Legislative Assemblies—the popular Houses—it was not the Senate elected on adult suffrage that rightly interpreted the will of the Australian people. It was the Legislative Councils of the three smaller States that rightly interpreted the wishes of the people and protected them against something they did not want.

In any circumstances, I shall oppose the abolition of the bicameral system, at all events until there has been some development in the political outlook of the people such as to suggest that a single Chamber might be relied upon to represent the will of all the people and to protect the rights of all the people, whether majorities or minorities. In particular, I consider it entirely wrong to suggest a drastic alteration of our Constitution in time of war. I shall not support the second reading of the Bill. The wish to destroy this Chamber does not spring from fear that it will block progressive legislation, but from a knowledge that it stands in the way of revolutionary proposals by a temporary majority that might be in violent conflict with the wishes of the people, such as the abolition of the State Parliaments, the policy of the advocates of unification, the nationalisation of all industries and many other extravagant doctrines which from time to time achieve a certain measure of sectional approval. To my mind, it is not without significance that it comes from the Party which wants to abolish the State Parliament, the Party which stands for unification, the Party which would force Ministers and members against their better judgment to support Dr. Evatt's proposals; the fact that this is directly asked for is more than significant.

On motion by Hon. G. B. Wood, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 17th October, 1944.

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

QUESTIONS (3).

HAY SUPPLIES.

As to Eastern States' Requirements.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is the season, in his opinion, developing in such a way that it will be safe to allow any great quantity of hay to be sent out of W.A.?

(2) If not, will his department take steps to acquire, on a cash on delivery to stock basis, a sufficient quantity to protect Western Australian livestock?

(3) Is not such acquisition the only way in which export to other States can be prevented?

(4) If there is any other way, does he consider action should be taken by such other means?

The MINISTER replied: With your permission, Sir, I would like to make a rather lengthy statement in reply to this question. I prepared this statement so that not only members of the House but also the public generally will know exactly what the position is regarding hay and chaff in this State. At a meeting in August of Ministers for Agriculture of all States, fears were expressed as to the possibilities of harvesting in three States sufficient quantities of hay for this year's crops because of the unfavourable seasonal conditions which were prevailing. As the season advanced it was obvious that earlier anticipations were well-founded and the almost alarming conditions in Victoria prompted a request for an inter-

state conference of officers, which was held in Melbourne on the 4th and 5th September. It was evident at that stage that there would be shortages of hay in South Australia, Victoria and parts of New South Wales. Western Australia's position was doubtful in some areas but there was little doubt that the State's domestic requirements would safely be met.

To encourage the cutting of light yielding crops, State departments recommended that the ceiling price of hay should be appreciably increased and after consideration the Prices Branch made an announcement to the effect that this price was to be increased by £1 per ton in Western Australia.

I received telegraphic and telephonic communications from Ministers for Agriculture in other States late in September asking whether those States had a prospect of purchasing large quantities of hay for early delivery. I replied on the 27th September to the effect that our prospects were not good at that stage but we might have quantities available above our internal needs and I would give them later information after we were able to take stock of our local position. A survey made by the Agricultural Department and, to some extent, by the Agricultural Bank at the end of September showed that it appeared that hay crops were short and yields likely to be light in the hay-growing districts. It was expected, however, that normal market requirements of between 30,000 and 35,000 tons would be obtained by merchants operating outside the normal districts. The amount of hay cut for use on farms was likely to be below normal, more particularly in the eastern and southern districts.

At the conference of Premiers held in the first week of October, statements were made to the effect that parts of Victoria and South Australia were suffering from a drought far worse than the 1914 drought and an indication of its severity may be gauged from the fact that Victoria anticipates a grain harvest of about 5,000,000 bushels which will mean a delivery of 1,000,000 to the Board, whereas the normal pre-war yield was about 35,000,000 bushels per annum. The intensity of the drought in South Australia has forced the Government of that State to take powers of acquisition of any crops likely to be suitable for hay.

All Premiers were seeking information as to Western Australia's ability to supply any quantities. It was my view that the first duty to Western Australia was to safeguard our own requirements and, although anxious to help others in distress, I considered it would be very unwise to prejudice our own position by permitting freedom of action in regard to sales from this State to other States. I therefore caused the following telegram to be sent from Canberra on the 6th October to the Department of Agriculture and to the Agricultural Bank:—

Anxious Western Australia endeavour to assist drought position Eastern States by provision of chaff or baled hay on following basis:—

- (1) local needs to be safeguarded;
- (2) Commonwealth guarantees to lift any surplus not delivered at the end of September next;
- (3) any undelivered surplus not to be sold on local market without our permission;
- (4) contracts for purchase at existing rates to be arranged by usual merchants;
- (5) shipping 2,000 tons monthly to Victoria desired to commence as soon as possible;
- (6) above proposals apply to maximum 24,000 tons.

Making further enquiries regarding prices and labour safeguards in interests of producers and consumers our State.

I discussed fully with appropriate Commonwealth officers the importance of the price factor on a comparison with the value of a crop for grain and for which some payment would normally be expected about February next. Farmers in this State would be anxious to help meet the distressful conditions in other States but could not be expected to suffer loss in regard to price equivalents.

Under direction of the Under Secretary for Agriculture, officers of the Agricultural Department, pending finality of arrangements, have endeavoured to stimulate the cutting of suitable crops, as we had the assurance that the Commonwealth would, in general, agree to the suggestions made to the Commonwealth Director of Agriculture at Canberra.

The position of farmers in this State is that last year 262,000 tons were cut for farmers' own use, and the estimate from their own returns for this year is that 250,000 tons will be cut. The commercial need for this State varies from 30,000 to 35,000 tons, most of which is ultimately sold

as chaff. To meet our own commercial requirements and Eastern States' immediate needs, therefore, would require about 60,000 tons to be cut in Western Australia—that is, above the quantities needed by the farmers on their farms.

One limit imposed is that there are only 12 large chaff-cutters in this State and these are owned and controlled by chaff merchants. They have a capacity of approximately 4,000 tons each cutter per annum. It is obvious, therefore, that no more than 15,000 tons will be available for shipment to the Eastern States as chaff, and the balance of the hay to be available for the East would have to be sold as baled hay.

The Commonwealth Government was anxious that as much as possible of the business should be conducted through normal trade channels because all States have their representatives in the trade who are experienced and who also have interstate agents. They desired also that the Prices Branch should control the prices to be paid to the farmer and all intervening costs until the maximum wholesale market was reached.

A conference of all merchants was held in the Department of Agriculture yesterday, when the position was verified that there are 12 large chaff-cutters in the State, normally in use within 70 miles of Perth, and that balers capable of turning out 3-wire bales were limited. Farmers owning plants and prepared to cut on contract are being asked to get in touch with merchants. It is quite understandable that using the normal trade channels will facilitate the business because merchants know the trade, have their agents in country districts, and, in addition, have control of almost all the chaff-cutting potential. They have agents in other States through whom other States are operating and whose services the Commonwealth is enlisting. In addition, the merchants are arranging their own finance.

At the conference yesterday, the merchants requested clarification of some vital points; for example, would the Commonwealth purchase any surplus of hay originally cut for export as at September next, and if so, would it be unloaded on to the markets in this State? The answer to that is that it has been arranged that any surplus at that date will be taken over by the Commonwealth and it will be marketed on the advice and under the control of the State Department of Agriculture.

Merchants wanted certain guarantees regarding labour. I may here interpolate something that cannot be printed in the Press. Last Saturday morning orders were received by the manpower authorities and others concerned that all Army personnel were to be withdrawn from agricultural work. The position thus became so desperate in connection with rural interests that I contacted the Prime Minister immediately and I have his assurance that not only will our request be met but our interests generally will be safeguarded.

Members: Hear, hear!

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Because of action taken in conjunction with the manpower authorities and by personal contact with the Prime Minister during the week-end, the manpower position which did appear desperate a few days ago has to some extent been eased. The agents further sought some extra compensation to cover the cost of transference of heavy machines to other districts, consequent added labour and cartage costs, and extra freights involved on hay or chaff being treated at more distant centres. Most of the hay for export will be cut well outside the normal 70 mile zone, and, in fact, some of it may have to come from 200 miles distant.

The price has been fixed by the Prices Branch for wheaten hay f.a.q. at £4 per ton in the stook and oaten hay 10s. per ton less in the stook, price in the stack being 10s. above that figure in both cases. I have the segregation of costs for all services which brings the maximum wholesale price to £9 per ton f.o.r. ports. In the case of baled hay, the tentative price f.o.r. ports will be £7 5s. per ton. Farmers with a prospect of cutting hay are likely to be contacted by representatives of the merchants on the basis of their f.a.q. wheaten hay realising £4 10s. per ton in the stack and oaten hay £4 per ton in the stack. That perhaps is the most vital part of this statement as all members will have had requests in this connection and I understand Federal members have also been contacted.

To summarise the position and as an outcome of the conference, it may be confidently stated that our own State needs will be safeguarded and all the predictable difficulties have been anticipated. The merchants have agreed to advise the Department of Agriculture today of all contracts made for chaff

and hay up to date, and they will furnish weekly returns of contracts and stocks. All shipping freight available will be notified to them by the Department of Agriculture. Merchants will arrange between themselves who will take up the available freight. The trade will be conducted between Eastern States merchants and the merchants in this State, but no report will be permitted without a permit of authority from the Department of Agriculture. The guaranteed purchase by the Commonwealth of the surplus hay on hand at the 30th September next will be contingent on merchants meeting the above requirements and on written contracts being presented to the Department of Agriculture.

It may be said that we are fortunate indeed, in spite of serious conditions obtaining in parts of our State due to impending feed and water shortages, that we are not so seriously circumstanced as are farmers and others in the Eastern States. According to two Premiers, the position is almost desperate. There is no agistment in sight and rain may be months away. Efforts have been made by the Government in this State to safeguard our internal needs by ensuring an appropriate price and manpower being available, and at the same time to help as much as possible to alleviate the serious circumstances obtaining in our sister-States.

FENCING.

As to Supplies of Galvanised Wire.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Can 12-gauge or 14-gauge galvanised wire be procured in Western Australia? If so, where?

(2) If it cannot be procured now, is it a fact that none has been available in this State for a long time?

(3) Will he take steps to obtain supplies of this wire from the Eastern States or elsewhere where it is procurable?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) Yes.

(3) Supplies are not available, at the present time, from the Eastern States or from overseas.

COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES.

As to Drought Relief Provision.

Mr. WATTS (without notice) asked the Minister for Agriculture: In view of the serious water shortage in country districts will he make a statement—

(a) as to the situation likely to arise in regard to livestock; and, (b) as to the possibility of Western Australia sharing in the funds being made available by Commonwealth and State action for the relief of drought stricken farmers?

The MINISTER replied: A conference was convened and held today in the office of the Department of Agriculture at which 19 representatives attended. These were representatives from the districts affected, the Associated Banks, the stock merchants, the Agricultural Bank and of others vitally concerned. The position is very serious. The railway dams, which form the normal source of supply for many stock in an average season, will this year contain insufficient supplies to meet the demands of the railways. It is anticipated that tens of thousands of stock—perhaps the number will be more in the vicinity of over 100,000 head—will not be able to be held where there is feed and they will have to be sold because of the water shortage. We have made arrangements for the necessary manpower to be available to treat the stock at the abattoirs and have arranged with the Commonwealth Government to make an announcement through the Press regarding the position of mutton types of sheep and canning types of sheep which would ordinarily be subject to market price because of forced sales.

I think the best answer to the hon. member's question on that point is that the Government will have a public statement prepared and released to the Press in the next day or two. Regarding the second point he raises, the arrangement made between the Premiers of the other States and the Commonwealth Government regarding money being made available for drought relief is that in two States the Commonwealth is to provide £ for £ to farmers who are suffering from the effects of drought with respect to their growing crops. There was no arrangement made to cover the position of livestock losses in any State. That aspect was raised by Western Australia through the Premier, and Western Australia is to have its posi-

tion reviewed at a later stage if the position warrants it.

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS [4.46] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is somewhat similar to that originally presented to the House in 1942. It makes provision for the granting of relief in certain circumstances to mortgagees with limited incomes. It will be remembered that year after year complaints have been ventilated in this House when Bills for the continuance of the Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act have been introduced. The reasons given by members were perfectly valid to the extent that many people affected by the legislation of 1931 are seriously placed in that they cannot recall their capital, which was invested in mortgages and was intended to provide for their old age in the capital sum invested. Most of these amounts are small and are insufficient interest-earning investments to maintain those concerned in their advanced years and they confidently expected, prior to the enactment of the Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act, to recover their money from the mortgagors and to live on the capital.

Many cases have come under my notice and I am sure many members have had similar representations made to them—some of them have been almost sad cases—where, although approaches have been made to the court, no order has been made because interest payments have been kept up to date. The Bill, therefore, provides that any mortgagee may take advantage of the legislation, should it be passed, if he is not in receipt of a net income exceeding £5 per week or if his total assets, including the property the subject of a mortgage, do not exceed £2,500. One of the difficulties in the way of indigent mortgagees—and there are many indigent mortgagees—in approaching the court is the anticipation of costly court fees. I mentioned in this Chamber two years ago that it had come under my notice that from £20 to £30 was the amount charged in connection with such applications, and that the particular applicant-mortgagee I had in view even then did not have his case approved by the court; so that in an endeavour firstly to remove from those people the hard-

ship that the legislation imposes, and secondly in removing that hardship to avoid involving them in costly fees, this Bill has been drafted. The approach made possible by the Bill is by affidavit to the Commissioner of Titles. The Commissioner of Titles, being a lawyer, will not only be able to assess the facts as set out, but having during the whole course of his public relations and service dealt in the main with land transactions, he is a particularly appropriate person before whom such cases may be heard.

The Bill provides also that the mortgagor may state his case. Accordingly, when the matter comes up before the Commissioner of Titles for consideration, he can hear both sides and will be able to assess the facts and deliver his judgment accordingly. As was the case on the last occasion when I endeavoured to cover the contingency, a very serious contingency, of the availability of money if the court or the Commissioner of Titles grants the application of the mortgagee, I telegraphed to the Commonwealth Treasurer an outline of what the Government intended to do, and I asked whether any restrictions would be imposed on renewal of mortgages or the taking-up of the amount by some other person. Mr. Chifley sent me two telegrams, of which the second one reads—

With further reference your telegram eighteenth regarding legislation liberalising mortgagees rights desire advise no conflicting Commonwealth legislation or objections on part of the Commonwealth.

So that way is clear, and I have also consulted the local manager of the Commonwealth Bank and the manager of one of the Associated Banks and find that they anticipate no difficulty in meeting applications for the funds that may be required. Such is a brief outline of the Bill, which has been designed to ease the position of serious hardship of very many people who come within the scope of existing legislation. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Thorn, debate adjourned.

BILL—LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (POSTPONEMENT OF ELECTION).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE [4.53] in moving the second reading said: This is

a Bill received from another place, where it has been agreed to already. It concerns the Legislative Council only and not this House particularly. I remember in 1941, when the war situation was looking fairly difficult, it was necessary to postpone the Upper House elections, and similarly in 1942. The elections were postponed, therefore, for two years. Members of the Council who were to have gone out in 1942 did not go out until 1944, owing to the postponement. To bring them into line with the constitutionally-changed elections, it is necessary to bring down this Bill in 1944, because in 1942 those members who should have then gone out had their elections postponed until 1945.

The present Bill provides for the postponement of elections due in 1946 until 1948, which will bring the whole of the elections back into their old rotation. In 1950 we shall be back to where we stood when we first postponed elections in 1941. Now the difference between 1944 and 1950, six years, will bring the elections back into their old order. This Bill will achieve that purpose, and I feel that it is necessary. It will not differentiate between any of the members or as regards the length of time they remain in the House owing to postponements made in 1941 and 1942. They will all be brought on to one basis. Consequently there cannot be any complaints. In fact, members of the Council will be treated as we here have been treated. Therefore I consider there should be no objection to the Bill. It only brings back the members constitutionally to where they would have been if there had been no war and no postponements. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Seward, debate adjourned.

BILL—BUILDERS' REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS [4.58] in moving the second reading said: This Bill aims to amend the Builders Registration Act in three particulars, the main one being to give the workers employed in the building trades industry a representative upon the board now operating under the Act. The Act itself was passed by Parliament in 1939. Under it the board is appointed, and it consists of representatives of

the Royal Institute of Architects, the Master Builders' Association and the West Australian Builders' Guild, together with the Principal Architect, who is chairman of the board. The present members of the board are Messrs. Clare, Brine, Murray and Winning. The main duty which the board has to discharge is that of determining the course of training practices and otherwise which persons shall undergo in an endeavour to qualify to become registered builders under the Act. The board also prescribes and conducts the examinations. The Act operates only within the metropolitan area, and applies only to buildings of which the value is greater than £400. During the time the Act has been in operation, 458 persons have succeeded in obtaining registration as builders and contractors under its provisions.

Mr. Doney: You said the Bill applied only to the metropolitan district. Is not registration required in country districts also?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. Registration under this Act is only necessary in the metropolitan area. The main amendment is, as I have said, to give the workers in the industry a representative on the board. It is being increasingly recognised that workers in industry are entitled to a voice in the general management and control of the industry in which they are employed. I think there is even more justification for that principle to be applied to this legislation than to most other legislation of a similar kind. This legislation gives to a board the power to determine who shall become registered builders and contractors within the metropolitan area. The men most likely to be seeking registration from time to time are the rank and file building tradesmen who, by the exercise of skill, initiative and ambition, seek to become builders and contractors on their own account, as against continuing in the industry as tradesmen only.

There always is a suspicion in every community, where a profession is closely guarded, as this building and contracting profession is under this legislation, that a tendency develops to make the profession a fairly close preserve, with the result that it is difficult for those not already admitted to the charmed circle to obtain entrance to it. Consequently, it seems to be desirable that a representative of the tradesmen and workers in the industry should be a member

of the board, in order that he might use his judgment, knowledge and ability to prevent any tendency to make it difficult, if not impossible, for men to be registered in the metropolitan district as builders and contractors under the Act. Because, therefore, of the general desirability of the principle of giving workers in industry representation on a board of this description and because of the further desirability of ensuring that those who wish to be registered under the Act shall have a representative on the board who would perhaps be more sympathetic than those who have been on it for so long, I recommend this particular amendment to the kindly judgment and acceptance of the members of this House.

The only other amendment in the Bill concerns a change in the title of the Architects' Association. Since the Act was passed, two groups of architects have combined into one group and have taken unto themselves a new title altogether. This makes it necessary, in order to put this matter on an entirely legal basis, to amend the Act accordingly. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Shearn, debate adjourned.

BILL—RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 12th October.

MR. PERKINS (York) [5.5]: Very wide interest is being taken in this Bill to alter the constitution of the Agricultural Bank. In the comprehensive speech delivered by the Minister for Lands in introducing the Bill, he made it clear that a large number of the original clients of the Agricultural Bank had found that, as their farming activities developed and their financial affairs became more satisfactory, it was necessary and desirable for them to have greater banking facilities than the Agricultural Bank, as then constituted, was able to afford them. For instance, the associated banks were able to provide those persons with cheque paying facilities; this the Agricultural Bank was unable to do. Other factors influenced the change as well. The trading banks, as we know, were able to provide many other facilities for their clients, and this Bill is designed to enable the Agricultural Bank to give its clients all the

facilities which are now provided by the associated banks, and not only its present clients but also other people engaged in various industries. I have found in talking over this Bill with various persons that a great many had hoped that opportunity would be taken by the Minister to change the general administrative system of the Agricultural Bank. Much will depend, of course, upon the kind of administration which the new institution will set up.

On looking through the Bill, however, a suspicion does arise in one's mind that the old system will be continued in the future to a very large degree. One of the principal faults—a fault inherent in our Agricultural Bank—has been the extent of the control which the Bank has exercised over its clients. I do not desire in any way to under-estimate the difficulties faced by the Bank throughout the long period of its existence. Many of its clients had but slender financial resources and but little experience of agriculture before settling on the land in this State; and, undoubtedly, had it not been for the help given them by the Agricultural Bank in the early stages, the agricultural development of the State would have been much slower. Nevertheless, in my opinion, a limit should be put to the control exercised by the Bank. I am rather afraid that in the past the Bank's administration has been responsible for sapping the initiative of many of its clients. Had the policy been adopted of making funds available to its clients and telling them that it was their responsibility to conduct their farms, better results might have been achieved and the close supervision exercised by the Bank could have been avoided. That is something which is now past.

The number of the Agricultural Bank clients is materially reduced. The proposals in the Bill which provide for the taking over of the unsecured portion of the debt—if I may use that term; I think members will understand what I am driving at—should leave the clients in a position, with financial assistance, to carry on for whatever period the funds may be available. The client should be free to use his own judgment as to how the money is expended; he should not be directed in that respect by a bank inspector. If such a policy is not adopted, then I believe the bank's clients will have no chance of developing the initiative which

is absolutely essential, in my opinion, to successful farming in this or in any other State of the Commonwealth.

The Minister for Lands: This Bill is designed for that very purpose.

Mr. PERKINS: I think I made it clear that under the Bill it will be possible to do that. However, we cannot glean from the terms of the Bill what the administration will be; but if the Government, in setting up the controlling authority, bears that in mind I believe a very big service will be rendered by the Government as well to the clients of the Agricultural Bank as to the State. Coming to the other difficulties attached to the change-over to a trading bank, this is a subject upon which I speak with some diffidence, because I frankly admit that I know little about the technical side of banking. One point, however, stands out. The bank will be dealing with new activities and it will be necessary to secure a staff which is conversant with the technical side of banking. I do not quite know how this difficulty will be overcome. The Minister gave us very little information on this phase, which is an extremely important one if the industrial side of the bank is to be a success.

I understand that of the present staff of the Agricultural Bank only a small number has had experience of the industrial side of banking. I point out that few of the staff should be surplus staff because, with the increasing activities of the bank, there could be a great expansion of the institution. Several people have approached me and asked whether it is right for the State to be intervening in this matter, when the Commonwealth was providing the service through the Mortgage Bank, which is a branch of the Commonwealth Bank. I have tried to point out to those people—and I think the subject should be mentioned in this House—that the two activities are quite distinct. This bank was designed to fulfil a need which the Mortgage Bank does not look like fulfilling, as far as one can glean from its activities. So far, it seems to be of advantage only to people in a very sound financial position. It certainly cannot be of much assistance to the people who have been carried on by the Agricultural Bank in Western Australia in recent times. The activities are quite different.

The Minister for Lands: Do you know of any new clients for the mortgage bank?

Mr. PERKINS: I do not know of any. If anyone who is conversant with the farming industry in this State made inquiries as to the way in which a mortgage bank could be operated, he would realise that only those who are in a very secure financial position can take advantage of the facilities provided under that Act. In fact, some people try to link the subject with the question of the nationalisation of banking. I do not know that that enters into the discussion on this Bill because, no matter what we think about the nationalisation of banking, it is something that can only be controlled in the Federal sphere. My own opinion on this question is that many people who talk so glibly about the nationalisation of banking have not studied the subject very deeply. On questioning them more closely as to their ideas on the subject, I find that their real objective is the national control of banking as distinct from the nationalisation of banking. They are two widely different matters.

Most of these people would say that, as far as the machinery side of banking is concerned, the private banks have given a very good service. That is something about which I do not think there can be much doubt. But the objection is raised, and I quite agree with it, that there is not room in Australia for two financial policies at one and the same moment. We cannot have the private banks running one financial policy and the central bank running another. Most people are quite agreed now to allow the central bank to decide what shall be the general banking policy for Australia, and to maintain that general control over the banking system, but to leave the machinery end of it to those people who are best fitted to deal with it, whether it be through State trading banks or private banks. The essential thing, so far as the client is concerned, is to see that a satisfactory service is given. The bank proposed under this Bill will be one run in competition with the private banks in this State.

The Minister for Lands: It will give a better service.

Mr. PERKINS: If the new bank is able to give better service than the associated banks do now, it will be able to pick up a lot of business both in the farming areas and in

the city. If, on the other hand, the service it gives is inferior to that given by the private banks, then this Bill will not be the means of restoring the fortunes of the State institution. I am going to support the second reading, but the Bill contains many clauses with which I do not agree. It contains clauses dealing with the administration of the old Agricultural Bank which many of us who live in the rural areas saw fit to criticise severely from time to time. I hope that some of the amendments which have been put on the notice paper will be carried at the Committee stage. I support the second reading, but shall endeavour to have those obnoxious clauses amended.

On motion by Hon. N. Keenan, debate adjourned.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 10th October.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [5.20]: The first problem that those members of this House who are desirous of inquiring into the merits or demerits of this Bill must address themselves to is the line of approach of such an inquiry. If a member is a believer in and a supporter of the bicameral system of Parliamentary government he will address himself to the fundamentals of the Bill now before the House from that point of view. That is to say, whilst he would preserve in the highest degree the right of this Chamber, as the House elected on the more popular franchise, to have its considered opinion given effect to, yet at the same time he would see to it that the power of the second Chamber to restrain hasty and unconsidered legislation is not endangered—least of all abolished, because in that case what earthly reason would there be for a second Chamber, or what justification for its existence?

Mr. Rodoreda: There is no justification.

Hon. N. KEENAN: In a moment I will deal with the view of the member for Roebourne. But I ask the question, and I am speaking as one who is a profound believer in the bicameral system: Of what use would it be to have a second Chamber if it had no power whatever to restrain legislation of a hasty or ill-considered character?

The Minister for Mines: It has too much power.

Hon. N. KEENAN: At present it is very inadvisable for those who hold that opinion to voice it because, if ever the actions of the second Chambers, in those States of Australia which vest their second Chambers with full constitutional powers, stood out clearly it was on the occasion when they alone saved Australia from the tragedy of having imposed on it legislation which the majority of electors of Australia have shown they do not want.

The Minister for Mines: They are not as intelligent as Western Australia.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Of course, the Minister for Mines can shut his eyes to the fact that a majority of 344,000 people in Australia refused to sanction the Bill submitted to them.

The Minister for Mines interjected.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I cannot discuss that with the Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister for Mines must keep order.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Above all things I desire to obey the rules of debate. I turn to the position of a member, such as the member for Roebourne, who has an idea and a belief founded, no doubt, on very sincere grounds, that Parliament would be most desirable if it consisted of only a single Chamber, with all the risks which are attendant on a single Chamber. Of course, any member holding the views that the member for Roebourne obviously holds will welcome this Bill as a very sure and certain step towards that end. I admit, as I have previously stated, that I am a supporter of and a believer in the bicameral system of Parliamentary government. So I view the comparison that is attempted to be made between the Lords and Commons of England, and the two Houses under our Constitution as wholly and entirely misleading and false. The House of Lords, since the end of the nineteenth century, has been a mere nominee Chamber, coupled with the incubus, I admit, of hereditary succession. But whatever Government has been in power has had the right to swamp the House of Lords with new creations. The Crown admits the right of such a Government to create as many Lords as it requires.

In 1911, the very year referred to by the Minister, Mr. Asquith, the then Prime Minister at Westminster, obtained a letter from the King admitting that right, and stating

that he was prepared to create as many peers as Mr. Asquith required to carry through the House of Lords the legislation which Mr. Asquith's Government brought forward. Mr. Asquith showed that letter to Lord Londonderry, who at that time was the Leader of the House of Lords, and the head of the whole Conservative Party in the House of Lords. When he saw the letter, he recognised that the case was utterly hopeless, that he could not fight it, and he admitted it, and made an unconditional surrender. So, there is nothing at all comparable with what is a constitutional question here, because the position in England was that the King by his letter intimated to the House of Lords that he undertook, in order to carry out Mr. Asquith's wishes, to create as many peers as were necessary to overcome the opposition in the House of Lords. So, what happened in 1911 in the United Kingdom has no possible bearing on or reference to what is proposed to take place here today.

Mr. Triat: We will have to get a letter from the King.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the member for Mt. Magnet would wait for a moment, he would understand why the King cannot enter into the question here in that nice way. Under our Constitution, which is a written one, the Upper House, as well as this one, is an elected House although, of course, the franchise is different. So the Government of the day is not in a position to swamp the Upper House with nominees in order to get any particular piece of legislation passed. It must convert the electors who elected the members of the Upper House. That is the only way in which it can overcome that difficulty which, I admit, on some occasions is wholly unjustifiable, but that, under our Constitution, is the present position. The Government of the day, unlike Mr. Asquith, cannot go to the local representative of the King and say, "We want 40, or whatever the number may be, nominations to swamp the Upper House," because the Upper House is a constitutional entity and has a right to exercise its constitutional powers, and no Government can do more to overcome that except to convert the electors who elected those members.

A clear illustration of that can be found by the action of the second Chamber of the Tasmanian Parliament. It twice rejected a Bill brought forward for the purpose of

transferring to the Commonwealth Parliament certain powers then enjoyed by the Tasmanian State Parliament. Had that Upper House, the second Chamber in Tasmania, been compelled to pass a Bill presented to it for the third time in the third session spread over a certain period, then the Government of Tasmania would have had its way and the Bill would have become law. But that did not happen because the Upper House in Tasmania, the same as the Upper House in this State, is an elected House. I am drawing the attention of the House to this matter because in the particular case I am citing the Commonwealth Parliament referred a Bill to the people, not to a limited number of electors who elect the representatives in the Upper House but to all the electors included in the term "adult franchise," and the Bill so submitted was decisively rejected in Tasmania. I must be conceded, I admit, that in order to obtain a working form of Constitution the Second Chamber must be elected on a broad liberal franchise so that as far as possible disputes between the two Houses may be avoided. But disputes must occur unless the Second Chamber is a mere rubber-stamp. So the all-important question to be determined is that of providing some solution when such clashes do occur.

The solution proposed in the Bill now before us is simplicity itself. It proposes that in the case of money Bills, as defined in the Bill before us, the Upper House is to be allowed one month in which to peruse and swallow the Bill holus-bolus without amendment. If it does not do so in the month then, on the certificate of the Speaker the Bill can be sent forward to the Governor and his assent asked for, and on that assent being granted, the Bill will become law. It would be infinitely more honest to provide that once money Bills have passed this Chamber, they should be sent direct to the Governor with a request for his assent, and, on the assent being given, should be proclaimed as law, instead of going through the wretched farce provided for in this Bill which will produce precisely the same result. In common with the Leader of the Opposition I hold the view that money Bills are exclusively the right and privilege of this Chamber, and therefore if we had had a simple proposition such as I have outlined instead of this ridiculous farce appearing

in the Bill it would have received my support. But, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, the position in the future may be very different from and entirely beyond what we can foresee. So until we can realise what is really going to be the state of affairs, it is impossible to act without acting prematurely and without acting rashly.

As regards Bills other than money Bills—and strange to say, one other exception, a Bill to extend the term of the life of Parliament beyond three years—it is provided that if the Legislative Council on the third presentation of any such Bill in the third session over a period of two years does not pass it without amendment, that is to swallow the measure entirely, lock, stock and barrel, then again, on the certificate of the Speaker, the Bill may be sent to the Governor with a request for his assent and, on the assent being given, may become law.

On looking at the Bill members will observe that it is so drawn that a proposed law can become an actual law without the electors having a single opportunity of any sort or description to express their views upon it. In fact, had this provision been the law in Tasmania, then the measure to which I have referred, which was a matter of great importance to all the people of Tasmania might have become law with little more than one-third of the electors of Tasmania in support of it. This is a possibility and even a probability of what would happen if this Bill became law. Indeed, it would be competent for this House of its own volition to abolish the second Chamber without the electors of the State having an atom of say in the matter. I have no doubt that the Minister, who introduced the Bill and who extolled Mr. Theodore on having insulted the electors of Queensland and, against their expressed will, having abolished the second Chamber in the Parliament of Queensland, would welcome a like happening in Western Australia.

The Minister for Justice: The Opposition had an opportunity to reinstate the Upper House but did not do so.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Apparently the whole creed of the Minister is, "You can do things without bothering about what the electors think of them."

The Minister for Justice: But the electors of Queensland have approved of it.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If the hon. gentleman wants to know why they approved of it, I point out that the Government of Queensland has been a minority Government for years. In Queensland there is a number of small electorates in which its members are returned, and the Government exists by flouting every law of democracy. However, we are not discussing the wrongs or rights of Queensland.

I have said in the course of my remarks that no comparison lies between the relations of the House of Lords and the House of Commons and the relations of our two Houses under our written Constitution. Yet, although there is no comparison whatever between those two sets of circumstances this is the only comparison that the Minister attempted to draw. And for a very good reason, too. No other comparison exists. Of all the network of political institutions to be found in the widespread British Commonwealth of Nations, the Minister has not been able to cite one single instance that would justify the proposals in this Bill. Does not that appeal to members? Does not that suggest that the Minister is taking a huge jump into an utter state of darkness and does not know what on earth will happen as a result of where he lands?

The Minister for Justice: I am proposing exactly what has been done in England.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will have the right of reply.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Surely the Minister's memory will enable him to recall that he did draw what he thought was a comparison between the relations of the House of Lords and the House of Commons and the relations of this House and another place under our written Constitution which was wholly and entirely impossible, and except for that, out of all the network of constitutional arrangements in every part of the widespread British Empire—and they are multitudinous—he could not find a single one to cite as a precedent for the proposals now submitted to the House. I admit it does not necessarily follow that the Minister was wrong in not citing a precedent because here, again, as the Leader of the Opposition wisely remarked the other day, someone at some time or other has to set a precedent. But it does mean that any such departure warrants very grave thought.

There is a matter that makes this Bill in part absolutely tragic and to which the Minister has given no thought whatever. This lies in the fact that we have recently passed and sent it to another place a measure which, if adopted by another place, will mean that elections for the Legislative Council in future will be held under manhood franchise. Suppose an election took place after the passing of the measure, the Legislative Council will speak as the mouthpiece of 274,856 electors and not even one less than that number. At the same time this House of Assembly will speak as the mouthpiece of 274,856 electors and no more, not even one more. What possible reason can be suggested why the Legislative Council, with an authority of the same potency as that enjoyed by this House, should submit to a position of absolute inferiority—humiliating inferiority—by being permitted to take only a casual and ineffective glance at intended legislation?

Is it not well on the cards that another place, having exactly the same authority as this place has, should follow our example and perhaps go further? I could envisage the possibility in those circumstances of another place demanding an amendment of the Constitution running along these lines, that if a Bill is passed there and sent here and not accepted here after a third presentation in the third session and over a period of two years, then, on the certificate of the President, it might be submitted to the Governor and, on his assent being received, may become law.

Mr. North: The Council might abolish this House.

Hon. N. KEENAN: This wild constitutional turmoil that the Minister is quite prepared to create without gauging the dangerous effects of the forces he is going to liberate—a struggle between two equal bodies, a struggle therefore that has no possible outcome except the destruction of one or the other—all this he is prepared to start in a careless heart-free manner if we will only join him. There is no place in the wide world where such conditions exist and where there is not political turmoil, no part of the world with two Chambers having equal authority, and that is because beyond doubt they would be attempting to determine which one would down the other.

Mr. W. Hegney: Would not the same people who elect the other House elect the Assembly?

Hon. N. KEENAN: What the result of this legislation will be no one could possibly tell, even in his wildest moments of imagination. All that does not mean that an amendment of the Constitution designed to iron out the difference of opinion that must and will arise in future is not a matter that requires attention, and requires immediate attention at that. I can myself well conceive a measure which might lead to that desirable end. I might even draw attention to a Bill which was brought forward in the last Parliament by the former member for East Perth, which possessed points that might have been conducive to that end. I do not despair of the capacity of this House, as constituted today, to bring forward a measure of that character. But only consequences almost inconceivable can follow the mere wrecking of the Constitution, which is all that apparently the Minister conceives as being possible on his part.

The Minister for Lands: You are suffering from a terrible imagination now.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not desire to labour the matter by repeating any arguments already submitted. I hope I have made it clear that in certain eventualities, which it is possible may take place, this is the opening chapter of the gravest political discord that the British world has ever seen. If events take the form that the Minister so lightly contemplates that political turmoil must eventuate. What I want is that there should be a workable Constitution framed under which both Houses, each acting within its own sphere, can get together and act together in harmony. I want to see this Assembly Chamber, in which I have passed the whole of my political career, fill the role of ruling Chamber within the Constitution beyond any possible challenge. I want to see this Chamber enjoy the right to have its considered opinion carried into effect. I want to see every step taken that can be taken to produce ordinary constitutional change and constitutional evolution, but I cannot for a moment persuade myself that this two-pronged drive against the Upper House, which is all the Minister has produced, can satisfy any of those wants, or can do anything else but produce that state of social trouble and enmity which we all wish to avoid.

On motion by the Minister for Lands, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1944-45.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 12th October on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates, Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council £2,265:

MR. TRIAT [5.40]: I have gone through the Estimates and do not look upon them as suitable at this stage. I do not think the present time is one where we should attempt to balance the Budget or produce a surplus, such as is attempted to be shown by the Estimates. When the war is over and peace returns each State in the Commonwealth will be practically in conflict with the others in the endeavour to obtain the benefits which have accrued to the States during wartime. I fail to see that Western Australia will be in any good position at all under the new order, so far as new developments or new concerns or new progress are concerned. When we travel round the other States we find that an enormous expenditure has been incurred, admittedly by the Commonwealth Government, in opening up different classes of industry, in putting big factories into operation, and in many instances in preparing those factories for the time when the new order comes about. All that we have received in Western Australia of any consequence or of any moment, so far as I can see, is a power alcohol plant in the South-West, in the region of Collie. No doubt that will be of great advantage to Western Australia in the years to come, when the wheat market falls flat and the price of wheat ranges from 1s. 8d. to 1s. 10d. per bushel.

Mr. Rodoreda: Are you referring to that as part of the new order?

Mr. TRIAT: In those days a power alcohol plant will be of some consequence to Western Australia, but apart from that we have little else to boast of. It behoves the State Government to do something of itself, to make provision for something against the time when the war comes to an end. Money will not be prevalent at the end of the war or plentiful, but today there is plenty of it available. Any State that balances its budget today will doubtless be expected to do so again in subsequent years. For our

money we depend upon the Loan Council and what the Commonwealth Government gives us. We may have a continuance of uniform taxation or that may come to an end after the war. We may get our quota of money then or we may not get it. The Premier of South Australia (Mr. Playford) has announced that he does not intend to balance his Budget. Indeed, he has budgeted for a deficit of £400,000. South Australia has made as much progress as, if not more progress than, any other State of the Commonwealth, and has become highly industrialised as the result of the war. Notwithstanding that, the Premier of that State has budgeted for a deficit of £400,000 for the financial year 1944-45. The newspaper report of Mr. Playford's Budget Speech states—

Both record revenue and expenditure is expected by the Premier—revenue at £15,661,000 and expenditure at £16,061,000. He pointed out, however, that he assumed that the revenue would be at about the same level as last year, but factors could easily arise which would make the estimate of revenue too high.

Continuing the newspaper report states—

The deficit of £400,000 was arrived at after allowing for £250,000 deferred payment from the Grants Commission and an advance of £542,000 to be deducted from future grants. This meant that, strictly speaking revenues must fail to meet expenditure by £1,200,000.

Boiled down, the difference between the revenue and expenditure in South Australia is £1,250,000. I do not expect the Premier of this State to budget for such a deficit, but I do not believe we are in a position to show a surplus when there are so many things that require to be done in Western Australia, and when there is money that could be utilised with advantage to our people. In the back country it is deplorable to see the condition into which Government buildings have fallen. That is the position in my electorate as well as in other country electorates, but does not seem to apply to the metropolitan area. In most localities Government buildings have not been attended to for years; they have not been painted and fences have not been repaired since the war started. Schools are in a deplorable condition. The furniture and the desks have been temporarily repaired by local tradesmen but are still in a bad state. Many thousands of pounds could be expended in that direction as well as in the

establishment of industrial concerns in the country areas.

The Premier: I should like to know where we could get the necessary labour for all those things.

Mr. TRIAT: Labour is available.

The Premier: I say it is not.

Mr. TRIAT: Let the Treasurer make the money available, and I will see that what work is required to be done at Leonora is carried out.

The Premier: The money is not available yet.

Mr. TRIAT: I hope we can still get the money. If so, I will see that the labour is made available. Fences are required to be repaired, school lavatories need attention and much painting requires to be done. I am confident that the necessary labour can be made available if the money is forthcoming. I am not referring to the use of busy bees at schools but to the employment of the necessary labour. All our public buildings are in the same state. I am sure that labour would be forthcoming for many of these jobs. Let me take the railways, for instance! Probably I shall be told that once again labour is not available. A lot of people are employed in the railway workshops. I do not know whether all those people are continuously doing a war job. I do know, however, that when some time ago we visited one of the war annexes only during the time we were there was work going on, and when we left it was found that no more shells were being turned out.

The Premier: When was that?

Mr. TRIAT: I do not know how long ago that was, but that is what occurred. I believe that state of affairs lasted for quite a long time, and was especially applicable at night time.

Mr. Thorn: The manpower authorities visited that place with a view to making use of employees elsewhere, but through political influence the men were allowed to remain.

Member: The member for the district may have had something to do with that.

Mr. TRIAT: I do not know. I was referring to the railways. During the hot weather all perishable goods travel to the back country in what are known as louvered vans. These are vans fitted with small louveres to allow the breeze to pass through. In the back country that breeze is hot enough to destroy the perishables that are in

the van, and not only does that occur but the louveres allow the dust to come in and thus contaminate the food supplies. It is impossible to get butter in the summertime in the back country—at all events butter that is not tainted and otherwise affected by the conditions under which it has travelled. Plenty of good butter is made in the South-West, but by the time it reaches the back country it has become rancid or partly melted. The same complaint could be voiced with regard to meat, which reaches its destination gritty from the dust that has entered the van. Foodstuffs that take four days to reach their destination, if in the form of vegetables and other perishables, are found to be useless. It is not to be expected that vans can be equipped with Coolgardie safes and coolers into which to place perishable goods. Appliances like that were all very well in the old days, but in these days why should not a refrigeration plant be provided? Let us have refrigeration plants which will keep goods at an even temperature in all weathers. If such plants were not used in the closer settled areas they could be used for the transport of goods to the more remote parts of the State.

The Premier: If we had plenty of loan money and material!

Mr. TRIAT: Why cannot we get the material? Can we not get it in Western Australia?

The Premier: Did you not hear what the Prime Minister had to say today?

Mr. TRIAT: I had not the opportunity to do so. We in this State have not received much consideration from the Commonwealth Government or from the Commonwealth side. We must, therefore, do things for ourselves. If we have not the material at the moment, why can we not get it? In this State we have all the resources for any material that is required, except oil. Anything that requires to be fabricated we can make for ourselves, but we do not make the effort. Let me instance a point in connection with the East Perth power station, and the use of pulverised coal. A panel was formed some time ago comprising various local men who were experts in connection with the use of coal. That committee sat on three occasions during the last three months. The suggestion was made that certain things should be done in the way of research in connection with Collie coal. A statement was made to me by an important represen-

tative on the panel, a man of high technical standard, to the effect that he could prove that the washing, blending and grading of coal at Collie would save £12,000 a year in freight to the East Perth power house. Nothing, however, has been done in that direction. The gentleman in question said he could prove what he said.

The Premier: It may not be right.

Mr. TRIAT: It is right. Let it be disproved! This gentleman was employed by the Government and made the statement that £12,000 a year could be saved in this way. Yet we have done nothing, not a solitary thing!

The Premier: The research has been conducted for only a little while.

Mr. TRIAT: It was started three months ago.

The Premier: A couple of months ago.

Mr. TRIAT: Well, a couple of months ago, then.

The Premier: You can't rush around getting people—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the Premier kindly keep order? If he does not, I will take action.

Mr. TRIAT: We might not be able to rush around, but that is only one matter. If this were gone into it would probably save £12,000 a year in freight on coal. It would save the transport of rubbish and dross equivalent to £12,000 in freight to the power house. That is an important item. The matter is so important that it should be proceeded with immediately. Quite a lot of people know about it, but unfortunately the man responsible for the position is not very active. The chairman is not lively enough; that is all that is wrong. If I were in position, I would say that he must be active or I would get somebody else to occupy the chair. The engineer of the power house at Geraldton, a week ago today, made the statement that he had tried to get 300 tons of Collie coal for utilisation at his works. He contacted the Coal Commission who said that it could not be given to him, but that he could have 300 tons of Newcastle coal. That statement was made by another responsible man. He could not get 300 tons of local coal but he could get from the Coal Commission 300 tons of Newcastle coal, which would have to be pulled 2,000 miles from the Eastern States. Can anybody tell me that that is right in a State like Western Australia? Can it be said

that we are making progress in the light of experiences such as that?

Mr. Cross: The member for Collie is watching you.

Mr. TRIAT: I do not care who is watching me; I want the House to know these facts. The members of the Coal Commission are good enough to give us Newcastle coal in preference to the Collie coal! That is a wrong state of affairs. We have to look forward to what we are able to produce in Collie. Every ton of coal brought from Newcastle is detrimental and not advantageous to this State, yet that sort of thing is permitted to continue, and I say it is wrong. To get back to the question of refrigeration! This State can produce the goods necessary for making refrigeration cars. I believe that there are in Western Australian engineers capable of building refrigerating boxes and engines and ammonia plants. If we have not got coil pipes we can import them and have the rest fabricated in Western Australia. Whenever we repair engines or rollingstock in Western Australia we put in the same type of bearings as were used 50 years ago.

A train runs into a back country area where the ground temperature is high and something goes wrong. The train pulls up on the track or at a siding, and when the engine is examined it is found that there is a hot box. Then the enginedriver comes along with a piece of oil waste which he uses to cool down the engine. We do not hear of modern roller-bearings being placed in our engines or rollingstock, but just the same old method is adopted of putting in an old brass bearing with a drip of oil placed on it to cool it. If it keeps cool that is all right; if not it is just too bad! We should put the most modern appliances on to our engines and rollingstock. Every time an engine or a railway truck is repaired we should put the most modern bearings in it. These things are procurable. Our enemies have been able to buy them. In fact, it has been necessary for the Allies to put pressure on some countries to prevent them from selling these things to the enemy.

Mr. Rodoreda: We could make them.

Mr. TRIAT: I know we could, but we do not. We do not even buy them. When we repair anything we do it in the same old haphazard manner. I hope the Railway Department will wake up. I have no

time for the way the railways are being run, and have had no time for it for a long while. I regret that I had to support the re-appointment of the Commissioner of Railways for another five years, because during the previous period he held office he showed no promise of doing anything better for the railways than had been done for them before. Turning now to industrial development, I regret the smallness of the vote for this purpose. The amount is only £5,190, and of that £3,454 is for salaries. That leaves for expenditure on development only £1,736. Can anybody tell me that that is right in a State like Western Australia in which so much investigation is needed into so many different matters? We have been told of the developments that it was proposed should take place. There was going to be a cellophane industry, a rayon industry, and an iron and steel industry, and a lot of things were going to be done, yet only £1,700 is available for investigation.

Mr. Cross: What about nylon?

Mr. TRIAT: I do not know anything about that. All I know is that there is only £1,700 available. Have these industries been started?

The Premier: Yes. The plants are coming in.

Mr. TRIAT: If that is the case, it is beautiful. It is regrettable that the State has no greater ambition than to spend £1,700 upon research into matters coming under the control of the Minister for Industrial Development. I am of the opinion that many thousands of pounds could be spent successfully on research at present. I am given to understand that there is a possibility of our iron-ore from the north of Western Australia, the best in any part of Australia—and perhaps in the Southern Hemisphere—being taken to the Eastern States and treated and utilised there. There is no intention of treating it in Western Australia, not the slightest! We are told we cannot do it here because we have not the material. The department was good enough to spend money on the development of the charcoal-iron industry. Whether that will be an economical venture, I do not know.

American research magazines I have read recently inform me that powdered coal can be used to bring down iron-ore. There are advantages in the use of powdered coal as compared with blast furnaces. Powdered

coal does not require continuous working, whereas blast furnaces must continue till they are finished—about five to ten years from the time they start, I understand. Otherwise it is too costly. A blast furnace cannot be started every time one wants to start it. I am given to understand by a prominent man connected with the Government service that our powdered coal is of as high a grade as any coal in Australia. It has a flaky peculiarity which gives it high heating qualities. This is a matter on the investigation of which we should spend money. We should build a furnace to test out whether it is possible to use powdered coal for bringing down iron-ore.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Was not a test made the other day?

Mr. TRIAT: It has been proved that Collie coal can produce good gas. Whether it is economically valuable for that purpose and will be satisfactory, I do not know. I had a look at the plant myself, and I was told by the man in charge of the work that it will produce 33,000 cubic feet of gas from one ton of coal, and the most that Newcastle coal can produce is 15,000 cubic feet. So the output from Collie coal is double the output from Newcastle coal, although admittedly there are no by-products such as coke. Mr. Fox told me he used nothing in the furnace but Collie coal, and everybody who saw it was surprised. Small particles of coal were used that would be no good for an ordinary fire. It produced gas of extraordinary value. In the presence of the Speaker it boiled a kettle of water in eight minutes, which gas from the ordinary mains would have taken 12 minutes to boil. It raised the temperature in gas ovens in five minutes to 600 degrees, and the highest temperature required in an oven is 450 degrees for scones. He turned down the gas 50 per cent. and it still retained a temperature of 450 degrees. I applaud the Minister for Industrial Development for expending money on this research. The Government would be well advised to spend £1,000 on an experiment to see whether iron-ore can be brought down.

Mr. Cross: They could not generate electricity with gas, could they?

Mr. TRIAT: I am not an expert in these matters. Let us avail ourselves of the services of the experts we employ to find these things out. But the money provided is not enough for the inquiries I should like to see

undertaken. At the present time we should not attempt to balance our budget or show a surplus. It is nice for the Premier to be able to say the budget is balanced, but as a result of that procedure we may have to do without some things.

The Premier: We have not refused any reasonable requests.

Mr. TRIAT: I am glad to hear that. Take the North-West of this State! The waters there are teeming with fish. Many people, including the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for the North-West, and others who have lived up there tell me that the sea abounds with fish from Port Gregory northwards almost to Port Hedland. There is an unlimited quantity of the highest-grade edible fish. There is snapper and jewfish, and plenty of small fish such as mullet and sea whiting. Some beautiful whiting have been caught and sold in the Perth markets for 3s. 6d. lb. The sea there teems with fish, but no attempt of any consequence has been made to see whether we can catch it in big quantities and subsequently can or dry any surplus for placing on markets overseas. There will be plenty of opportunity for the sale of canned fish after the war.

Mr. Rodoreda: There is a demand for it in Australia today.

Mr. TRIAT: If we have the right fish and treat it properly we can compete with the world. We have a market in the north of this country for canned and dehydrated foodstuffs. There are 750,000,000 people living north of Australia. They are not all wealthy, but there is a tremendous amount of wealth amongst them, and they would consume all the food we could give them provided it was of the right type. The Government should spend money making an inquiry into the types of food required, and the best type of packing to suit people in islands adjacent to Australia. Some years ago the former member for Kalgoorlie, the late Mr. Texas Green, spoke to me regarding his experiences in China. On one occasion when he went to that country—he was interested in sandalwood—he thought he would try to do some good for the Commonwealth by taking samples of goods such as jams, biscuits, etc., and acting as an agent for the people manufacturing them. However, nobody approached him to take any of the goods, but when he got to China he asked some of the Chinese people why they did not purchase Aus-

tralian goods. One man said, "Your people do not treat us fairly or decently. They are not honourable. I was supplied some time ago with tomato sauce in a bottle with a screw top."

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TRIAT: I was dealing with the position of a trader who endeavoured to sell his tomato sauce in China. As I said, the screw tops, and the contents were exceptionally good. The tomato sauce was of high quality. The Chinaman naturally decided to purchase this particular product, and did so in large quantities. He purchased over £2,000 worth of tomato sauce. When it arrived, instead of being in fluted bottles with screw tops it was packed in beer bottles with sealing wax tops so that it made the tomato sauce of no value to him. A Chinaman pointed this out to Mr. Green, the Federal member for Kalgoorlie, and said that the Australian product was not true to label, and as a result the manufacturer lost a terrific amount of trade. He also pointed out that the Australian trader did not cater for the Chinese tastes. He said that jam was an article not used extensively, but in small quantities, in China. He said that possibly one teaspoonful a week would be taken out of a tin. Now, the Australian tin is of the type that has to be opened with a tinopener and the contents, unless used within a reasonable period, are likely to go bad. The Chinaman pointed out that the American, instead of sending that sort of container to China, sent a press-in lid container so that when the Chinaman decided to have jam he could take out what he required and then reseal the tin, again showing the disadvantages under which the Australian trader was suffering when competing with a country like America.

The last item I wish to remark on is the question of the labelling of goods in China. There, goods are labelled according to the item in the container. If they buy a tin of stuff with a picture of a bird on it they expect to find a bird inside the tin. We send jam there and call it Rosella jam, and the tin has a picture of the rosella bird on the outside and, while it may be apricot or some other kind of jam, the Chinaman thinks that it contains a bird. The State Government would be well advised to spend

a certain amount of money on investigation into the methods of trading in these countries. We have a geographical advantage which is not experienced by any other State in the Commonwealth. We are 2,000 miles closer to that market. China and the adjacent islands are just around the corner of our North-West shores, and they have a population of some 750,000,000 people. That is a trade well worth examining. There is no item of the goods we produce that could not be consumed in China and those other countries if we properly explored the market. America is a long way from there, but we are close.

Mr. Cross: We have to drive out the Japs first.

Mr. TRIAT: We shall do that sooner or later. I am speaking of after the war, but we could sell our goods there now if we had them. After the war many people will not be able to sell their produce. The only market we shall have is the home market unless we are prepared to compete with the other countries and get into oversea markets. Now is the time to discover the likes and dislikes of the people who live in those countries so that we can cater for them and put up the stuff they require in the containers they like. If we do that, the people who produce the fruit, vegetables, meat and other goods in Western Australia will have a market that they will not be able to supply completely. A few thousand pounds would be well spent, even now, in examining the possibilities of these countries after the war. We know that they deal extensively in dried and dehydrated meats and foods. Because of their climatic conditions natural foods, unless refrigerated, rapidly deteriorate. So, meat and fish are dehydrated for them.

We have millions of tons of fish in the waters along our north coast from Port Gregory to Port Hedland. The fish in that area are cold-water fish. Further north we have hot-water fish, and all these fish could be easily exploited. It is not an expensive proposition to dry fish, and the countries north of Australia will provide a market for more than we can produce. Our own people would also reap the advantage if they could buy decent fish at reasonable prices. It is astounding that in Western Australia where there is so much fish we have not been able to buy it at reasonable prices for many years. Whether that is be-

cause of combines or cliques, I do not know, but I do know that snapper has always been an expensive fish, and so has the dhu fish. Even before the war dhu fish was 2s. 9d. and 3s. a pound. Yet, no one has to feed the fish; it is only a matter of catching them.

I can remember going for a trip to Yampi Sound in connection with an industrial arbitration case. On our way north we stopped at Shark Bay for nine hours, and during that period 12 of us caught half a ton of fish. A young man fishing in the bay told me that he supplied fish at £5 per 1,000 lbs. to a contractor. If the contractor failed to call in with his boat to pick up the fish it had to be dumped into the sea. There was no proper transport to bring the fish to the metropolitan area. That destruction was causing a big loss because the contractor had to be paid for the fish, and, as a result, he charged the public for it. I do not know what is going to be done with the 300-ton boats being built here, when the war is over. Perhaps they could be utilised to transport fish from the North to the metropolitan market. If they have no refrigeration space some could be put into them. A boat that could transport 300, or even 200, tons of fish at a time would be an acquisition to Western Australia. There would be no need to be content with only one. I believe that several of these wooden boats have been or are being built. They are slow, but that does not matter much so long as they can get the goods to the market. I hope something will be done to exploit the fish possibilities of the North-West coast.

I wish now to say a few words about Yampi Sound. The Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. may take over portion of Yampi Sound, and if it does it will not treat the iron-ore in Western Australia. That ore will go to Whyalla or to Newcastle and the only advantage we shall get out of it will be from the few pounds in lease rents and the few men employed on the works. Not many men will be breaking out and loading the ore. But, if members look at the geological map they will see that there is adjacent to Yampi Sound an enormous amount of country marked as being possibly coal-bearing country. That is a larger-coal-bearing area than in any other part of Western Australia. There has been no exploitation of those coal resources. I do not know that there has been

any examination of that question. If the coal is there, and that can be ascertained at no great cost—a geological survey would give us the information—it is quite possible that Western Australia could utilise some of the iron-ore at Yampi Sound for the purpose of fabricating iron, and even if we do not go beyond the manufacture of pig-iron there will be a demand for it after the war. There is a big shortage of pig-iron throughout the world, with the exception of Russia which is the only country that has a surplus of good quality iron, today. So I believe the fabrication of iron-ore at Yampi Sound will become an industry for Western Australia.

At present we do not use a great deal of iron and steel in the State. Probably 10,000 or 15,000 tons a year would meet our requirements; I do not think it would be much more than that. Whatever our requirements may be, they certainly could be met from the big iron-ore deposits at Yampi Sound, and if we had a surplus, we could export it to any other country in need of it. I understand that the islands north of Australia, which have been so badly damaged in the war, will require a great quantity of iron and steel when the work of rebuilding is undertaken. Thus it is quite possible there will be a great demand for iron, and it would be a pity to see our iron-ore taken to some other part of the Commonwealth for treatment. Surely we could expend a few hundred thousand pounds to ascertain the possibility of mining coal in connection with the iron-ore at Yampi. We have all the essentials in Western Australia for making good steel, if only we could get the industry started. If what we are told is true it would be possible to manufacture pig-iron for £6 10s. per ton. Other countries are prepared to pay £8 15s. per ton, so why not try to exploit that market?

The iron and steel industry is one that creates many other industries. Consequently, if we are going to look forward to the post-war period with any degree of confidence, we must provide opportunities to employ our people and those others who will be attracted to the State after the war. I think it will be possible to get a large population for the State, but we shall not get it unless we are able to provide work for those people as they arrive. I reiterate that I hope the

Government will give consideration to the matter of spending more money on the research work I have indicated. At Lake Campion we are producing potash, and I believe we can produce all the potash that will be required by the Commonwealth for probably a hundred years to come. It should be possible to overcome the question of cost. Only by trial and error, in most instances, are we able to achieve the object aimed at, and I hope the time is not far distant when we shall be producing potash at £12 10s. per ton or even less.

I congratulate the Minister on having opened up the deposit at Lake Campion and I pay tribute to him for what he has done to increase the supply of Collie coal, which is of great advantage to this State. I can remember an occasion when the Premier said he did not think that Collie coal contained any gas. I was of the same opinion; in fact, I had never met anyone who thought there was any gas in it.

The Premier: I was told definitely that there was not.

Mr. TRIAT: I received similar information from technical men. One of them, however, said that it did contain gas, but it also contained CO₂, which would not permit of the coal being treated for gas. This obstacle, however, seems to have been overcome. I hope the Government will provide money to further the work I have indicated. In years to come, the taxpayers would be well repaid for such expenditure. I hope that it will be found possible to use Collie coal for the production of all the gas needed in this State and that Newcastle coal will no longer have to be imported. When that happens, Collie will come into its own, and the coal-miners of that town need not fear being faced with an insufficiency of markets for the product after the war. I hope that during the present session the Premier will find money to test some of the possibilities I have mentioned. This year he is budgeting for a surplus of £1,700, but I would sooner see a deficit of £300,000 or £400,000 provided active steps were being taken to exploit the avenues I have suggested.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland): I rather envy the optimism of the member for Mt. Magnet, and wish I could share his enthusiasm for the possibilities of expanding industry in various ways and of the financing of that expansion by the

State. The hon. member evidently thinks it would be advantageous to work on a deficiency basis. I cannot see how that could be done. I believe it is essential to have sound finance to back up any enterprise, and particularly must the revenue account be in a buoyant, healthy position before we can successfully apply for increased loan funds for expenditure on those activities which the hon. member has described as possibilities. We have had a good deal of incursion into the happenings at Dumbarton Oaks and of the possibility of Australia's participating in the big questions being ironed out at the various conferences, with the details of which we have not yet been favoured. True, the newspapers have submitted some reports, but they cannot give more than an outline of the proceedings of huge conferences such as these. The member for Mt. Magnet has not dealt with matters outside the province of this Chamber, but has devoted close attention to the affairs of the State. Our duty in discussing the Budget, especially at this period—I shall make myself clear in that regard as I proceed—is to realise that we are at a stocktaking stage, and that it is possible to take the figures of last year's results as a guide to the possibility of this State's standing up to its responsibilities and obligations in the future.

I wish to emphasise, as I have done before, that the Under Treasurer, in my opinion, has greater authority in the handling of State finances than any Under Treasurer has had during the period of my association with Parliament. Mr. Reid, the Under Treasurer, today is handling what previously was handled by Parliament. The detailed administration and control formerly exercised by Parliament has been transferred, as a result of the Financial Agreement, to the Treasury. I have already explained, time and again, that that could not be otherwise. The operation of the Financial Agreement and the control of the Loan Council make it impossible for any Government to come to Parliament for parliamentary approval of current expenditure. It is, of course, true that Parliament gets a report of Treasury activities, and that those reports are placed in our hands, and also that the Treasurer, when submitting his Estimates, sees to it that we receive those reports for the purpose of assisting us in our investigations and discussions.

Mr. Doney: Of course the Under Treasurer's decisions have to get the Treasurer's approval.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Oh, of course. The helpful documents with which we are furnished include what is the most helpful of all—the volume of Public Accounts—what in my opinion is a fascinating volume. I never miss going through the Public Accounts, and in perusing them I always feel that we really do not know in Parliament what is going on today. That was not always so. Previously one did not have to go to the Public Accounts to get details because the Annual Estimates were then a totally different proposition from what they are now, since the adoption of the Financial Agreement. Power has passed from this Parliament. Owing to the altered circumstances, wherein Parliament has been bypassed because of the operations of the Loan Council, this being the outcome of the Financial Agreement, we have to go to various documents in order to obtain details that show just exactly how the State is getting on. In addition to a report on the Public Accounts we have the Budget statement of the Premier, with all the returns that are submitted; and even then it is not often that we get the Auditor General's report in time. I have not had that document yet unless it was laid on my desk today.

The Premier: It was delivered last week.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, it did reach Parliament last week; but there were only two or three copies of it, and I have been unable to avail myself of any of those copies. However, I was told that a copy would be available today. On the other hand, I have not had time to peruse it. But, as far as my ability allows, I have tried to analyse the position as disclosed by the Public Accounts, and I have read over the Premier's Speech on delivering the Budget. I do want to emphasise that Parliament can no longer be consulted in regard to current expenditure. We get only what Parliament is already involved in, or, in other words, what we are committed to. Quite recently I moved an amendment to a private member's motion, my object being to direct attention to Parliament's position relatively to matters of expenditure; and I gave some up-to-date illustrations, current things which had just happened, on which Parliament had not been consulted and over which Parliament had no control. I re-

ferred to the power house at Fremantle and the boat slip at Geraldton. I do not wish it to be inferred that I am opposed to those works, but I do want the people of Western Australia and its Parliament to be consulted in all matters of that description. At present they are not consulted. However, before the two matters in question were mentioned here, they had been announced by the Premier as part of Government policy; and I support the Government in its policy. But since then two other projects of big expenditure have been announced in the Press, without Parliament having been consulted.

In this instance the announcement was made not by the Premier but by the chairman of the Lotteries Commission, who stated that a sum, as far as my memory serves me, of £110,000 was to be spent on the Women's Home situated on the Canning River, and that a further sum—I do not remember the figure—was to be expended on essential additions to the Children's Hospital. Certainly there is no objection to those works, but it is necessary for the people to realise the changed conditions applying today; it is necessary that we as members should appreciate that we are not so useful as critics and as consultants in regard to the distribution of State revenue as we used to be prior to the adoption of the Financial Agreement. I tried, by an amendment I moved to the private member's motion which I have mentioned, to get this negation of Parliament rectified.

I appeal to members to realise that we cannot go on like this, that there must be a day of reckoning, and that 80 members of Parliament cannot continue to do as we are now doing; that that is economically impossible. To me it is, in addition, financially wrong. Still, I admit that members do not follow me in this regard. The amendment I moved received no support whatever. It was simply passed over, defeated on the voices without any comment at all. Therefore one has to accept the position that—

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will bear with me. It is not allowable to refer to any debate of the same session if such debate is not before the Chair.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The object I had was to rectify something wrong, and Parliament was not interested. I have to appreciate that a voice which is not gener-

ally ignored was ignored on that occasion, but I shall never be deterred from realising the unsoundness of the present position and the need for a close investigation into the altered financial administration of Western Australia as a result of the adoption of the Financial Agreement and the gradual improving and strengthening of control by the Loan Council. All I can say is that members do not share my views in this respect; but nevertheless I am not convinced that I am wrong in this regard, and I believe the day will come when this will be recognised. I have tried various means of achieving what I desired; I do not wish to enter into them, but I hope that the day will come when the people will appreciate the position. I admit that the Press has not assisted to any great extent in educating the people in regard to this matter. For some reason or other the Press is strongly of the opinion that the present Parliament and the present Constitution must be maintained. I personally believe that that originates not from the people's point of view but rather from the point of view of vested interests. If vested interests can best be served by maintaining State Parliaments as distinguished from decentralisation, vested interests will support State Parliaments.

As I have pointed out, the main essentials of centralised control have already passed from this State to the Commonwealth Parliament. I am prepared to admit that it has also passed from three other States who are receiving financial assistance through the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Those three States are in a totally different position from the States that are called the standard States. The standard States are those which are not receiving Commonwealth financial assistance; it is assumed that their expenditure is standard expenditure and that the other States should be reviewed from those standards. I refer to those States whose revenue and expenditure are not subject to the Commonwealth Grants Commission's scrutiny. My object in going through the Public Accounts was to satisfy myself that this State will be in a position to face up to its responsibilities and obligations during the period after the war known as the reconstruction period. I do not like the term "reconstruction." I prefer the word "construction," because I do not believe the

world will ever try to reconstruct; rather will it try to construct something better and something sounder by submitting control more directly to the people, not by taking it away from the people.

If members will look at page 46 of the Public Accounts they will find an outline of the deficits and surpluses each month for the past 10 years. To me it is a sorry review, but evidently it would not be so to the member for Mt. Magnet. It depends upon the point of view. I do not like to read of many deficits and a few surpluses; I want it the other way about because I cannot imagine sound finance where one cannot balance the budget. The return is illuminating. As I say, it covers a period of 10 years, and it is there for perusal by members. The return shows that during the past four years we have had a surplus; we balanced the budget. I submit, with all confidence, that last year was the peak year of this State in the way of full employment and it will be for many years to come. It will be many years before we have the full employment on an industrial basis that we have had during the past year and for a few years before, although the latter were not as good as last year. And that has been the war period. Not only has there been a basic wage payment, but there have been substantial margins and more than the average payment for overtime.

So we have arrived today at a period where we can take stock and from that stocktaking arrive at a conclusion with regard to the future. Last year's surplus was £38,021. The total surplus for the four years was £75,334. As I say, during that period of four years, a period of full and lucrative employment, we have accumulated a surplus of a little over £75,000. But while we have been building up this small surplus, the Eastern States have been building up enormous surpluses. South Australia has got considerably more, although it receives financial assistance through the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland also have enormous reserves in anticipation of what they will be called upon to face during the reconstruction period. I tried to get figures showing the accumulated surpluses and the capital put aside in anticipation of future needs, but I have been unable to get hold of any document which would actually show or give an idea of what has been set aside

in that way, but the amount must run into many millions of pounds in the other States of the Commonwealth.

Apart from the general ups and downs and ins and outs of under-estimated revenue and over-estimated expenditure, no Treasurer can anticipate exactly what the end of the year will disclose. That has never been challenged over the years in my experience. But after allowing for all of that, there is a special feature. Members will find it in the early pages of the Public Accounts. The Treasury had a definite windfall this year that should have enabled it to put more aside than has been placed in reserve during the period under review. I refer to an extraordinary return from the totalisator tax—£54,210 over what was estimated. That is more than we have received from this source in previous years. Probate duty was buoyant—if one might use that term: £48,399 was received. This again is a windfall. One cannot accurately estimate this revenue. It is a special contribution under extraordinary circumstances.

Mr. Doney: Were there no corresponding deficiencies?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No. There are the ordinary ones, but my investigation did not disclose anything special. I have referred to one or two special items, and I can see no reason why those amounts should not have been put into a special fund. That discloses—and this is what I want the House to realise—that when we appreciate those two items, constituting what I call a windfall, we find that we really lost £64,588 on last year's operations. The most complacent must be interested in figures of that description.

The Premier: We gave £45,000 to the Forests Department as a special grant.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is always possible to pick out items.

The Premier: No, that is unusual.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: From my experience this is a unique windfall as distinct from the general ups and downs of the Revenue Estimates. We may differ in that regard, but this is so distinctive that we cannot afford to ignore it.

The Premier: We gave the Forests Department £45,000. That was a special windfall for the department.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: And the Forests Department has given the State a good deal over the years.

The Premier: And will do so in the future.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes. The Premier mentioned that the Government proposed to spend more money on education. Honestly I cannot see where it is coming from. That is my anxiety. I want more money spent on education. The member for York paid special attention to the educational needs of this State, but if we cannot meet the State's requirements during a period of full and lucrative employment, I cannot quite see where the revenue is coming from to meet the increased needs in regard to education. It must be borne in mind that this State is not spending a very great sum, comparatively, on education. It is not the lowest in the Commonwealth from the point of view of expenditure but it is the next lowest. Strange to relate, Queensland is the lowest.

Mr. Kelly: It is very low compared with other parts of the world.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am referring only to Australia. The Queensland figure is £1 13s. 9d. and the Western Australian figure is £1 18s. 1d. Those are the two lowest figures.

Hon. N. Keenan: Are you sure.

The Premier: That is not right.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I got that from the remarks of the Minister for Information that were published in the Press the other day, dealing with education. I have all the figures here.

Hon. N. Keenan: We are the third lowest. There are two others lower than we.

The Premier: The secretary of the Teachers' Union published a booklet dealing with that aspect.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have the figures here. I will quote the lot when we are discussing the Education Estimates. I looked up the list and found that the Queensland figure was £1 13s. 9d. and Western Australia's was £1 18s. 1d. I took those figures from the newspaper. We cannot secure them from any other source in these times, because the Australian Year Book is not being printed and if the existing issues are consulted it is not possible to get figures that are anything like up-to-date. That is why I seized on those supplied by the Minister for Information, considering that next to the Commonwealth Year Book he would be the best authority.

The Premier: Get a copy of that booklet by Mr. Thomas.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have one.

The Premier: You will find the figures there.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I was sorry to hear the Premier say that the Railway Department had contributed £150,000 in an indirect way to the war effort. The Premier said that the contribution by the Army was £150,000 less than would have been paid by private consignees. I claim there was no need for that at all. This State has not received reasonable consideration in regard to war expenditure. I admit that every now and again we see a list of expenditure within the State, covering butter and cheese and eggs and all the rest of it, but that is not the kind of thing we are looking for and it is not the kind of thing that other States got. If possible, we want something more permanent and the way to get permanency is to make our public utilities earn money as a result of their utilisation by the military authorities.

Mr. Doney: You are quite sound in that contention.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I thank the hon. member. I am glad that I have said something right and something that will satisfy him.

The Minister for Mines: It is very unpatriotic all the same.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That may be so. My patriotism does not carry me so far as to agree to foolish contributions such as I claim this was. There was no need for this. We did not get any credit for it. It was merely that we charged less freight to the military authorities than was paid by the average citizen. I cut this paragraph out of the paper. It refers to the Queensland railways and is as follows:—

Queensland railway earnings rose 57 per cent. to £15,385,786 for 11 months made up to last Monday.

This is dated the 3rd June.

In the corresponding period of 1941 the receipts were £9,140,903. The total revenue in the last 11 months exceeded expenditure by £3,079,149 as against a surplus of £1,304,318 in the previous period. The Treasurer, Mr. Cooper, said that the railways had been called upon to handle abnormal traffic and had given efficient service in every direction.

Mr. Thorn: The military position is entirely different in Queensland.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not deny that. That is not the point.

Mr. Thorn: That is where they got the revenue.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The fact remains that the military authorities paid full freights.

The Premier: No.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If, then, all States have made a contribution proportionate to that of Western Australia, there is no particular feature in our contribution. Why did the Premier feature the £150,000? He drew my attention to that sum and then I tried to find out whether that was repeated in other States but I could not find that it was. I found that during the same period the Queensland earnings were £3,000,000 in excess of expenditure.

Mr. Thorn: You are quite sure there were no special reduced rates?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: How can I tell? I am giving the figures as I have them. The hon. member must appreciate that we have no way of getting details. In financial criticism all that one can do is to get comparisons. One makes the comparisons from the same source as one gets the declarations. After all we do not analyse the returns that we get; we simply take the figures. In Queensland they were dealing with railway figures, and I am dealing with railway figures, and drawing a comparison between the two States. Another item of a special kind is one of £250,000 to wipe off the accumulated floating or funded debt of £6,000,000. There is an interesting history associated with this £250,000. The Premier explained it very lucidly. I have looked it up and found that it was referred to by the Auditor General of this State as far back as 1936-37. I understand that some reference is made to it in the Auditor General's report now current. But the history is this, that at a given period there was this floating debt which represented the accumulated deficiencies of this State. At a certain time the Commonwealth Bank, instead of having these accumulated deficiencies covered by Treasury bills, arranged to put them on a more definite basis and decided that the fund would be funded throughout Australia, and this State's total was £6,000,000. The other States contributed until a total of £50,000,000 was reached representing the accumulated deficiencies of all the States of the Commonwealth. When that was arranged, it was decided that the States would

pay 4 per cent. sinking fund on the £50,000,000, so that Western Australia, therefore, was called upon to pay 4 per cent. on the £6,000,000.

The Premier: That is in the Financial Agreement of 1928.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is so. It was arranged, as I said.

The Premier: It is a legal liability according to the Financial Agreement.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That only confirms what I maintain. The obligation on this State was to pay 4 per cent., and it was to be liquidated in a given number of years. But the extraordinary thing is that we did not pay it.

The Premier: We could not get the money to pay it. It is not extraordinary if you have not got the money.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We were under an obligation to pay it, but we did not do so. What we paid was 5s. per cent. The Commonwealth Government added another 5s. per cent., so that instead of paying 4 per cent. we paid 10s. per cent. in liquidation of that funded debt. Now, the chickens have come home to roost and of course the trustees of the sinking fund, if that is the right term—

The Premier: It is the National Debt Sinking Fund Commissioners.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They discovered that it was going on and decided to make representations—and I suppose the Commonwealth Bank would be in the representations—to the Loan Council and the National Government to rectify it. As a result, I understand that the Financial Agreement is to be amended. We shall have an opportunity to discuss that in greater detail when the Bill is before this Chamber, but in the meantime the position is, as disclosed by the Premier in his speech, that £250,000 must be paid this year as a contribution towards some arrears that were due according to the Premier, under the Financial Agreement.

The Premier: That £250,000 debt is wiped off completely.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is wiped off because we paid it.

The Premier: It will reduce the total.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Undoubtedly it will do that, but we paid it from revenue, and we have to pay it this year. It has been paid before. If we had done what the Financial Agreement called upon us to do, we would not have to pay it this year. This

is an accumulated debt that is imposed on the 1944-45 revenue. This amount of £250,000 should have been paid in previous years. I agree with the Premier that it would have been difficult to do so. It is of no use talking of paying off large sums of money when there is already a deficiency, or a small surplus, but the fact remains that the debt is still there. The people of this State must appreciate that the funds this year are to be used for that purpose.

The Premier: We went back to the extent of £4,000,000 in the depression.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I know, but I am talking of our present position after four years of full employment. There is no depression now. I am analysing the past four years to try to envisage what will be possible in the future. I do not want to go back to the depression period. We have got away from that. Today we have full employment and everything we can anticipate to make this State buoyant, and we have not balanced the budget.

Mr. Thorn: Who gets the result of full employment?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Taxation Department gets quite a fair bit, but nevertheless the member for Toodyay has to be fair and realise that we are getting a very big return from uniform taxation—much more than we anticipated—and we are in a specially favoured position in regard to our share of the taxation raised in this State.

Mr. Doney: That is the unificationist speaking now.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No. Members can see the figures for themselves. The Premier in his speech referred to it and pointed out what a good deal it was to this State when the uniform taxation arrangements were finalised.

Mr. Thorn: I did not hear him say that.

The Premier: I said that because we taxed ourselves very severely is why we got the minimum.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: A period when we were buoyant happened to be taken.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the member for Guildford-Midland kindly address the Chair and take no notice of interjections? If members continue to interject, I shall have to take action.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The position is that these figures were based on the buoyant years and heavy taxation period of this

State. That was fortunate, but what members must appreciate is that we are getting the result today, and we have been getting that result during the four years of full employment. It is interesting to see how the Premier and Treasurer is going to pay the £250,000. He has got £191,500 surplus from the insurance on the "Koolama." The "Koolama" was bought on debentures that had to be redeemed at regular intervals. The State regularly paid its commitments in that regard, but the ship was insured for the full amount. Of course, being insured for the full amount, we got the full amount of insurance but we did not owe the full amount on the ship.

The result was that we received a surplus of £191,500. The Premier, as he said in his speech, has decided that that sum will have added to it the accumulated surpluses of £75,000, or whatever is needed so that the £250,000 will be liquidated. We have to appreciate that it would have been better for us had that £191,000 been available for other purposes. Again the Premier pointed out that a reserve of £150,000 had been placed in a trust fund for belated repairs. I do not think that £150,000 is going to bring all the belated repairs up to date. I believe it will take considerably more than that. The Premier said that the Government hopes to keep pace with whatever maintenance and repairs are necessary. I wish him luck and hope he will be successful, but he has pointed out in reply to an interjection by the member for Mt. Magnet that manpower and material will present a big problem. I think that repairs will be delayed still further, and suggest that an effort be made to set aside the amount of money that is not so expended this year.

A consoling item is found in the attitude of the Grants Commission. The Commission has decided to pay to this State a sum of £460,000, plus £500,000 that was held in suspense from last year. This means that the State will get roughly £960,000, but the Commission will still retain a good sum of money and hold it in suspense for post-war expenditure.

The Premier: Not out of the £960,000.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is so. As a result of the Grants Commission's determination, there is a fair sum to be spread over a future year rather than that it should be paid in full to the State in the year in which it is granted. Here is another feature.

The revenue of the State totals £13,589,175, of which the public utilities and State trading concerns contribute £6,931,916. Thus more than 50 per cent. of last year's revenue came from public utilities and State trading concerns. Those figures are very illuminating and illustrate the extent to which State ownership has progressed in this State. But to me the figures convey a feeling of anxiety.

I am beginning to wonder whether we really have the capacity to administer socialised activities to the extent to which we have built them up in this State. Let me explain. We have public utilities and State trading concerns whose operations are being carried on by trade unionists. They cannot be carried on by anybody else, because preference to unionists requires each man to be a member of a trade union. A man being a member of a trade union should be educated to the advantages from a trade union point of view of socialised activities. In addition to the workers being in charge of the operation of these concerns, a Labour Government is in charge of the administration. We have a combination of trade unions operating and their representatives in Parliament administering these concerns. Thus there is a close connection with the working of these socialised concerns. Worker control is as absolute as it is possible to be, possibly as absolute as it is in Russia.

Still, while this is so, we are having an amount of industrial turmoil and strife. It causes me much concern to find a general trend of irresponsibility developing in the working of these concerns. I do not wish to mention any particular activity, but I do say that there is an air of irresponsibility on the part of the workers chiefly concerned. There is not the stability one would expect from those operating the concerns; there is not the care in regard to the machines and the tools used that one would expect from men operating something they own. There seems to be a total disregard of public ownership and public interest in what the public should take a pride. My belief as a trade unionist of many years is that it is the responsibility of the trade unions to see that the trade union policy is faithfully observed.

If there is any disregard of honest, sound trade union policy, the executives of the unions appointed for the purpose should step in and make it quite clear that these concerns belong to the people. They do not

belong to the individuals who happen to run them. While we have to care for those who are operating them, those individuals have a responsibility to their fellow workers associated with them in the ownership. The silence of the trade union leaders, whether of one industrial union or a combination of unions, is most disappointing. I believe that a sort of irresponsibility is growing up in the trade union movement. We see it in the individual and in those who should supervise and ensure that the principles are observed and that the doctrines taught are strictly enforced. They are not doing their job.

[*Mr. Fox took the Chair.*]

Mr. W. Hegney: Where are they not doing their job?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not propose to go into details, but the hon. member knows more about it than I do. In this morning's paper is published a declaration by the great trade union conference of Great Britain, a purely industrial conference with no political connections whatever, run by Sir Walter Citrine, the outstanding industrial leader of Great Britain and to a large extent of Europe. Leaders of the British movement have analysed the position and made a survey of the operations of the workers in socialised activities during the war period. They found that the railways were run in the public interest instead of for private profit. I do not say that the private owners did not get some return, but the general operation under Government supervision in Great Britain was somewhat on the lines of that of our own railways. Of course the full results did not go to the Government, as they do in this State. In various other activities they pointed out that the trade union workers have had an opportunity to study the control and working of industry under Government supervision and declared most emphatically that there must be no return to the pre-war system. They said that the experience of the war period must be capitalised to the extent that the nation must continue to control a number of key activities which were stipulated.

The majority of those industries, or at all events a large number of them, are already socialised in this State. I wish to appeal to the workers, and the trade unionists of Western Australia to appreciate how they are discounting the ambitions of their

fellow-workers in Great Britain. How can Labour in Great Britain make progress when the people there can draw comparisons between the administration of socialised concerns in Western Australia, where there is complete labour control, and the administration of such concerns elsewhere? Can it be expected that the trade unionists of Great Britain, after learning of the turmoil that takes place in Australia and the irresponsibilities evident in some directions, and the trade unionists of other countries, too, will regard the system as practical and desirable? I refer to recent occurrences, in an endeavour to appeal, whether successfully or not, to the workers. Whether I succeed or fail does not worry me, because I believe that I have a duty in this connection. I believe myself to be the oldest trade unionist in Western Australia, one who has had executive association with the movement for close on 50 years. When I think of the years during which I worked to advocate and extend socialism, I am grieved to think of the present position.

During the reign of the Scaddan Government, of which I was a member, the Labour movement made more progress here than it made in any other part of the world. That is entirely true of the four years of the Scaddan Government's administration. During those four years the Perth tramways were purchased, the East Perth powerhouse was authorised, the State sawmills were started, and so it went on. All those activities were undertaken because in our opinion they were in the best interests of the State; and particularly was it the desire of the workers that the undertakings should be under that form of control which would give the best results. There are happenings in connection with State enterprises that one regrets, but I am not now dealing with that subject. I desire to witness loyalty of principle and the construction of that which counts. The worker never gets anywhere by concentrating on the question of wages and hours. That does not represent reform. It merely represents palliation. True, he has to see to his wages and his hours of labour; but he must also ensure that he gets the results of his labour. Instead of production for profit he requires production for use; and the only way he can achieve production for use is to work for himself and for the State.

I do hope the workers will realise that there must be some means by which the discontent or dissatisfaction of the worker can be overcome when a Labour Government is in office, without resort to those unseemly and unnecessary stoppages which bring suffering to the State as well as to the workers. Let me draw a comparison between New South Wales and Western Australia. In New South Wales there are labour stoppages, but they occur in private enterprises there. I refer to the stoppages on the coalfields. The coal of New South Wales has been exploited over the years. There is no activity subject to greater and crueller exploitation than coalmining, in any part of the world with the exception of Russia. All over the world the coalminer is exploited. America has its difficulties because of private ownership of coal. Great Britain has had them over and over again. They are found in New South Wales, where a great deal of revolt and turmoil has resulted. But the workers in New South Wales are fighting—fighting to get what we have got. In their activities they are not penalising concerns, but are trying to get reforms. Therefore, will the workers of this State not appreciate that by their actions in Western Australia they are discounting just what the workers in other parts of Australia, and particularly New South Wales, are struggling to attain?

Again, Mr. Deputy Chairman, you will know the position at Fremantle. There the trams are socialised. There is municipal control as distinct from national control, but the workers are operating the Fremantle trams in the same way as workers operate trams in Perth. The control is public control of a public commodity or public utility. In Fremantle one never hears of any trouble or turmoil, while we are stopping things here. While there is an air of irresponsibility in Perth, it is quite a treat to go down at Fremantle and observe the interest displayed by the workers who operate the Fremantle trams. To me there seems to be a totally different atmosphere in the operation of the tramway system at Fremantle from the atmosphere in Perth. I speak feelingly on this subject, because I originally organised the tramway union in this State. I had quite a long association with the tramway employees, though not of recent years. I was

the original tramway employees' organiser and secretary, and I was also associated with the Fremantle tramway employees. Therefore it does give me concern, having worked to establish an industry of this kind, to see the present position. In Perth the Scaddan Government bought the tramway company out, after an industrial struggle. We made it plain to the company that it was not welcome in this State, and the company sold out to the State.

The Minister for Mines: You nearly got run in at that time.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes. The fine was paid by someone. I relate that to show the pride that one takes in establishing these concerns and the disappointment one feels when things are not going along as one would like.

Mr. Cross: Perhaps the men have got some grievances.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The member for Canning will appreciate with me that the grievances could be ironed out very simply when the workers' Government is in power. Something must be wrong somewhere. I do not know what is causing it, but it gives me concern, and I am appealing to the labour leaders of today to appreciate that they ought to pay closer attention to the popularising of socialism than is possible if we proceed in the way we are going. Take a socialised concern like the Midland Junction workshops! That fortunately is a fairly contented place, but there is an absence of the enthusiasm that I would like to see. Years ago, when we were framing our trade union policy and compiling logs and claims to go before the Arbitration Court—I did much of that work for some years—we always based them on concerns controlled privately.

In those days there were few Government concerns, but a multiplicity of private concerns. The trade union policy was consequently formed in those days by men who were employees of private concerns. Today the scene is changed; today big employment is in public undertakings, and instead of the trade union policy changing so as to retain that which was accomplished as the result of close application to trade union propaganda, we are neglecting to capitalise that achievement and to make it popular, so that it might expand in other directions here as well as in other parts of the world. It is no use a worker coming

to me and complaining of not being able to get the full economic results that might be obtained in a Government factory because the machinery is obsolete and the general layout uneconomic, if he neglects to play his part as a worker.

My wish is to encourage workers who take an interest in socialisation, who want to popularise socialisation and who want to elevate a socialised concern. Workers should be proud of the fact that they own these concerns and are privileged to work in them. They should set an example to those in private employment, to get all the amenities associated with it. All of that is possible while at the same time fulfilling one's responsibilities to the concern with which one is associated. I did propose to deal with the potash industry and the alunite deposits. I am definitely concerned about the latter. I note from the Public Accounts that we have expended already a sum of £200,000, and I think we have gone far enough for the Minister, when he reaches his Estimates, to give us some detailed information on the matter. No doubt he will. The alunite side seems to be superseded or put somewhat in the background by the action of the Commonwealth Government in subsidising the Tasmanian deposit.

The Minister for Works: That is not so.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is what I want the Minister to explain. It appears to me that some interest is being displayed by the Commonwealth in the Tasmanian deposit that is not being displayed in the Western Australian deposit.

The Minister for Works: That is not so.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is a good job. I can but read the newspapers. I have looked up the returns but cannot get any information. No doubt the Minister will give us all the facts and figures. There is one matter in which over the years I have taken a great deal of interest. I remember that when Sir James Mitchell was a private member he started a programme of secondary industries and local production—"Buy local goods; consume local goods." A few years later Mr. James Kenneally became the head of that department of State and I think he outdid Sir James Mitchell in his advocacy of and in his claims for secondary industries.

Mr. Thorn: We would expect that!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Now the present Minister has taken over that department and he also is advocating local production and local consumption. The point however is that we are not making any progress and that is what is worrying me. I admit that we have a small concern here and another small concern there, but we have not got a foundation. We have not got a key industry. I agree with the member for Canning that we ought to do something to establish iron smelting and the production of iron and steel in this State. With our small population and limited market, unless we use the raw material with which Nature has supplied us we shall not get anywhere. The finest display in this State was held lately, when the existence of gas in Collie coal was proved. I know a good deal about the smelting of iron by charcoal. As a matter of fact, a scheme put up now was put up by me to the Industries Department as the result of representations made by an old engineer, Mr. Philiphoff. The Minister may have heard of him.

The Minister for Works: Your statement is not correct.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I know I went to the engineer of the department. First I went to Mr. Kessell. He had his blueprint of the scheme. Mr. Philiphoff had been the engineer of a plant in Russia, where steel and iron were smelted by soft-wood charcoal. He put up a scheme to smelt iron by hard-wood charcoal in this State. I discussed with him the possibility of securing an area of timbered land for the production of charcoal. I took the plan to Mr. Fernie. Mr. Philiphoff also went to Mr. Fernie at my suggestion. I think the Minister assisted, but no progress was made. A suggestion was made that the scheme should go to the Eastern States, but I discouraged it. Now the State is going on with it. Whether Mr. Fernie has something better than Mr. Philiphoff to put up I do not know. I am of opinion that the scheme submitted by Mr. Philiphoff is the scheme that Mr. Fernie is working on today. But I think we have got past that now.

We should spend no more money on smelting by charcoal, because I believe that smelting can be done cheaper and better—or, in other words, smelting can be revolutionised—by the application of gas as developed by the process that was demonstrated

at Midland Junction quite recently. If we can do it as Mr. Fox says it can be done, it will pave the way to great developments. Thanks to the assistance of the Department of Industrial Development and the State Government, he demonstrated that he could produce gas from Collie coal. It was a most extraordinary display and it made me feel that at last we had something in the way of a key industry, something that is basic. In this State we have not any of those great hydraulic undertakings that are of such great help elsewhere. We cannot expect them, but if we can make use of the millions of tons of Collie coal in the way that Mr. Fox claims it can be used, secondary industries in this State will be within measurable distance. I am not satisfied with the progress the State has made up to date. From time to time we see comments on the small number of employees engaged in this State as compared with those in the other States and as compared with past years. The figures disclose that even before the war there were more employees—

The Minister for Works: That is not so.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am glad the Minister is here to listen to what I am saying. I am taking an interest in his Estimates and in his department. The Public Accounts disclose that a great deal of money is being spent by this department. Parliament is not consulted, and therefore when the money is spent we should have an opportunity to examine the figures. Those figures are not very helpful in this regard. When the Minister introduces his Estimates, if he can explain the position, then it will be explained. If he cannot, we shall have the privilege of questioning him. I have tried to point out that this State must apply itself very closely to its obligations and responsibilities during the post-war period. I know that a great deal of progress has been made in regard to primary production and land settlement. But we have to go further. If we cannot do it by our small population supplying local markets it must be done with cash and I do not see where the cash is coming from.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin): I regret that I have not prepared myself to follow the member for Guildford-Midland into the realms of Commonwealth-State finance. However, I want to compliment him upon the speech he has made. It was well worth listening to. This is the first

time since I have been in the House that I have felt compelled to say this about any speech by the hon. member, though I have no doubt that on quite a number of occasions before this he has merited that recognition. I do not want the hon. member to imagine that I am just, as a matter of habit, antagonistic to him when he talks finance. It is only when he talks about unification—implicitly rather than specifically—that he raises my ire. I find it necessary to deal with the water supply situation, not only in my own part of the country but also in the State as a whole. The subject is far more serious than some members in this House appear to recognise.

This morning there was a conference in the office of the Under Secretary for Agriculture that was attended by certain hydraulic and railway engineers, several stock agents, bank and insurance officials of high rank, one representative from the Agricultural Bank and, from this House, the members for Wagin, Yilgarn-Coolgardie, Pingelly and myself. The conference dealt generally with water as affecting the stock and feed question and did not permit themselves to deal, as I had wished, with the domestic situation. They were of opinion that while there were patches of country adjacent to the Midland and Wongan Hills railways and north and south of the Goldfields water scheme line that had escaped the full effects of the drought, other parts were facing the most critical period within memory. I do not feel it wise to go into too much detail on the decisions arrived at by the conference, as I understand it is the intention of the chairman to make them public in a day or two, but I may say that tentative arrangements have been made to transfer stock to treatment works at Fremantle and Albany and to agistment centres as well, where necessary, and also in regard to transport. The hope was expressed that the railways would lend the fullest co-operation to any scheme ultimately decided upon.

I do not doubt that though it was not specifically stated at the conference, the general thought is that the first move in regard to evacuating stock should be from very dry areas, gradually working back through the less dry districts. We in this House have been keeping relatively quiet in respect to the water supply situation, hop-

ing that late rains would change substantially the general complexion of things. Those rains have not arrived and we must recognise that from now onwards to May, 1945, the rural areas in Western Australia, both in a domestic and in an economic way, will be facing the most anxious period of their lives. The chances are that very many people on the Great Southern, and a little east and west of the Great Southern, will go thirsty during the next six months.

The Premier: Oh, no!

Mr. DONEY: It is no use saying, "Oh, no," because that happens to be the case so far as we can judge now. We must take stock of the position as it is with the object of letting the Government know what is required of it by way of action to ameliorate the position. So it is of no use whatever placing any reliance upon chance rainstorms that may occur. We must necessarily have regard to the situation as it is rather than as we would like it. The chances are—and I regret to say it—that many will be thirsty, countless head of stock will die and, it is no exaggeration to add, public health will suffer. In addition, pastures, gardens, lawns, orchards, etc., will dry up. I realise of course, despite the interruption of the Premier, that I do not need to call the attention of the Government to the catastrophe that threatens the State generally and the Great Southern portion of it in particular. Again, and this is unfortunate so far as I personally am concerned, it is the Great Southern that will suffer most. It has had a lesser rainfall, by comparison with the general average than has any other centre.

[Mr. Marshall resumed the Chair.]

The Minister for Lands: That is not quite so. You lose sight of the fact that there is a large part of the State other than the South-West Land Division. There are parts of the North-West that have not had two inches of rain in two years.

Mr. DONEY: I admit that my mind is fixed more on the South-West portion, and that I have been leaving the far North or the far North-West out of my calculations for the reason that year by year some areas there go without any rain. But so far as the more closely settled parts are concerned, I regretfully say that the central Great Southern is the worst off, and that, of the Great Southern centres, Narrogin

has had the worst fall. It is of course not only in the town itself but in the districts east of Narrogin, too, that the lack of rain is felt. The areas east of Pingelly, Wagin, and Katanning are equally affected. Even today quite a number of dams on the high levels are completely dry. As a matter of fact, they have been dry right through what is supposed to be the rainy season. Quite a number of other dams—not a great many of them—have but a few months' supply remaining, while the amounts in the town reservoirs are down to a hopelessly low level.

Instead of the principal town in my electorate having, as is possible when the dam is full, 78,000,000 gallons, it has only 13,000,000, or one-sixth of what it should have. That ratio, therefore, of one to six, represents the measure of our pending distress this year. It goes without saying that neither humans nor stock can live without water. Thus it is that the more fortunate people on the farms and in the towns will need to assist the unfortunate ones, and whatever supplies the Government can lay its hands upon, whether in the Government reservoirs, the public works, the road boards, or the private reservoirs, will have to be as evenly distributed as possible. The only happening that can avert the fulfilment of this tragic forecast is a general rain of two inches over the whole State—and right now, too! That fall of two inches would need to occur in but a brief hour or two, and be of exceptional heaviness. It would not otherwise shed quickly enough to flow into the reservoirs. All this, of course, is the very worst of luck for Western Australia at this period. Here we were hoping for an exceptionally good year so that we might apply ourselves with keenness and enthusiasm to the post-war reconstruction period. Instead of that we get a record low rainfall. This is so not only in Western Australia but in the other States.

We have seen it reported in the Press, and we presume it to be true, that in Victoria and South Australia there has been no season to compare with this for 105 years. And not even that long-bygone season, however bad it was, could produce the tragic results that we unfortunately are forced to anticipate now for the reason that the development of the country was such that there was not so much at stake. I have already said that of

the major Great Southern towns, Narrogin has had, by comparison, the least rainfall. As a result, the outlook is truly alarming. Mr. Crimp came down for a day. He divided the 13,000,000 gallons that have been impounded this year by the number of users in the town. He presented the people, who gathered at the meeting, with the result and went away leaving them naturally disturbed and angry.

Mr. Watts: Did he allow for evaporation?

Mr. DONEY: Mr. Dumas, the Chief Hydraulic Engineer, could hardly fail to take that factor into account. I am not blaming Mr. Crimp for what he did. At that point it was all that he could do. What contributed to the people's annoyance was that he said that no water at all must be put on the gardens. Anyone who has been to Narrogin knows that the town has some truly lovely gardens. It gives a real heart-ache to know that they must go. It means, too, speaking in terms of hard cash, that large sums running into thousands of pounds, will be lost. The district hospital and the private hospitals will, by so drastic a cut, find their effective continuance very difficult. It will mean also, I suppose, that septic tanks will not be able to function properly. With the exception of York and Beverley, which are served by the Goldfields Water Scheme, all the towns along the Great Southern, will be heavy sufferers. My colleague from Beverley reminded me a little while ago that the town of Brookton expects to use up all the water at present available by the end of November. That, of course, is regrettable, but it appears, on my colleague's calculation, to be a fact. The Premier may take some notice of what I am about to say now.

The Premier: I have listened to every word you have said.

Mr. DONEY: I have no doubt about that. I want to speak about the lack of tanks and of galvanised iron and of flat iron. These last two commodities are necessary, of course, to make new tanks and repair others, so that should any rain fall between now and the next wet season we may have tanks ready to catch it. The last time I was at the Munitions Department I was told that no iron supplies had arrived for two months. I am not sure, but I think that nothing has come in during the last fortnight. It was about a fortnight ago that I called. I discussed

this matter with the Premier prior to his departure for the Eastern States. When he was over there, I took the opportunity to send him a telegram to refresh his memory regarding the dire need for supplies of corrugated and plain iron. I may tell the Premier now that I have not been favoured with a reply, and I take this opportunity to express the hope that, perhaps at the close of the sitting tonight, he may have some information to give to the House.

The Premier: No, I have not got the information yet although I have made representations.

Mr. DONEY: In large measure I place the responsibility for the position upon the Government, which should get solidly behind those members who are urging the necessity for making application for supplies of iron. I know the Premier is as fully seized of the importance of this matter as we are, and I hope he will endeavour to ascertain why it has not been possible for further supplies of iron to be made available to meet the needs of not only the Great Southern but other parts of the State as well. The urgency and importance of this matter should not be lost sight of. Members may recall that in 1938 I sought to adjourn the House in order to call attention, on the grounds of urgency and public importance, to the water supply difficulties in the Great Southern. Those difficulties, of course, have since then become progressively worse year by year.

I can demonstrate the greater urgency that exists today by saying that small as the quantity of water was in the dams in 1938, this year we have rather less than half of what we had then. In the latter year we were subjected to heavy restrictions which meant that we had a mere trickle of water for one hour per day on two days in each week. I repeat that today we have available only half the water we had then. The Minister for Works may recall, or can ascertain by reference to the files, that in that year the Government provided large tanks in the centre of the towns and kept them filled. That prompts the question: How much more necessary is that provision today if it was necessary in 1938? The Government's task of grappling with the water supply problem is recognised by everyone as very difficult indeed. Fortunately we have very efficient hydraulic engineers upon whom we place reliance. There is great scope for their ingenuity this year,

and I am sure there is a busy time ahead of them. Normally the railways take water from near-lying dams to centres needing help but, unfortunately, this year, with few exceptions—railway dams on the Great Southern railway and along all branches of the railways east and west of that line hold extremely little water, if any at all. In some cases the supply in the dams will be sufficient for a week, a fortnight, or a month and in some cases for two months—unless replenishing rains fall.

Mr. Cross: The railways have to haul water for their own requirements.

Mr. DONEY: That will have to be taken into consideration and the railway authorities are not losing sight of the fact—neither are we. As a matter of fact, the only sources of supply that can be relied upon after Christmas will be the big reservoir at Lake Matilda, the supply at Elleker, and biggest and most reliable of all, the Wellington dam at Collie. I had thought that the Government would have made water from the Goldfields Water Supply mains available to the Great Southern district, but I have learnt, from a source I do not wish to quote at the moment, that that is not so and we are not to be allowed to tap the Goldfields main at all. I do not know whether the Government can claim there is any fair play in such a decision.

The Premier: A decision has not been reached in that respect yet.

Mr. DONEY: I am pleased to hear the Premier say that. I hope he will use his influence to see that such a decision is not reached. I believe the Premier will agree with me when I say that in times like the present when the national need is so great, any and every source of supply, metropolitan or otherwise, should be tapped and the water as evenly distributed as possible. Unfortunately the railways dams are too far distant from the central and lower Great Southern areas to be of material assistance, in addition to which the Railway Department, as the member for Canning pointed out, will have to face its own private difficulties, which are indeed very great this year. Not only will the railways be busy hauling water on their own account, but will have to use a great many of their trucks and much of their steaming power in conveying starving stock to coastal agistment areas or to treatment plants at Fremantle and Albany. Even so, railway co-operation is essential in this work.

I know that the Commissioner of Railways quite understands the position, but naturally as the control of the railway system is his job he will regard the needs of the railways as of more consequence than those of people or stock. With the best wishes in the world he will do his duty and, in the circumstances, I suggest to the Premier that he may, if necessary, use a little forceful persuasion, if there is any such thing, upon the Commissioner in due course. I understand the supply of water in the metropolitan area is ample for all needs and so it is along, and adjacent to, the Goldfields line. But that does not apply to the rest of the State except in certain favoured patches along the Wongan Hills line and the Midland railway line and also, as I mentioned previously, along the Goldfields line and north and south of it as well. I think that during my time in this House no question has been brought before members so frequently or with so much urgency as has that of the water supply problem throughout the Great Southern districts. I shall quote at this stage a resolution that was passed by the Narrogin Municipal Council at its last meeting. It reads—

That this Council considers it the Government's primary obligation to supply the Great Southern districts with an adequate water supply and that, owing to the uncertainty of the duration of the war, it considers that operations should commence immediately.

I bring that resolution to the notice of the Government and in particular to the Minister for Works, accompanied with a plea for early action along the lines suggested therein. There is now a definite plan by the department, so I have been told, to supply to the central and lower Great Southern water from the Wellington dam. The first requirement will be a raising of the wall of the dam and, following a survey which is already being made, pipes will be laid and reticulation will ensue in due course. I believe, too, that so far as the country from Popanyinning to Pingelly and the portion eastward is concerned, it is to be served, not from the source I have just mentioned, but from the Mundaring catchment. I do not know whether the Minister for Works would care to make a statement upon this matter by and by, but the people of the Great Southern are anxious indeed to have an authoritative statement made by the responsible Minister as soon as he has something definite to tell them. I hope

that his attention will be given to this matter now, and that he will say just when the work is going to be done. I fervently hope it will be done immediately.

I would remind the Premier that Sir John Forrest and that great engineer, Mr. C. Y. O'Connor, laid down the Goldfields water scheme, which I suppose is the biggest of all our schemes. I think we regard it as the biggest development scheme in Australia, a greater work, I should say, than even the much vaunted Sydney harbour bridge. This can be claimed for it that it has added very substantially indeed to the revenues of the State. Certainly it was costly in the earlier stages, but today it is returning splendid dividends and has certainly been the means of adding to our population and to our good name. The Great Southern areas call for like treatment, which would result in greater prosperity for the Great Southern, while the long suffering but certainly very deserving people of the Great Southern as well as the Premier, the Minister for Works and myself will be saved in the future many a headache if only the Premier will go to the trouble, of which I believe him to be capable, of measuring up to the greatness of Sir John Forrest.

It is unnecessary to say that an ample water supply is the first requisite of progress in any country and more so in a country situated as ours is. We talk of education and social orders being firstly and secondly the needs of any State, but the prime essential in Western Australia or in any relatively dry country is water and water in plenty. I suggest that in addition to the rationing of water, which is all very well in its way and cannot be avoided, a great deal could be done in the direction of opening up old wells and for that matter sinking new wells.

The Minister for Mines: What depth would you have to go to get water?

Mr. DONEY: We have not had any great amount of success in respect to artesian waters. We are outside the artesian basin which extends down towards that area, but does not actually touch the Great Southern.

Mr. Cross: East of Katanning a bore is down 1,050 feet and the stock will not drink the water because it is too brackish.

Mr. DONEY: I cannot see that that proves very much. The question of boring for artesian and more superficial water is

one to which greater attention should be given. There is a definite basin inside where Narrogin has been built. I suggest that we might go outside the ridge that surrounds the basin and which would be within reasonable distance from the point of view of finding water for the town. In addition, there are quite a number of other devices which will be a great deal more apparent to the hydraulic than to the lay mind. Here is a suggestion that I am glad to say the Minister has accepted as being quite reasonable and proper. It was reported to me the other day that Mr. Gillett, a man well known as a water diviner—and the time has gone by when the ability to obtain water by divination can be challenged—has the ability not only to ascertain the presence of water, but to determine its approximate depth and whether it is salty or reasonably pure. Of course I can vouch for none of this, though it has been said on good authority, but we want water so urgently that I do not care how we get it so long as we get it, and since there seems to be a chance that this man's work might yield good results, I express my thanks to the Minister that he should have regarded the matter seriously and agreed to put Mr. Gillett in touch with Mr. Crimp. Maybe I need not have said so much to bring home to members the truly tragic position—that is quite a proper word to use—that has arisen in this State in regard to the lack of water supplies, but I think I was justified in doing so.

Mr. BERRY: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

MR. BERRY (Irwin-Moore): It is with considerable regret that we have heard of the difficulties mentioned by the member for Williams-Narrogin. This is a national tragedy. Speaking personally, I happen to be in one of the favoured pockets, but that does not mean that I should not be as vitally interested in trying to get something done as is the member for Williams-Narrogin where conditions have not been so good. It has always struck me as quite an amazing thing in Western Australia that while our rainfall is definitely regular, we have not taken full advantage of it to prevent the heavy precipitations, while they are being precipitated, from running down our valleys into the sea, or wherever they go. There is

no conservation. The member for Williams-Narrogin suggested that conservation of water is as big a problem, and as important to us, as is the problem of education. Undoubtedly that statement is perfectly correct. I find that many private farmers, men on the land, have endeavoured to construct dams and sink wells and in other ways find or conserve this very necessary water. But with regard to our dams we find that when we go in for extensive and intense pasture improvement we are actually upsetting the catchment areas and make it ever so much more difficult, if not quite impossible, to fill those dams.

For instance, on my own property in the mouth of July there was in the vicinity of 610 points of rain, and in the following month, August, something near 500 points—considerable quantities of water when registered in tonnage per acre. In spite of that, however, we ourselves are not yet satisfied that our dams are by any means full; and we have put that down to the introduction of subterranean clover and pastures generally; these improvements having made it more difficult to fill farm dams. I relate that not because I want anything to be done for these farmers, who I believe can protect themselves. I desire to suggest that every sizeable town in Western Australia or anyhow in the backblocks, should be equipped with a dam of sufficient capacity to provide for the district immediately to be served as well as for the town itself. And that is no impossibility. When I was a new member of this Chamber, the Government gave me a dam at Dulwallinu. While hardly adequate, the dam has been a tremendous benefit to the people there.

[*Mr. Hegney took the Chair.*]

The Premier: There is a good dam at Pithara.

Mr. BERRY: I was not aware of that. But the majority of the dams are now becoming muddy. The Wongan Hills dam, again, is too small. The Government's duty is to go in more for conservation of water by means of catchment areas and dams, rather than resort to the very dubious method of divining rods and wells and bores. My experience has been that for the most part the bores are of no great value to either ourselves or to anybody else because of salinity. I think that view is supported by the Water Supply Department.

I do not remember the figures, but I have the impression that the majority of bores put down have proved intensely unsatisfactory. Therefore I consider it our duty to realise that every year in these countries where the Mediterranean influence is predominant, there is a certainty of some amount of rainfall. It is reasonable to suggest that this country in any one year is never entirely deficient in the matter of rainfall, as regards the Mediterranean-type regions. Every year in May, June, July and August we do get rains; and it behoves us, if we are thoughtful and far-sighted, to make available the necessary facilities to prevent that water from uselessly running down drains and being lost. We have to recollect that Western Australia is a State without rivers, for the most part, and also without mountains. I believe it is described as a peni-plain; but whichever way one likes to look at it, the fact remains that the water is simply deposited and then disappears. If one goes to the immediate coastal areas, one finds tons of water underground; but a great deal of that must be seepage from the back country, which because of that seepage becomes denuded.

I was greatly interested in the remarks of the member for Mt. Magnet. That hon. member, notwithstanding the adverse criticism he received from the member for Guildford-Midland, put up a proposition which has considerable merit. He dealt first of all with the question of which I have spoken ever since I have been a member of this Chamber—the need to encourage trade with those countries which are our neighbours. On one occasion I pointed out that Australia is now being centred in such a way that she must turn her eyes rather to the Far East than to the distant western countries of Britain and the Continent. I suggested that we should endeavour immediately upon the conclusion of the war or even now to send representatives to the Far East to educate the nations there in the methods of western civilisation, so that those nations would be enabled actually to buy our products and use them for their own advantage and to ours. Just at the moment there is in this country a gentleman from Ceylon whose name I regret I am unable to pronounce; but, anyhow, he is Ceylon's Civil Defence Commissioner and Food Controller.

It seems peculiar that this need for our taking an interest in Far Eastern countries is considered so mild that men from those countries actually have to come here to us. That strikes me as even paradoxical, seeing that these visitors have come to Australia because of the loss of rice exports from Burma and the difficulty of obtaining adequate nutriment in their own countries. They have come here to negotiate for wheat and flour and frozen meat products. It is plain that the demand for these has increased several hundredfold during the war. That is our opportunity, because it is through the present war that Far Eastern peoples are beginning to learn the advantages of the products of temperate countries as compared with the lesser calorific value of products of their own lands. I feel a little sorry that the gentleman I have mentioned has had to come here instead of our going to Ceylon. At best it shows that it behoves us to get after this business as quickly as we can; because it is to the Far East that we must turn our attention in order to obtain substitutes for those markets of ours which may more or less die away in other parts of the world.

I have no doubt that immediately after the war Europe is going to be a greater potential market for us; but how long will that last? If the war does not end within a few months, I am personally of opinion that some of these countries which are liberated will have time to rehabilitate their own economic systems; and if they do so we shall find, at the end of the war, that the big demand about which everybody is so confident will not be so very great. Therefore when the member for Mt. Magnet suggests that we should look to the Far East, and look there with business acumen and some commonsense he is right. We will find there a market which will have much more lasting qualities than others which might arise as a matter of transition after the war. But it should be borne in mind that this gentleman has come from Ceylon and that although there is a market there, we in turn will have to look to some of our own peculiar trade and protection policies, and ascertain whether it is not possible to bring back from those far Eastern countries some of the things which they produce, in order that our ships may travel full both ways and in order that the producers in other

countries may, by their exports, pay for the goods which they purchase from us.

That is a very important point. It is a very touchy one for Australia; but I can assure you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that I was once shown a godown, or warehouse, at Surabaya some years ago. It was full of sugar. It was shown to me in reply to a suggestion which I had made that freer trade should develop between Western Australia and the Dutch Indies. There was a quantity of $3\frac{1}{4}$ tons of sugar in that warehouse which Australia could have purchased at $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb.; but we could make no use of it at that figure because of our protectionist policy. The reply to my suggestion was that apparently they would see us damned before they would trade with Australia at all. That is the problem to overcome as to the trade with the Far East, and probably any other country. The problem will become more accentuated after the war, and it will be necessary for us to devise a plan of such proper and definite balance as will enable us to open new markets and trade in them.

The member for Mt. Magnet brought up tonight the question of fishing. That is a subject I feel I know something about, because I have been interested in it for many years. Members may recollect that on the 4th December, 1941, I asked the Premier whether negotiations were proceeding for the building of a fisheries research vessel. The reply I received was that negotiations for the building of a vessel were proceeding between the State and Commonwealth officers and that the construction of the vessel would commence early in the new year. I do not know what happened. Probably there was some good reason why the proposal fell through. We have made no attempt to build up in this State an industry which is capable of absorbing large numbers of workers. My suggestion was and still is that we immediately have a commercial fishing vessel which could proceed to sea and ascertain exactly what supplies of fish were available. This information should be made public, so that people interested in the industry might take it up.

A suggestion was made by the member for Mt. Magnet that we should have refrigerated railway coaches. I agree with him, but I also suggest that we should have a refrigerated ship owned and controlled by the Government. This ship should proceed

to places like the Abrolhos Islands, Carnarvon and the North-West, where it should buy up the local catches of fish and bring them to Perth for sale. That could be done. Other countries do it. I suggest that no waters in the world are more sadly neglected than the waters of the Australian coast from the standpoint of fishing. Even as I am speaking tonight, schnapper are coming into Safety Bay. They come there annually to spawn almost always on the 15th October. They go into the deep portion of the bay where the bottom is muddy to deposit their spawn. In our stupidity we catch those fish as they come in to spawn, and we endeavour to catch what is left of them as they go out. We are told by way of extenuation that it is not known where the fish go to and that therefore we have a right to destroy them while they are full of spawn and with us. That is the talk of a lunatic. That is the folly that will denude us of a great heritage and destroy the opportunity of placing hundreds of people in work and supplying thousands of people with fish.

Where do those fish go? That is a matter for conjecture. It is only by discussing with old fishermen that we can form any opinion; and the opinion some of us have formed is that if one were to take a commercial fishing vessel, or any other vessel, to the edge of the continental shelf approximately 50 miles from the coast of Western Australia, schnapper would be found there all the time, feeding on the edge of the deeps. It is a crime to catch those fish while they are spawning in Safety Bay. It is a crime to catch any other fish while they are spawning anywhere on our coast. Yet that is what we have done and are still doing. Government investigation made in this State goes to show that on our coast we have over 500 varieties of fish, 250 of which are edible. Possibly with a commercial fishing boat we would find still more varieties, including additional edible varieties. Such a fishing vessel is absolutely essential. Near the Abrolhos Islands there is reputed to be an area of 40 square miles of sandy bottom where we could trawl and where, in fact, we have trawled; but today those schemes are pigeon-holed and lost. In this area we have some of the finest flat fish in Australia. In fact, the Western Australian coast is noted for its fish. I cannot do

better now than quote what Zane Grey has to say in his book, "An American Angler in Australia"—

Then the west coast of Australia! Here will be found the grandest fish. For years I have known that the Indian Ocean contains the most marvellous unfished waters and the greatest of fish in numbers and size. I have been on the track of the monster Indian Ocean sailfish for years. But never until I met the Danish scientist, Schmidt, world authority on eels, who has seen these sailfish, did I really believe the data I had accumulated. Shark Bay, 300 miles north of Perth, is known to contain schools of sharks. Schools of sharks do not inhabit waters that are not full of fish.

That is the statement of an authority. I am not an authority; I am an ordinary man who lives near the beach and takes a great interest in fishing, as I have done for the past 12 years. I can assure members that what this authority has said is true. I myself have seen off the coast here tunny, kingfish, marlin and shark—sharks of enormous size. While on shark stories I have actually participated in the netting of a catch of no fewer than 7 edible sharks in one week-end.

Member: Do you go to the racecourse?

The Premier: There are a lot of sharks there!

Mr. BERRY: This is not a matter for levity and I am sorry that it should be made so. I am fed to the back teeth about the waste on our coast. It is time that we woke up to its possibilities. The member for Mt. Magnet was talking about the price of schnapper and said how expensive it is now compared with its price before the war. But let us go back a little further. Some 40 years ago J. and W. Bateman paid 1s. each for schnappers, not 1s. per lb. Today we could not buy one lb. for 1s. That firm paid £10 a ton for schnapper in Safety Bay. They had some method of smoking it and, ironically enough, they sent it to China and the Far East generally. The remains of those fishing grounds can be seen even now. In those days one never saw fewer than 60 vessels fishing for the unfortunate creatures that went there to spawn. Today only six or eight are to be seen. I cannot stress this point vigorously enough. I cannot sufficiently emphasise the urgent necessity for providing a ship to find out the true potentialities of our coastal areas.

If we are going to persuade people to come to this State to settle it will be as well

for us to tell them of the State's possibilities; and there are great fishing possibilities here. But we must remember that, as in the case of land, it is not possible to take out everything without putting something back. So far as land is concerned, we do put something back and because we put something back we obtain continuity and get improvement. It will be essential also to put back into the waters of the ocean in order that we may preserve what is there. And first we must put in commonsense. For it is not commonsense to catch spawning fish in their millions and destroy them. In other countries this problem has been tackled and the solution has been effective. The result is that in those countries there is a permanent fishing industry. If we take what is happening in the schnapper grounds as an example, it will not be many years before nothing is left. It is all very well to tell me that schnapper-catching provides two-thirds of the income of fishermen. I am aware of that. I have been out fishing for schnapper probably more than has anybody in this House. But that is not the point. Unless we put something back into the sea, unless we preserve what is there, soon there will be no two-thirds for anybody. In the old days people were apparently alive to the situation.

Many years ago there was a regulation on the beach of Safety Bay under which an official of the Fisheries Department fired a gun at certain intervals, and the people began to fish or go home according to the time at which the signal was fired. That did not last long, however, and it was immediately followed by chaotic destruction. I want all this information of which I have spoken collated. I would like to see our Fisheries Department comprised of practical people. I would like to see this fisheries research vessel at work. I am sure we will get it some day, because the Government will become so ashamed that the vessel will be provided. I would like to see it manned by people with practical experience, and not by people from academic sources who give us academic information of no practical value. It is generally recognised that the spawning period of schnapper is from the 15th October to the middle of November. It would be a very easy thing to prevent anybody from catching the fish then. Let them be caught afterwards and not while they are spawning. I hope I have

said enough about the fishing industry to make the position perfectly clear.

I have endeavoured in the past to demonstrate that by our negligence we are destroying a heritage which belongs to people other than ourselves. It belongs to the coming generations. The sooner we control the whole of this industry the better it will be for our stomachs and for the stomachs of future generations. The way of control is not to put up a lot of "hooley" about allowing one gallon of petrol for a hundred pounds of fish, and providing that if a man in Safety Bay runs out of petrol tickets he must go all the way to Fremantle to find an inspector who is seldom there. I make that statement without fear of contradiction, because I have twice been to Fremantle on behalf of somebody else and found nobody there at all. The office is in a tiny building in Cliff-street so closely barred that it would take a man cleverer than Gunga Din to get petrol out of it. That completes all I have to say on the Estimates generally. I will leave my other remarks until the departmental votes are discussed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.6 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 18th October, 1944.

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

QUESTIONS (4).

INDECENT ADVERTISEMENT.

As to Suppression.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON asked the Chief Secretary:

(i) Has the attention of the Minister for Police been drawn to a definitely indecent

card now in circulation advertising a somewhat notorious place of entertainment in Mounts Bay Road?

(ii) If so, what action, if any, has been taken?

(iii) If not, will he institute enquiries to be made with a view to suppressing same?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(i) Yes—to-day.

(ii) Matter has been investigated.

(iii) Consideration is being given to further action.

REPRINTED STATUTES.

As to Distribution of Second Volume.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary:

Will the Government make available to members a free copy of the second volume of reprinted statutes (issued in 1943) as they did with regard to volume 1?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Yes.

HOSPITALS.

As to Tabling Reports.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP asked the Chief Secretary:

Will the Chief Secretary lay on the Table of the House the following papers:—

(i) The reports submitted by Miss Bottle of the hospitals she inspected which are managed or supervised by the department;

(ii) The reports submitted by Miss Lockwood of the country hospitals used as nursing training schools?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Yes.

HEALTH.

As to Report on North-West.

Hon. C. R. CORNISH asked the Chief Secretary:

Will he place on the Table of the House the report of Inspector Sutton dealing with health matters in the North-West?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Yes.

BILL—SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with amendments.