

walk off unless they get more money, and that the people in the North are not threatening to walk off, but are prepared to battle on, I hope that the present Government will take the position of the North into consideration.

Hon. A. Thomson: I presume they are getting enough to eat.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: When I was at Carnarvon three months ago sheep were being shipped from Geraldton, having been fattened in the southern areas, carried by steamer to Carnarvon and in Carnarvon were slaughtered by the butcher for domestic purposes. Beef was being brought from Wyndham in the State steamers' freezers, landed at Carnarvon, and distributed amongst the stations over a radius of 100 miles. That is the position these men find themselves in after battling for so many years. All I ask is that members individually and collectively see that everybody has a fair deal. That is all we want, but I do not think we have had it. I am hoping for better things from the Government and shall be disappointed if they do not give some assistance to the people of the North.

The Honorary Minister: What kind of assistance are you anticipating?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have seen a suggestion in the Press that the rents should be reduced. Half a loaf is better than no bread.

The Honorary Minister: I think the pastoralists are well satisfied with the way this Government has treated them.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They are not complaining now; but is the pastoral industry to go out of existence for want of support? Is the agricultural industry to be spoon-fed because the men threaten to walk off their holdings if they do not get assistance? On the other hand because the squatter goes battling on and makes no complaint, is his side of the question not to be considered at all? I ask members to see that all sections of the community get a fair deal.

The Honorary Minister: You must realise that every request which has been made by the pastoralists in a reasonable and decent sort of way has been considered and dealt with by this Government.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The question is what decision did the Government arrive at? I have raised these points simply in

order that the Honorary Minister may tell us when he replies what the Government propose to do to assist these people. The Lieut.-Governor's speech concluded with an expression of hope that Providence might bless our labours. If this Government and Parliament will see that each and every section of the community get a fair deal, surely we may expect that Providence will bless our labours.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Wittenoom debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.11 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Tuesday, 25th August, 1936.*

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

### QUESTION—QUEENSLAND FORESTS, LTD.

Mr. WATTS asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that a large number of West Australian citizens are shareholders in Queensland Forests, Limited, a company registered in New South Wales? 2, Has he noticed the statements regarding that company and its associated corporations made by Mr. John Ness, member for Dulwich Hill in the New South Wales House of Assembly, as reported in the "West Australian" newspaper in June? 3, As these statements, if true, indicate that there is considerable risk of loss and hardship being inflicted on a large number of persons in this State, will he give consideration to associating the Western Australian Government with a request being made to the Federal Government for a Royal Commission to inquire into the activities of the company mentioned?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Premier) replied: 1, The Government has no information on the matter. 2, Yes. 3, The matter will receive consideration.

### QUESTION—AIRPORT, RENAMING.

Mr. J. MacCallum SMITH asked the Premier: Is it his intention to lay the correspondence in connection with the naming of the Bullsbrook airport on the Table of the House?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Premier) replied: If a motion is made to that effect, the Government will offer no objection to placing the papers on the Table.

### ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to Supply Bill (No. 1), £2,200,000.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Fifth Day.*

Debate resumed from 13th August.

**MR. NEEDHAM** (Perth) [4.37] (continuing his remarks from the 13th August): When addressing the House a few days ago I referred to the employment policy of the Government. I had intended then to quote some figures having an important bearing on that question, but at the time they were not available. I have them now, and with the indulgence of the House I shall revert to that part of my address and quote figures from the Commonwealth Labour Report No. 25 of 1934. The report gives particulars of conditions pertaining to relief work in the various States of the Commonwealth. I shall not again deal with the position in other States, but shall refer only to the position in Western Australia, as follows:—

Amounts required for sustenance and general relief of destitution are provided by the Government from Consolidated Revenue. In 1930-31 sustenance payments amounted to £436,146 and expenditure on relief works to £149,455, and in 1931-32 expenditure on sustenance was £643,996 and on relief works £1,202,547. In 1932-33 expenditure on sustenance amounted to £346,956 (of which £149,833 was for sustenance work) and on reproductive relief work to £1,183,864. In 1933-34 the expenditure from Revenue was £232,192, representing £176,203 for rations and lodging, £49,239 on sustenance work, £2,274 for grants to institutions; and £4,476 on firewood and miscellaneous, and on reproductive relief work £1,884,897. In 1934-

35 the expenditure from Revenue amounted to £72,497, consisting of £52,748 for rations and lodgings, £16,195 on sustenance work, £481 for grants to institutions; and £3,073 on firewood and miscellaneous, and the expenditure on reproductive relief work was £2,077,326. In 1935-36 the expenditure from Revenue amounted to £49,870, consisting of £32,295 for rations and lodgings, £14,595 for sustenance work, £156 for grants to institutions, and £2,824 for firewood and miscellaneous, whilst the expenditure on reproductive relief work was £2,173,898.

These figures prove conclusively, if such proof were wanting, that during the regime of the Collier Administration from 1933 to 1936 there was a change from the system of spending considerable amounts on sustenance and sustenance work only and lesser amounts on really reproductive public works. During the regime of the Government headed by Mr. Collier we find the opposite position, namely a lesser amount of money being spent on sustenance work and sustenance only and a greater amount of money on reproductive works. These figures prove the contention I advanced earlier in my address as to the effectiveness in this respect of the Government headed by Mr. Collier from 1933 to 1936. I now come to a matter of Government policy with which I do not agree, and with which I have not agreed during the three years I have had the honour to be a member of this Chamber. I refer to the Government's policy of dismissing men from Government service upon attaining the age of 65 years, irrespective of the physical and mental condition of these men. Dismissals in the railway service are, I believe, more numerous than in any other Government department. I speak particularly of the railway service because I have had some experience of railway work in Western Australia. I know that men are being dismissed from that service at the age of 65 years although they are mentally and physically fit to carry on the work upon which they have been engaged—in every way fit. The plea has been advanced that the dismissal of men who have reached the age of 65 years makes way for younger men. That theory, however, has not worked out in practice, so far as I see. I wish to point out inconsistency on the part of the Government in this regard. Whilst they have pursued the policy of dismissing from the Government service men upon attaining the age of 65 years, they have put into Government positions men who are much older than 65.

Mr. Thorn: That is the point.

Mr. NEEDHAM: Men who have attained the allotted span of three score years and ten.

Mr. Thorn: Who are they?

Mr. NEEDHAM: Those men have been appointed to positions by the Government despite the fact that other men have been dismissed because they have reached the age of 65 years.

Mr. Sampson: Are you going to all this trouble to prove the Government inconsistent?

Mr. NEEDHAM: I might tell the hon. member that I do accuse the Government of inconsistency in this regard. I do not wish it to be thought that I am reflecting on any man who has been appointed by the Government to any position and whose age is over 65 years. Not at all. I believe those men are quite capable mentally of doing the work entrusted to their care. But I also contend that other men who have been dismissed from the railways and other services are also physically and mentally fit to carry on their work.

Mr. Thorn: What you want is consistency.

Mr. NEEDHAM: The position becomes much worse when we know that the men dismissed, or many of them, have nothing to look forward to except, perhaps, the old age pension. It is not possible for any man who has been working at the ordinary rate of wages, who perhaps has never got above the basic wage, yet who has reared a family and educated that family so far as his financial position would allow—it is quite impossible for him to make any provision for the declining years of his life out of the rate of wage he has been receiving. Yet although he is physically and mentally fit, when he reaches 65 years of age he is thrown on the scrap heap with nothing to look forward to but the old age pension. If there were a system of superannuation that would help him, of course my complaint would not be so marked. I sincerely hope the Government will reconsider those men and in future, when a man reaches 65 years of age, will permit his case to be viewed on its merits; if he is still physically and mentally fit to carry on the work, then let him continue, but if not, of course, I suppose he will have to go. Now I wish to bring under the notice of the Government, particularly that of the Minister for Works, the necessity for trying to come to some agreement with the Perth City Council in connection with

the foreshore. It is well known that a plan has been prepared and the work actually started for a splendid promenade along the foreshore from the Causeway down to the Mounts Bay Road, and continuing right on round the river. Portion of that work has been completed, but there is a barrier between Barrack-street and Mounts Bay-road. The then Minister for Works received a deputation from the City Council which waited on him at his own request. That deputation represented the works committee of the City Council, and the suggestion was made that a joint committee representing the Public Works Department and the City Council should be appointed to try to determine the question of control between Barrack-street and Mounts Bay-road. That was over two years ago. I believe that joint committee was appointed and held one meeting, but that was all that happened. I venture to say that if a decision could be arrived at regarding the control of that area of land it would be a long step towards making the city beautiful. Everybody admits that when that promenade is completed it will be a thing of beauty and a joy forever, and I hope the Minister for Works, whoever he may be in the reconstructed Ministry, will try to bring this matter to some finality.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You are aware that the East Perth electors turned down that proposal?

Mr. NEEDHAM: That proposal was never put before the electors of East Perth.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Oh yes, it was. During the election campaign I heard you yourself mention it from a lorry.

Mr. NEEDHAM: The hon. member never did.

Mr. Marshall: Where did you expect to find him; standing on his head, or on a lorry?

Mr. NEEDHAM: The land I am speaking of is not in East Perth electorate, but in the electorate of Perth. I want to see the City of Perth, beautiful though it is already, made still more beautiful, and I believe that can be done if the City Council and the Government can reach an understanding on the question of the control of that area of land.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Government have very much more important things than that to consider.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I am aware of that. I am aware also that if my friend had his

way, not only would there not be any money spent in the city of Perth, but he would have no money spent in the metropolitan area. He has told us here time and time again that he wants all available money spent in the country.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You are as far wrong in that as you are in most instances.

Mr. NEEDHAM: You were never right, but you were very far wrong in the statement you made just now. For, as any member who cares to search "Hansard" will find, the burden of the hon. member's speeches has been that money must not be spent in the metropolitan area.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Not until the agricultural industry is properly established.

Mr. NEEDHAM: So for once the hon. member is consistent, and I hope he will preserve that consistency in the future. Now there is only one other matter to which I would call the attention of the Government, namely, youth employment. I read the other day a report by the committee or the trustees who were commissioned to advise some plan for the spending of £25,000 raised by the people of the State for youth employment. I notice that they arrived at a determination on certain things. I remember introducing to the present Minister for Employment a deputation from the Boys' Employment League asking that he should give some help to the work of that league. I must say the Minister accorded to the deputation very sympathetic consideration, and I notice in the report to which I have alluded that the question is one that will be referred to later. The Boys' Employment League have done wonderfully good work during the last few years in trying to put boys into employment. They have not confined themselves to boys, for I know they have been instrumental in putting adults into occupation in very good positions. I have always complained that the Government have not given the Boys' Employment League the monetary assistance that the league should get, commensurate with the work they have done. Let me just quote a few figures to show what has been done by the Boys' Employment League. The number of registrations received by the league in 4½ years has been 7,222 and the number of positions obtained for lads in the same period 7,177. I wish to stress the point that the Boys' Employment League have striven to get the very best wages for boys they have sent to

positions; and not only the very best wages, but also the best conditions of labour. The weekly influx of unemployed lads is approximately 33 at present, growing to 40 or 44 per week later in the year. The weekly placement of lads is at present 30, growing to 40 per week later in the year. The average placement week by week throughout the whole 4½ years has been 31. The above figures on population constitutes an Australian record, and is believed on population to constitute an Empire record. The past Government placed at the disposal of the league an officer—on very little over the automatic range—to act as secretary, made available the use of an office on the top floor of the Treasury building, and supplied one typewriting machine, one telephone and some stationery. To this the present Government added recently a cash grant of £100—or 3½d. per head for each placement made. Now let us compare this treatment of the league by the present Government and their immediate predecessors with the treatment accorded to similar organisations in other States of the Commonwealth, and in South Africa and New Zealand. South Africa has provided 12 bureaux for the placement of boys and girls at an approximate annual cost of £20,000. Placement in South Africa is 50 per cent. higher than in Western Australia. Victoria grants the movement 10 fully-paid officers plus free advertising on railway stations and in trams and buses, plus free printing and postages and wires, plus free fares in many instances and plus a grant from the Government in 1935 of £2,500. Queensland has a special department or portion of a department dealing with youth employment, fully staffed and satisfactorily operating, free scholarships for unemployed boys, a special wage subsidy to farmers, etc. In New South Wales, the boys' employment movement recently received from the Government a grant of £22,400, which was preceded by £20,000, or £42,200 in all. Here also many amenities are granted which do not occur in Western Australia. In every State excepting Western Australia there are either large grants or free fares for boys, or both. New Zealand provides special assistance in cash and kind, while there are also wage subsidy schemes in operation. In Victoria there is also a special bureau connected with apprenticeships, and boys or young men are allowed to enter at any age as apprentices to many of the trades. I have quoted these figures only

to show that the Boys' Employment League in this State are not receiving as much Government assistance as they deserve. I know that the officer working there is not getting the basic wage. He does not content himself with working just the ordinary hours, but works all sorts of hours whenever necessary, he and the man in charge. I impress upon the Government the need for giving greater financial assistance to the league. When finality is reached as to the utilisation of the £25,000 raised for youth employment, I hope the league will receive some assistance.

**MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER** (Subiaco) [5.0]: I wish to preface my remarks with an expression of regret at the retirement of the Hon. P. Collier as head of the Government. We are proud of our democratic heritage, which enables us to regard political opponents, of whatever party, as men whose desire has been and is to serve their country, and I join with other members in expressing the sincere hope that Mr. Collier will be speedily restored to health and enabled to return to his duties in the House. Owing to the fact that I was not a member of the last Parliament, I cannot join with other members in their eulogistic remarks regarding your rulings, Mr. Speaker, during your previous term of office. However, I bow with pleasure to the august ruling which you have given since I came to this House and have joined the honourable hatless members. The Press remark on a ruling that there are no ladies in the House is somewhat embarrassing as it forces the conclusion that there are no gentlemen. I trust that hon. members will allow this ruling of sex negation to permeate all discussions whenever a discriminating measure against either sex comes before the House. I have many subjects which I wish to touch upon, but in doing so I wish to make it clear that I have no desire unfairly to criticise the Government for their failure to fulfil the promises made during their last term of office. Neither have I any desire to eulogise the Treasurer's dexterity in balancing the budget. In common honesty towards general principles every Government endeavours to put its programme into effect, but its capacity to do so is limited by the ability and vision of its members. The now famous balanced budget has gained the applause of the capi-

talist world, which must be very gratifying to a socialist Government, although methods to effect the equation must have given qualms of conscience to some members. It is quite evident that the ex-Treasurer reaped where he had not sown. It is also quite evident that any Government could have balanced the budget had it pursued the same means as the last Government, but it is doubtful whether any other Government would have attempted to do so in view of the distressing circumstances in which many of our people were placed. In listening to the speeches I have been struck by the fact that little credit has been given to the Federal Government for the increased disabilities grant of some £200,000. It may be argued that the increase was long overdue, but that does not alter the fact that the Premier had that money which assisted him to balance the budget. We have not heard anything of the amusements tax remitted by the Federal Government and promptly reimposed by the State. Further, during the second year of the Government's term of office, £33,000 was given by the Federal Government so that the youth of the State should receive special consideration. The youth of this State are still waiting not only for special consideration but for even ordinary consideration. That was a debt of honour, and we are still awaiting its payment. There was also a sum of £62,000 which was taken from the State Sawmills account for which the Government can claim no kudos. A further sum of a quarter of a million—to be exact, £234,523—was taken from the pockets of the public by means of games of chance, the proceeds of which were used to finance hospitals and other institutions. These institutions should be and are the direct concern of any Government. Then we had the Government's wind-raising raids on the starting-price betting shops which netted the Government some thousands of pounds in fines without any suggestion that they were designed to cure the evil. The raising of funds, either for general revenue or for the provision of social services, by any questionable means—and I consider the last two methods questionable—is a matter for condemnation, and must tend to discredit the legislative ability of members of this House, and further to discredit the democratic system under which we func-

tion, a system which can live only so long as the people have faith in the integrity and ability of their administrators.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You must consider control as well.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Those huge amounts are apart from the proceeds of the emergency tax, which is notorious for having strayed from its legitimate path—a path which the public believed was one of real emergency—to some sort of a new income tax, which I believe any Government will find difficult to relinquish. The desire to effect a balanced budget was the legitimate longing of a Treasurer who doubtless strove to show to Australia and the world the wonderful possibilities of this State and to attract capital for investment, or perhaps he might have had his honourable eye on the possibility of securing a further loan, but it serves no useful purpose to pretend that we are bubbling over with prosperity while we still have thousands of men on relief work, in receipt of sustenance, or seeking employment. Before any budget was balanced, humanity demanded that the claims of those men should have been met.

Opposition member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Raphael: It was your Government who did it.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: This is my speech.

Mr. Raphael: And it was his interjection.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The Government have again promised to deal with the problem of unemployment, and it will be interesting to see how they are going to do it without resorting to further taxation. In the Lieut.-Governor's Speech we were reminded that strict economy and close supervision of Government accounts must be maintained. But the Labour Government is notorious for big borrowing and bad spending. Out of £88,000,000 borrowed by the State the Labour Government borrowed and spent in nine years £33,345,000, and during 1934 they increased their borrowing on the amount of the previous year by £3,500,000. The public indebtedness has increased by £20 per head since 1932; taxation has increased over 54 per cent., while population has increased by only 15 per cent. in the last ten years. The soundness of borrowing does not rest upon our needs but upon our ability to repay, and further loans can only be warranted if assets are to be created. It is

difficult for anyone to understand the paradoxical attitude of the Labour Government—a Government whose avowed policy of the nationalisation of all industries is well known. Yet we have a Government who can with éclat grant huge mining concessions to rich mining men, a Government that can applaud on the one hand secondary private industries, and on the other deliberately endeavour to chase off the roads an established motor bus service by spending £84,000 of public money, a Government whose Ministers can reply to a deputation of responsible citizens requesting a grant for the free distribution of milk to necessitous children that although sympathetic no funds were available, and yet within a few days another Minister can announce the Government's intention to spend £84,000 on an unwarranted trolley bus service. Do the Government realise that that money would have been sufficient to provide a free ration of milk to every necessitous child in the metropolitan suburban area for at least 20 years? Had the Government been actuated by a genuine desire to help suburban transport, the new service could have gone via Hay-street, Rokeby-road to Nedlands, thus passing through a thickly populated area. This would equally well have served the University, and reached the destination with only a couple of minutes difference in time. Apart from Nedlands, we have the isolated district of Jolimont, mainly composed of workers, mostly Government supporters, almost without transport facilities. The new service could have been taken via Hay-street, Jolimont and Wembley to City Beach, thus giving ready access to the sea to residents of Perth, West Perth, Subiaco, Daglish and Wembley, and correspondingly easy access to the city, while it would also have opened up new building areas in close proximity to the city. Apart from that, if this irresistible urge to spend on transport could not be controlled, the money could have been utilised in country districts which are crying out for transport. Have not we the sorry plight of the farmer being denied the right to handle his own goods in his own way, in order that revenue from slow-moving railways, without concerted and adequate deliveries at either end, might be bolstered up—railways that are reminiscent of the days of the 6 h.p. motor car, or even worse? If we have public money to spend on transport, surely the direction in which to spend it is where it will serve develop-

ment purposes most. Nevertheless we have a Government faced with every sort of developmental requirement deliberately throwing away £84,000 on a service that is adequately provided for and upon which they need not have spent one penny. The ex-Treasurer, in balancing the budget, did not take into consideration the appalling position of the farmers. Men on whom the State depends are leaving the land in increasing numbers; they are in the city in hundreds either seeking employment or on relief works or on sustenance. How much better it would be to give them sustenance to keep them on the land and to have cancelled the interest on their debts. The Government knew that they would not get the interest and could easily have cancelled it rather than have allowed the farmers to abandon their holdings. Abandoned farms are a menace to any country. In some instances the groupies can be seen occupying worm-eaten, roof-leaking shacks, and their cattle dying of starvation, whereas perhaps an adjoining holding has a perfectly good house and a good supply of fodder but owing to red tape and difficult conditions the men cannot make use of the better houses and the wasting fodder. Such is the treatment from a Government which talked in conference about private banks skinning the cream of the credit issue, the need for increasing the purchasing power, and the desire to end poverty amidst plenty. Not only is such talk paradoxical, but it is sheer humbug and eyewash. Not only did the Government skim the cream but they took the entire bowl of cream. They allowed these people to live under conditions that are comparable only with those of Chinese peasants. It would be interesting to know how many farmers have during the depression been forced off the land by private mortgagees. I suggest that the number would probably be many less than in the case of those who were forced off the land by the Agricultural Bank under the auspices of a benevolent Labour Government. We talk about tyranny and poverty in Italy, Germany, Russia and other countries, but we have poverty and tyranny in our own comparatively prosperous country. I defy any member to find anywhere in Italy or Germany such hopeless farms and hopeless farmers as we have in Western Australia to-day. When the Premier made his historic reference to the country returning to normality, I take it he meant that those values

upon which the State depends for normality had to some extent returned. Wool, wheat and gold, which reflect their better prices through industry and commerce, primarily helped the Premier to balance his budget. Unfortunately these increased values arrived too late to be of any assistance to our distressed farmers, so deeply indebted that they had reached the stage when if manna fell from Heaven itself they could not have benefited their creditors. What was needed was humanitarian statesmanship and consideration, pending a realisation of their share of the values, the decline of which had brought them so much misery. If world indications point aright, we will see the men beggared watching prices soar and soar, when such prices would have meant salvation to them could they have retained their holdings. In this respect the policy of the Government towards the distressed farmers has not only been ruinous to the State but utterly statesmanlike. Not only has the Budget been balanced at the expense of these people, but at the expense of their unfortunate children, many of whom have been forced into the C3 class which engenders in them bad tendencies that help to develop a character which in later life will cause these children to seek revenge on society for their early unfair upbringing. Crimes in youth will lead to a degenerate manhood; full gaols, hospitals and homes are the natural corollary and the greater cost of maintaining all these institutions. Every responsible citizen is aware of the difficulties confronting any Government in financing the increasing social services, but if the conditions become increasingly difficult for men to find work, it is obvious that the Government must face the fact that children must be fed. No party can shirk this issue. The Free Milk Council has ascertained that in some of the schools one-sixth of the children are under-nourished. In the Child Welfare return published last year it was stated that the increase in the number of epidemics amongst children was due to malnutrition. The league's nutritional committee recommended that immediate steps be taken, as a public charge or otherwise, to meet the nutritional needs of that section of the community with low incomes; it also advocated that an adequate supply of milk should be made available for children. Western Australia is a comparatively poor country, and many people live on comparatively small incomes. It is frequently not realised that

many families of three are living on a guinea a week, families of four on 28s. a week, and families of six on two guineas a week. Many parents with large families are living on £3 a week. Such parents cannot provide an adequate supply of fresh milk for their children. There is no ground for the excuses that are put forward as to why this milk should not be given. It is suggested that the children will be looked upon as objects of charity, that the parents themselves may object to the children receiving free milk, and that those who can afford to pay will take advantage of the system. Such objections are not only puerile but absurd. The Free Milk Council has experienced none of these objections. A letter was written to the parents of all the children at one particular school where free milk was given, and all the replies were of a thankful nature expressing delight at the interest taken in the youngsters. As the children are weighed and measured before they receive the milk, they feel they are of some importance, and are developing a milk conscience. Those who can afford to pay for the milk are increasing in number. The council has experienced no difficulty in selecting those children whose parents are in poor circumstances. The Government will find it very easy to ascertain the incomes of the parents concerned. I suggest that the distressing circumstances of these children might be relieved by a grant from the Government of at least £1,500 a year, to be spent on the issue of free milk. I further suggest that the Government should establish domestic science classes attached to all schools with an attendance of 80 children or over. Where the children can obtain a midday meal at cost this would not only ensure more thorough domestic science training, so necessary in girls, but after the initial equipment had been provided the cost of supplying the meals would be met by the children. Many children now receive a few pence with which to buy their luncheon daily. This money is spent in sweets, cake and other ways. The children who get the money are not in the A1 class. If parents knew that a wholesome midday meal could be provided, they would see that the pennies they gave were spent in that direction. The system has been functioning in America for many years, in Victoria to some extent, and here in a limited way. If the system were adopted in a wholesale manner, I feel sure the State would benefit by the improvement

in the physique of the children. It would also benefit by a decrease in the cost of maintaining our hospitals, homes and other institutions. I am very glad to see that a grant has been given from the Youth and Motherhood Appeal Fund to hospitals and clinics, but that does not dispose of the hospital question. We still have the constant impecuniosity of hospitals and the frequent public appeals, in the face of the tax of 1½d. in the pound. Hospitals are a Government responsibility, and not the responsibility of lotteries or anything of that kind. Until the Government take up this question whole-heartedly and legislate for the health of the people, the community will never be a contented one. Recently in Subiaco several cases of septicaemia broke out. Three maternal deaths were recorded and two babies died as the result of the disease. The private hospitals are excellently run and in fairness to them the Government should hold an inquiry into the cause of the outbreaks of septicaemia. Such an inquiry would give the Government a good idea of the risks to which women are exposed in child-bearing. So many mistakes have been made with land settlement schemes that I am certain the Leaders of the Governments concerned have never grasped the essentials of land settlement. More use should be made of the talents and experience of the 80 members who comprise the Parliament of this State. If permanent non-party Parliamentary committees were established, with power to co-opt outside experts in an honorary capacity, I feel sure that much valuable time would be saved. These committees would act as informing agents as it were for the two Houses. The system is followed in other parts of the world, and has proved exceedingly valuable.

Mr. Hegney: Do you suggest getting rid of Ministers?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Some of them. Such committees would save much valuable time and would obviate many of the heinous mistakes that are now made. Amongst others I suggest such a committee to investigate the land settlement schemes, ascertain the reasons for our past failures, and pave the way for wiser and better legislation. In the past we have followed the system of placing inexperienced men on the land, loading them up with debt, and expecting them to avoid the inevitable disaster. We have large areas of land which could be made available free to approved societies, which



could organise their own members in their own way. I believe that under such conditions our land settlement would move along very much better and much more soundly financially. The Quakers of England have settled thousands of people on the land during the last three or four years. In Palestine more than 33,000 persons have been absorbed annually. The Jewish Board in Palestine has converted the sandy hills into flowering orchards. It has often been said in this House that the wrong type of settler has come to Australia. That is not true. The type is exactly the same as that with which the British Government are dealing now. They have been successful in settling on the land numbers of families, miners from Wales, and others.

The Minister for Mines: There are 32,000 fewer farms there now than there were three years ago.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I should like to challenge those figures. I have not long returned from England, so that I know what I am talking about. To-day Great Britain is successfully placing hundreds of people on the land. Large estates are being cut up, and ex-miners are being settled upon them. The reason why the Imperial Government are successful is that they have placed this work in the hands of experienced and practical men. When the holding reaches the productive stage these supervisors find markets for the produce. The Government of this State has been a worthy example of how not to do things in connection with the land. A lack of Government sympathy, understanding and commonsense has driven hundreds of people off the land. These people can be seen in Great Britain to-day walking round as sandwich men telling the community not to go to Australia. We are aware that the cost to the Government of relief work is approximately £5 per week per man. This is made up of £2 15s. for wages, and £2 5s. for material and overheads. In two years the cost of this relief work comes to approximately £500 per man. A land settlement scheme to re-establish our farms by giving work to suitable relief men and ultimately placing them on those farms, would save money to the Government and create assets for the Government. If during the first year £125 were given in wages and the balance in equipment, during the second year less in the way of wages and

the balance in equipment up to £500 to include super, seed, and stock, and if capable the men were given a 99 years lease, and the rental were based on production and not upon fictitious Government values, I feel sure that within a couple of years there would be no abandoned farms. It would serve to preserve the State's security and help in providing work without entailing the present appalling losses. It would save the necessity for many of these men keeping two homes, which at present they are forced to do, and under such conditions they eke out a mere existence. The member for Perth (Mr. Needham) criticised the Youth and Motherhood Appeal. If one cannot be constructive in one's observations, I think it unwise to talk destructively, and I hope that anything I say whilst I am in this House will be regarded as constructive.

Mr. Hegney: I notice that all the farmers are sitting up and taking notice of how they should run their farms.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Perhaps if the members of the Government will take notice of how the Government should be run, they will prove to be more successful. When consideration is given to the position regarding apprentices and the shortage of skilled labour, those primarily concerned refuse to face the issue. The facts are that to-day we have idle machines in some of our secondary industries, because the balance between the training of youth who are to enter the trade and the skilled labour leaving the trade, is badly adjusted. Owing to the existing brighter conditions, the employers are looking for trained youths, but because of this mal-adjustment, find it almost impossible to get them. In the annual report of the Education Department for 1935, we find that technical training has been restricted owing to the want of adequate buildings and equipment. For instance, the report contains the following:—

The number of individual students enrolled at the Perth Technical College during 1935 was 3,176, an increase of 313. The work was carried out under conditions that prevent efficient work being done. The Commissioner who held an inquiry into the needs of technical education in 1928 recommended that £50,000 to £60,000 be expended on buildings at the Technical College, and £20,000 on equipment. The number in attendance then was 2,464. The numbers have increased since 1928 by 800, yet no increased accommodation has been provided. If funds cannot be made available by the State, the time has arrived when an earnest endeavour should be made to obtain them from other

sources. In America, the Federal Government assist the States. In parts of England the local governing bodies provide funds for technical education, a notable example being the Municipal School of Technology, Manchester. I strongly recommend that the present almost impossible state of affairs be ended. A strong case could be made for assistance from the Federal Government, or the Municipal Act could be amended to enable sufficient funds to be provided by way of rates.

The report also shows that there are not sufficient apprentices in the bricklaying, plastering and masonry branches to enable classes in those lines to be continued. I commend the suggestion that the Municipal Corporations Act be amended to enable sufficient funds to be provided by way of rates, for I regard it as a sensible proposal. It would mean that municipalities would be able to provide their own training centres, and this would be a valuable aid to decentralisation. If the school age were raised to 16, the last two years of a youth's school life could be spent in useful, practical training in the vicinity of his own home. In America most schools have vocational and domestic science classes, and one-third of the school day is spent in those classes. There are higher vocational colleges attaining a university standard for specific training purposes. In Russia similar higher schools do not come under the purview of the Educational Board, but under the Supreme Economic Council. The reason for that is that the number of trainees must approximately equal the number that industry can absorb. I do not suggest any such arbitrary methods here, but I do suggest that our unplanned system affords the disquieting knowledge that we have not sufficient vocational trainees, but idle machines and unemployed youths. Many of these disappointed youths are encouraged by subversive agitators, some of whom are pedantic theorists who endeavour to lead the youths to believe that a change in the form of government will relieve their lot. I warn hon. members that the danger to democracy is not through revolutionary workmen, but will arise from the unbalanced intellectuals whose unwholesome influence is gradually white-anting our religious and political structures. If we desire to retain our democratic form of government we must get down to realities. We must give each youth a chance to live and to make his way in an agricultural, technical or professional career. This can be done only by increasing the

facilities for vocational education and augmented planning. They say that "love laughs at locksmiths," but I think that the youth of the State when well fed will laugh at the visionary professors. The recommendation of the Youth and Motherhood Appeal Committee for the raising of the school age should be considered very seriously by members of this Chamber, but their recommendation that a hundred youths be recruited for prospecting should be thoroughly condemned. If those youths were to be sent out under such a scheme, they would still be untrained at the end of the year, and the State would have spent 15s. a week on them together with the cost of their equipment. Prospecting is a man's job, and the Minister for Mines knows full well how difficult he has found it during the past year or so to induce men to embark upon the scheme. Men who are without any responsibilities have refused to participate in the prospecting scheme on the basis of 15s. a week, so why should the Minister seek to exploit our youth?

The Minister for Mines: You ask the Appeal Committee that question, not me.

Mr. Hughes: At any rate, if they find anything, Claude de Bernales will buy it.

Mr. Thorn: You will recollect that the member for Forrest supported the prospecting scheme.

Miss Holman: The member for Forrest can speak for herself.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I next wish to bring under the notice of members the great disadvantages under which many suburban business people are trading. The large stores and emporiums are allowed to sell almost every conceivable article, to the detriment of the small suburban traders. With the advantage of a large turnover and the employment of much juvenile labour, most of which is dispensed with when the young people reach 21 years of age, enable the city emporiums to be crowded while suburban stores that were once busy are now empty. I am forced to the conclusion that the Government foresee a socialistic advantage in the present position, and therefore they are content to allow these unjust conditions to continue. They are playing a waiting game, waiting until the smaller shops are swallowed up in the larger concerns, and then those large emporiums will serve as a jumping-off ground for the nationalisation of trading stores. If my conclusions are wrong, I am sure the

Government will agree with me that there is urgent need for the provision of laws to govern the relative percentages of male, female and juvenile labour to be employed, and to discontinue the growth of monopolistic trades that are based in many instances upon the inordinate supply of cheap labour. Next, I would like to bring before the notice of the Government the housing problem. I ask them to give serious consideration to that question when it comes before Parliament and to pay particular attention to the position of pensioners who cannot afford to pay more than 5s. a week in rent.

Mr. Nulsen: Give them more money.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I am prepared to give the pensioners twice or three times as much as they receive now, but in the meantime I am urging the Government to see that the rentals these people have to pay is commensurate with the income they receive.

Mr. Raphael: Will you vote for a Fair Rents Bill?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I will think about that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is it not rather unusual to interject when a new member is making her first speech?

The Minister for Mines: What about the brick areas that have been declared, in consequence of which the cost of houses has gone up by £300?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I am coming to the end of my rather wearisome speech.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is not wearisome by any means.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I wish to suggest to the Government that they should consider inaugurating a scheme for compulsory, contributory insurance for all social services that rightly belong to the State, those in which all citizens can participate. With such a contributory insurance scheme in operation, I feel sure we could do away with the financial emergency taxation. I suggest that a committee of experts, who would include doctors, social-service workers, insurance and friendly society officers, and, of course, members of Parliament, be appointed to prepare a practical and feasible scheme to be placed before Parliament almost at once. That scheme should do away with the necessity for the present method of financing hospitals by means of lotteries and constant street appeals. Such a scheme would give the citizens a sense of self-

respect and would tend to make them feel that the social services were theirs by right and in no sense a form of charity. If such a scheme were properly administered, I believe it would prove economically self-supporting almost from the inception. The Government have hinted at the necessity for marketing boards, but I think that as our social services absorb such a large proportion of public funds, they are as much in need of scientific handling, if not more so. We cannot wait until the Federal Government deal with the matter. Neither should we attempt to do so, because this is a State matter. If the State desires to preserve its own identity, we should get on with our own job and paddle our own canoe. It may be argued that it is a national task to care for the health of the nation, but it must be remembered that each department that is taken over by the Commonwealth represents an added economic stranglehold by the Commonwealth on the State. I believe that the compulsory contributory insurance scheme that I suggest in respect of social services could be entirely self-supporting. If we are the contributors, let us see to it that we pay the State, and then we would at least have the right to dismiss a Government who did not do their duty. Experience has surely taught us that in the Commonwealth Parliament our representation is so small that it does not count. I urge the Government to put forward a scheme for contributory social service insurance at once, one that will provide for all sickness, unemployment and child endowment where the family is more than three in number. In conclusion, I further urge the Government to bring in a measure that will give relief to those railway men who joined the service under the 1871 Act. I believe two-thirds of the members of this House are pledged to support those men, but they find it convenient continually to hedge, hedge. These men believe that when they joined the service they worked under conditions that provided for a pension, and under that belief gave up 25 or 30 years of their lives to the service of the State. If the legal interpretation of two words in the Act prevented some of the men from receiving their pensions, a moral obligation rests upon Parliament to amend the Act so that justice may be done to all. These men are now old and any liability the State would incur would be small and decreasing. I ask the Government to be at least just to these men.

**MR. TONKIN** (North-East Fremantle) [5.45]: I listened with considerable restraint to the provocative speech of the member for Subiaco. The speech was excellent according to the point of view, but I venture to predict that the next time the hon. member talks in a similar strain her remarks will not be received as sympathetically as they were to-day. The matters introduced by her were highly controversial and while she laid the blame at the door of the Government, I would lay it at the door of the capitalist system.

Mr. Withers: Which she supports.

Mr. TONKIN: The member for Kalgoorlie who moved the motion we are now debating, in my opinion acquitted himself particularly well. He delivered his speech with rare confidence not often displayed on such occasions. It was a maiden speech and the hon. member spoke under trying conditions. Anyway, he made an excellent job of it and I consider his selection for the honour was amply justified. I am glad also that the honour attached to moving the motion was secured by the return of the Labour Government, although of course, with a majority somewhat attenuated. There were two reasons in my opinion for the loss of support sustained by the Government. The first was in connection with unemployment. It was to be expected that there would be considerable dissatisfaction over part-time employment and also because of the sad position of employment for youth. But fairly judged it has to be conceded that the Government have done reasonably well.

Mr. Hughes: Nonsense!

Hon. C. G. Latham: Reasonably well for them.

Mr. TONKIN: I ask the Leader of the Opposition to refer to the capitalist Press from which we do not expect to get very much praise.

Hon. C. G. Latham: To which are you referring?

Mr. TONKIN: The other day there appeared a leading article in the "West Australian" setting out that the conditions for the unemployed were better in Western Australia than anywhere else in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Cross: And the Leader of the Opposition said that too.

Mr. TONKIN: That is an expression of opinion from the "West Australian" which does not pre-ent our point of view. I agree

that conditions in Western Australia are a good deal better—

Hon. C. G. Latham: They have always been better.

Mr. Cross: Not when you were in office.

Mr. TONKIN: Had the electors compared the conditions as they existed during the period the Labour Government were in office, with what they were when the previous Government were in power, we would not have lost the support we did. The Opposition gave us very little credit for the improvement made.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We gave you all the credit to which you were entitled.

Mr. TONKIN: The second reason for the loss of support was due to the flirtation carried on by the Nationalist and Country Parties with the members of the Douglas Social Credit organisation. It was a fair time before the election that an alliance was proposed. The Labour Party were honest by declaring their opposition to the Douglas Social Credit proposals and said that those proposals were unsound. The Opposition would agree that they were honest in the matter, but would say that they were also very foolish. They were quick to see the political advantage to be obtained by making out that they were supporting the proposals advocated by the Douglas Social Credit organisation. Accordingly their members and their candidates joined with the Douglas Credit organisation and appeared on the same platform at meetings called ostensibly for the abolition of poverty. The Leader of the Opposition too appeared on the same platform. There would have been a rude awakening for a large section of the people had the Opposition succeeded in defeating the Government. The Leader of the National Party did not relish the deception he was practising, but he was fully aware of the advantages, and so he put away his scruples and brought to bear all his artfulness. This was his message when he delivered his policy speech as it appeared in the "West Australian" on the following morning. The heading is "Abolition of Poverty" and these are the hon. member's words—

There could be no higher ideal for human aim and effort to reach than the abolition of poverty, and even if the ideal be not reached the stages on the way must add to the sum of human happiness. If there is a way open to reach this ideal within our power to exploit, I would not only gladly but enthusiastically enter upon it. It is difficult as yet to see clearly

that way, and all I can honestly say is that we will not shrink from any effort to discover it.

I tell the hon. member that the way to abolish poverty is as plain as a pike-staff, and not he and probably not more than two on his side of the House will be prepared to pave the way for achievement.

Mr. Hughes: What is it?

Mr. TONKIN: The abolition of the capitalist system. The statement which was applauded by the member for Toodyay committed the Nationalist Party to nothing definite. It was simply the statement of an ideal, an expression of a desire to attain an ideal by supporting proposals which are real anathema to the party the hon. member leads. There is curious irony in connection with this report. The hon. member spoke as I read from the statement, but those are not exactly the words reported in the "West Australian." The hon. member was reported to have said:—

If there is a way open to reach this ideal within our power to exploit this ideal, I would not only gladly but enthusiastically enter upon it.

The hon. member and his party were already engaged in exploiting the ideal to the full. I have been asking myself whether what appeared in the newspaper was really a printer's error, or whether the printer was unwilling to be a party to the deception. We have heard a lot from the Opposition about the abolition of poverty, but not a word since the elections. Several speeches on the Address-in-reply have been made from the other side, but how much have we heard about the abolition of poverty with the possible exception of what was said by the member for Claremont (Mr. North).

The Minister for Lands: If the electors had taken his views seriously they would not have elected him.

Mr. TONKIN: If members opposite were honest in their advocacy of these proposals they would have taken the opportunity to explain them in this House and endeavoured to show that by following the proposals as laid down by the Douglas organisation, we should take some steps towards the abolition of poverty. But they have been silent.

Mr. North: Two-thirds of the proposals are now in force; that is what has happened in the last four years.

Mr. TONKIN: Very little thanks to the hon. member's party.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And none whatever to yours.

Mr. TONKIN: Oh! I understand that the Labour Government in New Zealand have helped considerably. The strange thing is that we find those people who wanted to introduce the Douglas Credit proposals to Western Australia are supporting the party which represents the bankers in Parliament, and yet the members of the Douglas Social Credit organisation wanted national control of the monetary policy. That is what the Douglas credit supporters want, the national control of the monetary policy, and possibly not more than two members opposite would do anything to bring it about. I agree with the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) that the stages on the way to the abolition of poverty must add to the sum of human happiness. It is my intention to suggest steps which should be taken and I believe that the member for Nedlands and his party will "gladly and enthusiastically" follow those proposals. I believe that three proposals could immediately be embarked upon. The first is the reduction of the hours of labour, the second is full-time employment and the third is employment for young people. In connection with the reduction of hours there is a particularly strong case. The introduction of machines into industry has brought about mass production with its consequent speeding up with the result that the workers are subjected to much greater fatigue than formerly, and so there is need for a shorter working period which of course means more leisure. Secondly, financial gain accruing from improved technique has been up to the present monopolised by employers and patentees, and the only share workers have had has been the share of increased unemployment. I think it was in 1934, at the Basic Wage inquiry conducted by the Federal Arbitration Court, that Judge Beely remarked, in his minority judgment, that—

After an analysis of the distribution of products as shown in the manufacturing statistics placed before him, it appeared that since 1927-28 the distribution of products to workers and employers of 54.58 per cent. and 45.42 per cent. had been altered to 50.91 per cent. and 49.08 per cent. in favour of employers; and he considered that this decline of 4.39 per cent.

of the products in the workers' share called for complete re-examination of the whole theory and methods of wage fixation.

Those figures go to show that the introduction of machinery has not benefited the workers at all, but that the whole of the benefit has been taken by the employers, because their share of the products has been steadily mounting. That I consider entirely wrong. I hold that the workers themselves should be given a greater share of the improvement which results in industry from better technique.

Mr. McDonald: Would you amend the Arbitration Act?

Mr. TONKIN: Reduction of hours would be a remedy for unemployment. Mr. Folsom, the employers' delegate from the United States of America to the last Labour Conference in Geneva, held under the auspices of the International Labour Organisation, made the statement—

Shorter hours meant more employment, or at least prevented more unemployment.

There is the belief of an employers' delegate as laid before the last Labour Conference. It has been proved beyond doubt that much technological unemployment is permanent. Therefore the only obvious remedy for such unemployment is a sharing of the available work. By some it was thought that the depression would have a retarding effect on the displacement of labour; but that was not so. The depression made it essential for the wide-awake employer to endeavour to reduce his costs, with the result that numbers of employers who could afford to do so, scrapped their old plant and introduced labour-saving devices, resulting in further displacement of labour. Then, as countries began to emerge from the worst of the depression, those employers who previously could not afford to introduce modern machinery scrapped their obsolete equipment and followed the lead set by their colleagues in industry. The further result was more displacement of labour. Much of that technological unemployment is permanent, unfortunately; but fortunately the introduction of machinery, although making imperative a reduction in working hours, has at the same time rendered such reduction easier of accomplishment. Sir Frederick Stewart, the Australian Government representative at the International Labour Conference of last year, made this statement—

The ingenuity of man in devising labour-saving appliances has so revolutionised the in-

dustrial practice and so diminished the necessity for human labour as entirely to change the relationship between the wage bill and ultimate production costs.

That is an important consideration. Labour is not now the factor it was in production, and so a reduction in hours is not now as costly as it would have been when labour cost bore a bigger proportion to the final cost of the article than it does to-day. Costs would not increase as much by reduction of hours as theory would indicate, because there are offsetting factors. For example, it is quite wrong to argue that a reduction in hours from 44 to 40 per week would mean an increase in cost of 10 per cent. simply because one gets that result from a sum in proportion. There are other factors to be taken into consideration. By way of illustration let me take one. There is improved efficiency. It is well known, and has been proved by tests, that the last hours during which a man works in the day are not so productive as the first hours; that a man's productivity tapers off whilst he is working. He will do more work in the first four hours than in the later four hours; and therefore it is not correct to say that a reduction in weekly hours from 44 to 40, means an actual 10 per cent. increase in cost of production.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Does not that apply to the man on the plough and the harvester?

Mr. TONKIN: I am willing to reduce that man's hours also. Sir Frederick Stewart, to whom I referred a moment ago, used this illustration in answer to a charge that industry could not bear the increased cost. Sir Frederick, who is himself a large employer of labour, has said—

Now that I am in Geneva, if I were to receive a cable from my manager in Australia telling me that the price of wool had gone up 20 per cent., what would it avail me to cable back to my manager saying, "We cannot afford it; the producers will have to accept less"? If we have to pay 20 per cent. more for our raw material, we have no option; we must pay it.

In the same way, if the employer has to face an increased cost of 5 per cent., or say 15 per cent., because of shorter hours, that cost will be faced sooner or later and the goods will still be sold.

Mr. McDonald: He would pass it on.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: How would he pass it on overseas?

Mr. TONKIN: How does he pass it on when there is an increase in the cost of

his raw materials? How was the increased cost borne when working hours were reduced from 60 or 54 to 48 hours per week? The same old argument was used then.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: How about the products sold overseas?

Mr. TONKIN: Happily, some progress has been made with this question. Up to date two conventions have been adopted for the 40-hour week. The first is for employees engaged in the glass bottle industry; the second for persons directly employed in building or civil engineering works financed by central governments. The United States of America, New Zealand, and Italy have made some progress in this regard; though in Italy the reduction in hours was accompanied by reduction in wages. I am not advocating that. I want no reduction in the standard of living, but I do want a shortening of hours such as has been adopted in the United States of America and also in New Zealand. Western Australia could now make a start. We could introduce the 40-hour week on our public works and utilities. It has been said of the world to-day that we are "a civilisation condemned to decline through the excess of its own creative ingenuity and technical perfection." I do not believe that. However, there is a danger of it unless we take precautions. There is one way to escape, and that way is to be found in shortening hours and raising the standard of living. That brings me to the second stage which I said ought to be embarked upon in our march towards the abolition of poverty; and that is full-time employment. The member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) when leading the Labour Party at the last general election, stated that it was intended, as the financial position from time to time permitted, to limit the number of works on which part time provision operated, by restoring to a full-time basis as many as possible of those works which were essential for the progress of the State. Even with shorter hours it is inevitable that there will be an increasing number of men permanently employed on Government works. I believe there is a definite obligation on the Government to maintain employment and the standard of living, and so there is necessity for a public policy for the maintenance of purchasing power. Public works

will have to be planned in relation to employment. I was interested to read in the "Daily News" one evening an article emanating from the Nationalist Research Group—I think that is what they style themselves—of the National Party of Western Australia. There was a heading "National Criticism of Labour's record," and it was stated that—

The number of men now employed on Government works must be a record for all time. Of course it is, but one could not expect the National Party to see that the failure of the capitalist system was responsible for that position. As more and more men find it impossible to obtain work in industry, it will be necessary for the Government to find them employment on public works. That is why the "army of men" now engaged on public works is far in excess of what the number was in years gone by. The Government that may be in power will find it necessary in future to plan public works in relation to employment—to put still more and more works in hand in order to take up the slack which is continually increasing in capitalist enterprise, and which of course is inherent in that system. It is true that sustenance and part-time work ward off starvation, but they do not prevent progressive undernourishment and demoralisation.

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

#### *Point of Order.*

Mr. North: On a point of order I wish to ask through you, Sir, if the Minister for Lands made an interjection to the effect that the member for Claremont (Mr. North) would never have been returned if the electors had taken him seriously. The hon. member certainly did make some interjection of the sort, but he could not be clearly heard from this side of the House, and if, as I have been told, his interjection was that the electors of the member for Claremont did not take their member seriously, I ask that he withdraw it. Actually, the subject of Social Credit was not mentioned in that election. There were two National candidates and it was clearly expressed that the Social Credit question was not an issue.

Mr. Speaker: I hope the hon. member is not going to make a speech.

Mr. North: No, Sir. But at the time of the previous election, you will remember,

there was a Royal Commission that dealt with the question. In view of that explanation, I ask that the Minister withdraw the statement he made, or is said to have made.

The Minister for Lands: I regard the objection taken by the hon. member as unfounded. He said, of course, he wanted a withdrawal "if" I had made such an interjection. What I said was that the electors of Claremont did not take the hon. member's views seriously. That was merely an observation and there was no personal reflection in it at all. There is nothing for the hon. member to complain about. Furthermore, if exception was to be taken it should be taken at the time the words were uttered. But if we were to have exception taken to such remarks, there would be no debate at all.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You know what happened here last session.

The Minister for Lands: I do not care what happened last session. The remark I made was only an observation and should be taken in all the circumstances. There was no personal reflection at all. If the electors of Claremont had taken seriously the hon. member's views on Douglas Credit, he would not have been returned. That is my view. Then, as I have said, under Standing Order 145, the objection should have been taken at the time the words were uttered. Of course there is nothing in the complaint.

The Minister for Employment: I think the hon. member misunderstood what the Minister for Lands said.

Mr. North: May I in reply to the Minister for Lands say definitely that from this section of the House it was not possible to hear what he said. However, I have heard that what he said was that the electors of Claremont, if they took the hon. member seriously, would never return him. Of course the use of the word "views" conveys a different meaning.

*Debate resumed.*

Mr. TONKIN: Before the tea adjournment I was saying that sustenance and part-time work were merely to ward off starvation and did not prevent progressive under-nourishment and demoralisation of individuals and families who could not obtain better conditions. In 1935 a very interesting investigation was carried out by the staff of the Rowett Research Institute in co-operation with the Marketing Supply Committee

and with assistance from the Imperial Bureau of Animal Nutrition, the Royal Statistical Society and Cambridge University. They conducted a wide investigation into the food habits of Great Britain, and reached certain decisions, which are not absolutely conclusive but are really of a tentative nature. Nevertheless the investigation was a very searching one. For the purpose of their inquiry they divided the population of Great Britain into six income groups. The lowest group represented 10 per cent. of the population and included all those persons whose average income did not exceed 10s. per head per week. Let me explain: If a man and his wife and three children, a 5-unit family, had an income of, say, £2 10s. per week, that was taken as an average income of 10s. per head per week. It was shown that about 10 per cent. of the population came into that lowest group, having an income up to 10s. per head per week. It was further estimated that from 20 per cent. to 25 per cent. of the children in Great Britain were in that lowest income group. The committee also found that a diet completely adequate for health was reached in an income level above 50 per cent. of the population, and also that the greatest incidence of deficiency diseases was to be found in the children of the lowest group. The average diet of the people in that group was deficient in every constituent examined, for example, in proteins, in vitamins, in carbohydrates and so on; every constituent examined was deficient so far as the diet of that lowest income group was concerned. The result of the tests indicated that it would be possible to effect a considerable improvement in the health of the children of the lowest-income group by improving that diet. We know that is possible, and I say, Sir, that it is a crime that something is not done immediately to improve that diet of those people. Now I want to apply the results obtained to conditions in Australia. I admit, of course, that I can only make a general comparison, that conditions in Australia are not exactly comparable with those in Great Britain. But I think I can rightly assume that those results will bear general application. We calculate our basic wage on a family of four. But results have shown that in the lowest-income group we find most children. That means, then, that the average worker has more than two children, with the result that his basic wage is already reduced, and that he is endeavouring



to live on a diet which is not adequate according to modern standards. If we now consider that aspect in relation to Government sustenance work, we are forced to this further conclusion, that a man working full time would be on an inadequate standard, but being on part-time employment his standard must be terribly low indeed. Science has proved conclusively what a profound influence diet has on health and physique, and also that much of the ill-health afflicting human populations can be attributed directly to deficiencies in diet. What trouble are we, Sir, piling up for ourselves? The children are the worst sufferers. The requirements for new tissue formation in growth are an extra supply of the richer materials is necessary. That is to say, the children need a greater supply of vitamins, proteins and minerals, more so than adults. Therefore, when we have the condition of inadequate diet with children, the evil effects are accentuated. It is true that the State saves money by having men on part-time work instead of on full time; it saves money because it is obliged to do so, not having sufficient finance to afford full-time work. But at what a cost we are saving money! We are making a direct saving, but spoiling the health of thousands and thousands of children and most probably increasing our future costs because of the sickness and ill-health that will certainly follow. The committee to which I referred carried out a very comprehensive review into this question, giving consideration to the various income groups; and they concluded that as income increases and the standard of diet is improved, so does the death rate decrease; children grow more quickly, the adult stature is greater, and general health and physique are improved. That leads me to believe that money spent now will be more than repaid in the future because of the better general physique of the people. I should think that the people who ought to be most insistent that full-time work be given are those persons who at present get an adequate diet, not those persons on an inadequate diet. All of us who can get sufficient of the right kind of food should not be satisfied until every other person is at least guaranteed an adequate diet. It is a crime to allow it to continue a day longer than we can avoid. If it means increased taxation, we should be prepared to bear it if we are already on an adequate diet, in the interests of those who are getting food which is not sufficient to enable them to grow nor-

mally and to reach the proper stature to which they would attain if they had sufficient nourishment. I consider, too, that by keeping men on part-time work, we are imposing an unfair additional burden on them. The depression was responsible for part-time work. The depression was responsible for the financial emergency cuts in the wages and salaries of various persons, but those financial emergency cuts have been restored, while the part-time worker is still carrying his special cut because of depression conditions. That seems to be unfair.

Mr. Hughes: They have not been restored in all instances.

Mr. TONKIN: To which men?

Mr. Hughes: The railway men are still down 15s. a week.

Mr. TONKIN: The hon. member knows it was left to the courts to adjudicate on the various claims, and in a large number of cases the cuts have been restored.

Mr. Hughes: I do not know of any men in the industrial world who are back to the 1930 level.

Mr. TONKIN: The hon. member has to take into consideration the relative costs of living in the two periods.

Mr. Hughes: We got our salaries restored. We did not have to take that into consideration.

Mr. TONKIN: I might be prepared to agree with the hon. member, but I am contending that the emergency cuts in wages have, in a large number of instances, been restored.

Mr. Hughes: Tell us one.

Mr. TONKIN: In the hon. member's own case.

Mr. Hughes: Yes, but what about the industrial world?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will address the Chair.

Mr. TONKIN: While in a number of cases wages and salaries have been restored, the part-time workers are carrying a special cut owing to depression conditions.

Mr. Sampson: And they have to pay to belong to a union.

Mr. TONKIN: Does not the hon. member believe in unions?

Mr. Thorn: Why does the member for Swan want to dig that up?

Mr. TONKIN: If necessary the people of the State should be prepared to have a deficit rather than a surplus in order that the unfortunate part-time workers might be relieved of their special cut. The mem-

ber for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) in his policy speech when leading the party in the last general election, said—

In my 1933 policy speech, I said that if returned to office I would go to the Loan Council and say that something more was needed than the mere balancing of Budgets, which was no help to hungry men and women.

I agree with that; the balancing of budgets is of no help to hungry men and women. Therefore I am advocating a deficit, if necessary, to give those part-time workers full-time employment. That would probably mean additional taxation, but I say again that people on an inadequate diet should be prepared to bear additional taxation in order that those who are not getting sufficient food should be enabled to do so. Now I wish to deal with the third stage, which I suggested should be taken. This is the question of youth employment. Serious as is the under-nourishment of people, the most serious of all problems confronting this and other countries is that of youth unemployment. It is a moral problem, fraught with very grave economic and political consequences. It is no exaggeration to say that the future of the peoples of the world is at stake on this question. There are thousands of young men and women who have never worked, and what ambition they might have had when they left school has been completely dried up. Their opportunity to commence a career has been irretrievably lost in most instances, and we find them now faced with the responsibility of making homes for themselves without the slightest idea of how to do it or how to find work in order to do it. Anyone knows that prolonged idleness at the formative age of adolescence must lead to demoralisation, because the best years of life have been wasted. It is no wonder that the number of ne'er-do-wells and criminals is increasing year by year. If one turns to the records of crime for the last few years, one is staggered to find the increasing number of young men in the lists. There is only one reason for it, and that is the trouble due to youth unemployment. There is only one solution, and that is to create more vacancies.

Mr. Sampson: Allow them to learn trades.

Mr. TONKIN: Modern thought suggests that five measures may be taken to create those vacancies. Firstly, there is the rais-

ing of the minimum age for commencing work in commerce and industry. Young people between the ages of 14 and 16 should not be part of the unemployment problem at all, because that is the training period, and they should be at school. It would be necessary to make the school-leaving age coincident with this raised age for entrance into industry. The postponement of the normal age would relieve a congested labour market, and would immediately create more vacancies for those above the age of 16. Steps along those lines have already been taken in Norway, the United States of America, Canada and Switzerland, and some districts in Great Britain. To take such a step would necessitate some scheme of child endowment. Already numbers of workers are finding it almost impossible to purchase the necessary schoolbooks for their children at about the ages of 12, 13 and 14. Also they are largely dependent upon the earnings of their children as soon as they leave school. They frequently want them to leave school before they are 14, and endeavour to get exemptions, in order to secure the benefit of the few shillings that the young people can earn. We would have to assist those families, because otherwise too great a hardship would be imposed on them, and such assistance would necessitate a scheme of child endowment. The second measure for increasing the number of vacancies is to lower the retiring age for people at work. This should have general application, and should include judges, members of Parliament, and in fact everybody, with the exception that men of superlative skill should be allowed to continue so long as they were able to do anything of benefit to the community.

Mr. McLarty: Who would be the judge of that?

Mr. TONKIN: Such men would be outstanding individuals. I might instance a man like Marconi. There is not more than one like Marconi in a generation. It would be absurd to retire such a man at 50 and prevent the world from deriving the full benefit of his expert knowledge and genius. The same would have applied to Edison. No judge would be needed; such men would suggest themselves. They would be so few in a generation that the exception would make little difference to the rule. So far

as I can judge, there are no superlative men in Western Australia.

Mr. Thorn: Are there in the Commonwealth?

Mr. TONKIN: I do not think so.

Mr. Thorn: Then why except a man like Marconi?

Mr. TONKIN: I was making provision for men like the hon. member, who otherwise might have said that I had made a general statement without providing for exceptions. The exceptions, however, would be so few as to be negligible, and the rule would have practically general application.

Mr. Thorn: That would not get us anywhere.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes it would, because the hon. member would advance with the crowd. This would also mean much expenditure because a superannuation scheme would be necessary. It is unthinkable that men should be forced from industry at the age of 55 and be expected to live on the old age pension of 18s. a week. If we are to create vacancies for the young people, those are measures which must be taken. If it is not desired to create the vacancies, we cannot employ the young people. Surely we should not keep the old people working while the young ones are maintained in idleness.

Mr. Thorn: You suggest that people be retired at 55?

Mr. TONKIN: Not at all.

Mr. Thorn: That is what you said.

Mr. TONKIN: Who am I to be able to fix on the exact year that should be adopted? It will be essential to reduce the retiring age, be it 55 or 50. Although I do not expect to live to see the day, I feel sure that in future years men will be retired at 40 years of age. For the information of the member for Toodyay, let me say that this experiment is already being tried in Czecho-Slovakia. The member for Nedlands smiles. That will not prevent the Czecho-Slovakians from proceeding with the scheme.

Mr. Hughes: They have a "shoot-up" there occasionally.

Mr. TONKIN: They must have more brains in that country; we certainly have not a monopoly of brains here. People laughed at Columbus when he told them the world was round. Here is the Czecho-Slovakian scheme. If men of 56 and women of 54 are retired, they are granted a pension, provided they do not engage in lucrative employment. Should we laugh at those people for experimenting? I believe that

before many years have elapsed a convention along those lines will be agreed to by the various nations at Geneva, and that a reduction in the retiring age will be made universally. The third measure advocated by thinkers on the subject is that of the suppression of multiple employment in private and State undertakings when the monthly salary is above a certain figure. It is a common thing to find some men with half-a-dozen occupations and others with none. That is not right. It has been suggested that where the monthly salary is above a certain figure, a man should not be permitted to hold a number of jobs, while there are young people starting off in life who cannot get any jobs. The fourth measure suggested is that of the abolition of overtime. If a man is already working full time there is no justification for his working additional time when there are other men who cannot get a job. The abolition of overtime is advocated. Those who advocate a reduction in working hours cannot logically ask at the same time for a continuation of overtime. The fifth and last measure suggested by those who have given consideration to the subject is that special public works should be put in hand to cater for unemployed youths. Instead of ordinary public works that will absorb all kinds and conditions of men and women, they advocate that special work should be put in hand to cater for the young people, the work to be adapted to their age and occupation. All these things would require heavy expenditure, far beyond the financial resources of any one State. I consider it the duty of the Commonwealth Government, however, to come to the aid of the States in this matter. If we are going to raise the school-leaving age—the time is not far off when that will be done—we will need an endowment scheme. We shall need assistance because of the additional expenditure necessary in the Education Department. Even now the State cannot cope with the requirements of the department. Many things are wanted that cannot be financed. I hear members every year, when I speak on the Budget, twitting me because I ask for additional expenditure. They give the impression that I am asking for a tremendous amount of money.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is a question of giving the people food first, or work so that they can earn food.

Mr. TONKIN: Probably that is right.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Of what use is it to go to the top of the ladder when we have not yet passed the first rung?

Mr. TONKIN: This will assist people to get food.

Hon. C. G. Latham: While their parents starve?

Mr. Thorn: This is food for thought.

Mr. TONKIN: If the school leaving age is increased, it will be done because we want to keep children of 15 or 16 out of industry. That will create vacancies for unemployed youth of 17 or 18 who are earning nothing, and have to be maintained by their parents. We will provide jobs for them. To do that we must have extra expenditure on education. We shall need more teachers, schools and materials, and that will mean heavily increased expenditure.

Mr. Hughes: Will you not have to do something for the working man who has a boy or girl of 15 or 16, to enable him to maintain the child at school?

Mr. TONKIN: I said it would be necessary to have a child endowment scheme.

Mr. Warner: Would you make it applicable to all classes of the community?

Mr. TONKIN: Why not? If we apply it to the working man and woman, the people on the lowest rung of the ladder, it is obvious that we apply the remedy where it is most needed. It would not be necessary to give the endowment to people who already had more than they knew what to do with. They would not want it.

Mr. Warner: What about the farming community?

Mr. TONKIN: I would place that community in the lowest income group. They would come within what I am stating. The worker on a farm is no different from a worker on the road; he is on the lowest rung of the ladder, and will need assistance.

Mr. Hughes: Why should we make the Federal Government do this? Why not do it ourselves?

Mr. TONKIN: We have not the necessary financial resources.

Mr. Hughes: We have all the natural resources of the country.

Mr. TONKIN: They are privately owned.

Mr. Hughes: If that is the remedy, let us get rid of private ownership. Do you not intend to follow along your own road?

Mr. TONKIN: The hon. member need have no fear on that score; I will follow if given the opportunity.

Mr. Hughes: That is propaganda for tomorrow.

Mr. TONKIN: It is the duty of the Commonwealth to assist the State in this matter. We all agree that the defence of the country is a Commonwealth responsibility. If we want to defend the lives and the property of the people in Western Australia, that must be taken over by the Commonwealth, and we are prepared to bear taxation so that this may be done. Let us be logical. It is just as important to defend young people from demoralisation as it is to defend this country from aggression. The former danger is the more imminent. At present the States are left to fend for themselves. Despite what the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) says, we have not the financial resources in this State for a child endowment scheme, for additional expenditure on education, for a superannuation scheme, and all the other necessary things. The Commonwealth therefore should be asked to assist. Why should they not do so? They are taxing the people of Western Australia. They are supposed to be looking after the welfare of the whole of Australia. How can they do that if they neglect the welfare of Western Australia? As in every other country, the youth in this country are demanding that attention should be given to their plight. It is not a question whether we can afford to do these things, but whether we can afford not to do them. When I commenced my speech I said I would show three stages that could be adopted so that we might march towards the abolition of poverty. Quite a number of changes will be necessitated before our object can be achieved. We have the promise of the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) that once he can clearly see the way, he will gladly and enthusiastically enter upon it.

Mr. Marshall: He will require to get another monacle first.

Mr. TONKIN: If these stages are embarked upon, they will go a long way to abolish all poverty. I believe that is what we are all striving for, but some of us are

afraid to take the necessary measures to reach the goal.

**MR. McLARTY** (Murray-Wellington) [8.10]: In common with other members I desire to offer you, Mr. Speaker, my congratulations on again being elected to the high position which you occupy. I take this opportunity, too, of congratulating Mr. Willecock on having attained the Premiership. I greatly regret that the hon. gentleman is at present in hospital; and I feel quite sure that when I express the hope that he will soon be able to leave hospital, with fully recovered health, to take his place amongst us in this House, I voice the feeling of all members on this side of the Chamber. Further, I would like to take the opportunity of congratulating the Minister for Employment and Labour (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke) on his rapid accession to Ministerial office. Unquestionably, the Minister and his colleague the Minister for Agriculture (Hon. F. J. S. Wise) have had rapid promotion in the political life of Western Australia. I hope that they have gained their positions through sheer merit, and not because members opposite think that the wise men come from the East. I must own to a feeling of disappointment that the South-West is still unrepresented in the Cabinet. I have no wish to be at all parochial, but when I look over the personnel of the Cabinet I find that the metropolitan area is well represented, that the goldfields have representation, that the wheat areas have it, and that the North-West has representation also. I remember that when the Minister for Agriculture was elevated to Cabinet rank, there were general expressions of approval because the hon gentleman is a North-West representative. For that reason I personally was quite glad of his accession to office, knowing that the North-West would have direct representation in Cabinet. I trust that in the near future the Cabinet will include a representative of the South-West. That portion of Western Australia is advancing rapidly, but it is confronted with many difficulties. The Deputy Premier knows something of that aspect; but still, if the Cabinet had first-hand information concerning those difficulties, it would help materially. The Speech of the Lieut-Governor did not convey very much to members. It consisted in the main of a recital of past happenings. I am afraid that the Speeches at the last few openings which

I have attended have been much in the same vein. It is a pity that the Government do not give members an earlier opportunity of knowing what legislation is to be brought down. I know that the Press did mention a further Bill this morning.

**Mr. Thorn**: That is an innovation.

**Mr. McLARTY**: Governments should get out of the habit of merely mentioning the names of two or three Bills to be introduced, and keeping members in the dark till towards the end of the session, when there is not that opportunity to study measures which there should be. I hope to hear something early in this session with regard to marketing problems. I regret that the former Premier will not be able to carry out his promise to explain fully the Government's action in intervening in the recent James case before the Privy Council. The Government, I am aware, make the claim, which is probably a proper claim, that they intervened in order to protect the States against further Federal encroachment. Many Western Australian producers, nevertheless, believe that the Government, by their action in supporting James, helped to bring about the downfall of highly important marketing legislation. I presume the Government have some plan prepared to assist the dairying and the dried fruit industries, as I understand that Ministers have had a very fair idea that the Privy Council's decision would be in favour of James.

**Mr. F. C. L. Smith**: You do not think that the intervention affected the decision?

**Mr. McLARTY**: I do not think so at all; but, still, it was the impression of many Western Australian producers that the Government were supporting James. Fortunately, present indications are that the Federal Government will be able to maintain an effective marketing organisation, and that primary industries will not be affected, at least for the time being. Although the marketing legislation has been upset by the Privy Council, it will scarcely be denied that that legislation has been of great benefit to some of our primary industries, and also to the State and the Commonwealth generally. It seems extraordinary that after our Federal Parliament has passed legislation and all our State Parliaments have agreed to it and our Federal High Court has upheld it, an appeal to the Privy Council should upset the whole scheme, and this despite the fact that the legislation is admitted by the

great majority of our people to be beneficial to Australia as a whole. No doubt the Minister for Agriculture has been giving these marketing problems his most serious consideration. We are all anxious to hear the hon. gentleman's views. I am sorry the Minister did not attend the conference of Ministers for Agriculture in Adelaide. I am aware, of course, that the Minister for Works has gone to Adelaide to represent the State at both the conferences to be held there. Nevertheless I consider that in view of the importance of future marketing legislation the Minister for Agriculture would have been well advised to attend the conference in question. I know he is a particularly busy Minister; but yet I feel he should have made time available to attend that conference, even though his doing so had made it necessary to adjourn Parliament for a week. I also wish to say to the Minister that I hope he will alter his decision in regard to the receiving of deputations.

Mr. Thorn: That decision is altered already.

Mr. McLARTY: I myself am entirely opposed to Ministers receiving deputations on all sorts of trivial matters; but with respect to future marketing legislation I deem it necessary that the Minister should obtain first-hand information. He can obtain it by receiving deputations. The reception of these deputations is a source of satisfaction to the industries represented. The suggestion that deputationists should put their views to the Minister in writing is not altogether practicable. It has been intimated that the Minister has altered his decision in this regard. I hope that is so.

The Minister for Lands: Do you find it difficult to put your views on paper?

Mr. McLARTY: Sometimes I do. Sometimes I would rather interview the Minister personally, feeling that I would get more satisfaction in that way. At all events, if important marketing legislation is to be introduced the Minister should, in my opinion, adopt this attitude. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) in his speech made reference to shorter hours. I am aware that an effort is to be made to introduce a 40-hour week. There has even been talk in influential quarters of a 30-hour week. That suggestion I take to be propaganda. I am wondering what effect shorter hours will have on the primary industries of this country. Will they mean an added burden for the producers? Personally, I have no objec-

tion at all to shorter hours if it will help to solve the great unemployment problem; but if a move in that direction means an added burden for the primary producers to carry, we shall not achieve what we set out to accomplish. It is useless adding to the superstructure unless the foundation is strong enough. While the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) was speaking, I was hoping he would deal with the position from the point of view of the primary producers, bearing in mind that in Western Australia everything is based upon primary production.

Mr. Tonkin: There is vast primary production in America.

Mr. McLARTY: That is so.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But this is not America.

Mr. McLARTY: One has only to look at the industries of this State to recognise that over 90 per cent. is represented by primary production.

Mr. Tonkin: Do not the Americans feed their own people?

Mr. McLARTY: But America has a tremendous proportion of secondary industries.

Mr. Tonkin: They do not have to import their food supplies.

Mr. McLARTY: That is so, but there is a vast population in America. I recognise that a shorter working week will make life in the great industrial centres throughout Australia much more attractive, but in attempting to solve the great unemployment problem, it will be disastrous if we further depopulate the rural areas.

Mr. Tonkin: Do you think Australia should lag behind in any international move?

Mr. McLARTY: No, but we are peculiarly situated inasmuch as Australia is in the main a primary producing country. That applies more particularly to Western Australia where we have to depend upon exports for our existence. I feel that the policy of the Government should be such as will make life in the country more attractive.

Mr. Cross: Then shorten the hours of work for the farmer.

Mr. McLARTY: If it were possible I would do that, but I would like the hon. member to tell us how he could bring that about.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Put on two shifts.

Mr. McLARTY: Most farmers cannot pay for one shift, but if the hon. member

can devise a scheme to enable them to employ two shifts, let him propound it to the House. We have heard lately a great deal about the poor housing accommodation in the city. We have our housing problem in the country as well. Where shall we find the best average housing in this State?

The Minister for Lands: In Nedlands.

Mr. McLARTY: In the city, or in the country? If we are able to keep our people in the country districts, that in itself will go a long way towards solving the housing problem in the city. In Western Australia, city life appears to hold greater attractions to the people. In fact, that is obvious from the huge populations of the various Australian capital cities.

Mr. Tonkin: That is not peculiar to Australia.

Mr. Cross: That condition applies everywhere.

Mr. McLARTY: I do not know that it does. I have been in countries where that does not apply, where there have been many well-populated centres and not merely one or two isolated and heavy aggregations of population. The hon. member will see that that condition of affairs does not apply in all countries. I have a few suggestions to offer towards a solution of the problem of increasing the attractions of country life. I believe one way would be the provision of adequate water supplies for all country towns. The member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) complained bitterly of the fact that people in his electorate had to use muddy water, and the other evening the member for Katanning (Mr. Watts) also complained about the inadequate water supply provided for his home town. If people have to use muddy water and wash with it, conditions are not very attractive, particularly to housewives. The Government could well give consideration to devising means by which improved water supplies could be made available for country towns. Then again, cheap electric power would help to bring about development. In country towns the people have to pay three or four times as much for electricity as do the city dwellers. Power is needed for developmental purposes, and I believe the difficulty could be overcome in some way. I am sorry the Government do not provide

help in the provision of agricultural halls, particularly in newly developed districts. I do not suggest that that help should be forthcoming in older established areas. The condition of country roads has improved tremendously in recent years, and also the hospitals and schools, but there is still room for improvement. Our great problem to-day is to increase our country population. We hear a good deal about the defence of Australia, and those who are raising the issue are fully justified; but I contend that a larger population is our best means of defence.

Mr. Doney: The trouble is that that is too slow.

Mr. McLARTY: I do not mean population in just a few centres, but what is required is a better distribution of population. I congratulate the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Styants) upon his maiden speech. He applauded the Government on their public works policy, but we should know what future public works the Government intend to carry out. It is necessary that our public works shall be planned ahead, and particularly with public works is prior preparation essential. Do the Government contemplate going on with any further irrigation work?

The Minister for Lands: Or further drainage works?

Mr. McLARTY: Yes, drainage works too. Have the Government any comprehensive policy respecting the conservation of water in the drier areas? In view of the tremendous rainfall in the Darling Ranges, it has been suggested that it should not be difficult to provide water supplies for the dry areas, and also sufficient for future irrigation works. I do not suggest that such undertakings should be carried out in one year, but that they should be spread over several years. I would regard any scheme for the provision of adequate water supplies in the drier areas and for irrigation purposes too, as particularly sound, especially if the operations were spread over a number of years. Again I feel that when public works are about to be put in, the districts that are to be affected should have some knowledge of the proposed works, which should not be sprung upon them at short notice; they should be given opportunity to make provision for future development. This should

be capable of arrangement, particularly as Mr. Collier pointed out to the Agent General, that the turning of the corner has been achieved. The position of the group settlers in the South-West seems to be giving grave concern to those who have an intimate knowledge of the situation. I represent some group settlers, but I am glad to say that so far from being dissatisfied, they appear to be imbued by some measure of satisfaction. I feel that as a result of the recent writing-down, those settlers on the Peel and Bate-man estates will be able to make good. I certainly think their present valuations are high enough, and there may be cases where the valuations could be further reduced. However, it is only to be expected that in a scheme of such magnitude some anomalies should arise in the course of a writing-down. The settlers I represent are in a different position from those represented by the member for Sussex and the member for Nelson.

The Minister for Lands: Do you call gifts of public moneys anomalies?

Mr. McLARTY: I say that in connection with the writing down there may be some anomalies.

The Minister for Lands: But surely gifts of £1,000 are not anomalies?

Mr. McLARTY: The Minister is talking about gifts, but if one has not the remotest hope of getting anything back, I would not regard them as gifts.

The Minister for Lands: If your bank were to give you a writing-down of £1,000, I suppose you would regard it as an over-draft?

Mr. McLARTY: I am not afraid of anything like that happening. However, as I say, the settlers I represent are on a different footing from those represented by the members for Sussex and Nelson. The settlers I represent have an assured market, and so long as they can hold it they will have a good chance of meeting their obligations. It is not my intention to offer any hostile criticism of the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank, for I realise that they are faced with a most difficult task. When the Agricultural Bank Bill was before the House I did not feel inclined to have anything to say upon it, for I would very much rather offer something constructive than indulge in destructive criticism calculated to embarrass or hinder the Agricultural Bank Commissioners in their very difficult position. In an endeavour to offer something constructive, I would ask the Minister

for Lands if it be not possible say, for three years, to bring about a further reduction of interest; that is to say, for money used for developmental purposes. I want to make this point also, that the Bank Commissioners' claim for a half-year's interest up to the 30th June last is resented by the settlers, who declare that they have paid that interest. The legality of the payment is also questioned, and legal advice states that the Commissioners have no claim. That matter should be cleared up, and cleared up quickly. If the Commissioners are entitled to that interest, I suggest that it would have been a better plan to capitalise the first half-year's interest, and thereby give the settlers a clear start. A request has come from the settlers that an appeal board should be established. The Bank Commissioners rightly state that the Act does not give them power to create an appeal board, but I believe that an appeal board would benefit both the Bank and the settlers.

The Minister for Lands: An appeal board for what?

Mr. McLARTY: In regard to valuations, evictions and general matters.

The Minister for Lands: Do you think the Bank of New South Wales would give you an appeal board?

Mr. McLARTY: I do not know what the Bank of New South Wales would do, except that they would hear me if I had a complaint.

The Minister for Lands: Would the Westralian Farmers give their debtors an appeal board?

Hon. C. G. Latham: They would go to the court.

Mr. McLARTY: I do not want to see an appeal board established in order to take away the authority from the Commissioners, for I do not wish to weaken the power of the Commissioners.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Minister knows of the appeal board that was held on the goldfields when an adverse decision was given by the Arbitration Court.

Mr. McLARTY: The railway men have an appeal board, the civil servants have an appeal board, and I think the sustenance workers also have an appeal board. If it be right that those bodies should be entitled to an appeal, why is it that the settlers cannot have the same privilege?

The Minister for Lands: If a debtor owed you money and did not want to pay it, would you give him the right of appeal?



Mr. McLARTY: I think I should have justice from my debtors. The Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act, and other Acts, have been passed in order to apply to such circumstances. Again, the Minister, if he would have a further illustration, agreed that the returned soldiers should have their own representative at the Agricultural Bank in order to place their cases before the Commissioners. If it be right for the returned soldiers—and there can be no question about it—the group settlers also might well have a representative at the Bank. The Minister shakes his head. I ask the Minister to explain why appeal boards are set up for the benefit of some organisations, but not for the settlers under the Agricultural Bank. Another matter that is creating uneasiness amongst the settlers is the question of the procuration orders. I am not standing here suggesting that the settlers should not face their obligations.

The Minister for Lands: Then you must be sitting down to it.

Mr. McLARTY: Before putting these procuration orders into operation, I would give a settler a chance to meet his obligations. We all like to handle the money we are earning, but these procuration orders do not give that opportunity. There is another objection. They have the effect of destroying outside credit.

Mr. Needham: There is a procuration order against your salary every year.

Mr. McLARTY: If a butter factory has the first pull in the order that payments are made, it means that settlers are unable to secure credit from the storekeeper. That difficulty will be increased in future, because the storekeeper has been so badly hit by the present adjustment of debts. There is no question that the country storekeeper has had to carry a heavy burden in connection with the adjustment of debts. I suggest that the settler, if he prefers to meet his commitments by paying them himself, should be given that opportunity. Then, if the Bank Commissioners think he is not acting as he should, they could use the procuration orders. I shall leave any further references to group settlement matters to the member for Sussex and the member for Nelson. I believe that the Commissioners desire to act fairly and are out to secure a satisfactory solution of the present difficulties. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) referred to child endowment. I agree that the time has arrived when we should

do something to help the parents of large families. The Commonwealth is faced with a declining birth rate and there is no country in the world more in need of natural increase of population than is Australia. Here, again, the defence position arises. It may be said that this is a Commonwealth matter; I think it is also a State matter. We would be justified in putting into operation some scheme to help the family man.

Mr. Tonkin: Would you agree to additional taxation for that purpose?

Mr. McLARTY: Although I disagree with increased taxation, I think I would favour additional taxation to help those people who are trying to bring up big families. I know that some scheme of national insurance is mooted, and I hope it will soon be put into operation, but I still think that some special consideration should be given to the men and women who are endeavouring to rear large families.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You think our primary industries can be still further taxed?

Mr. McLARTY: When I mentioned the subject I said I did not know where such assistance could come from.

Mr. Cross: You agree with taxing the other fellow?

Mr. McLARTY: No, I do not, but I am making a special plea for the man with a large family. Where such assistance is to come from is a matter for the respective Governments to decide.

Mr. Thorn: The Commonwealth Government provide superannuation for civil servants' families.

Mr. McLARTY: Yes, and I wish we could do something of the kind here.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is deducted from their salaries.

Mr. McLARTY: During the election campaign I heard some very good suggestions from candidates to encourage tourist traffic in Western Australia. I was surprised to read of the small amount expended in this direction. In reply to a question by the member for Albany (Mr. Hill) it was stated that the expenditure for advertising over a number of years had been very small. If we could issue attractive booklets to advertise the attractions of this State, as is done in New South Wales, and they were placed on overseas and interstate boats, a considerable sum of money would be derived from tourist traffic. I hope that during the present session

a measure will be introduced to deal with third-party risks. The time has come when something should be done to protect, not only the motorist who does insure, but also the pedestrian. Most motorists willingly tax themselves in order to give protection, but a small percentage are still not covered and are a danger on the road.

The Minister for Mines: And if they have any assets they are very foolish not to cover themselves.

Mr. McLARTY: Yes. The member for Katanning (Mr. Watts) suggested that the hospital tax should be increased in order that free treatment might be given to all who enter hospitals.

Mr. Needham: Nationalisation of health?

Mr. McLARTY: The Leader of the Opposition asked me if I liked the idea of increased taxation. I do not like it, and I hope I shall not be asked this session to support any increase.

Mr. Tonkin: He should not have put you in a fix like that.

Mr. McLARTY: To provide free hospital accommodation for all, I think the financial emergency tax should be decreased before the hospital tax is increased. A moment ago the member for Perth interjected. When the hon. member speaks, he makes comparisons between the work of the Governments he has supported and the record of the National-Country Party Government. He never takes into account the improved economic conditions; he did not say anything of the extra amount of taxation received by the present Government, or of the increased grants from the Commonwealth, or of the difficulty which the Government I supported experienced to obtain even loan money.

Mr. Needham: I thought you knew all about it.

Mr. McLARTY: I know a good deal about it; I was here when the hon. member was not, and I appreciated the difficulties that confronted the Government at that time. I wonder if the hon. member will adopt the same attitude when the Federal elections arrive.

Mr. Needham: I will take that fence when I come to it.

Mr. McLARTY: I feel sure that the hon. member will speak of the great financial difficulties experienced when the Scullin

Government were in power. I suggest that the time has arrived when something should be done towards completing the Houses of Parliament. We are certainly short of necessary accommodation. If a visitor comes to see a private member while the House is sitting, it is difficult to find accommodation where the visitor may be received. We are justified in making some additions to this House now. The State possesses its own brickworks, and large numbers of bricks are often available there. It does not seem to be a difficult matter to arrange the finance to meet the cost of the increased accommodation that is so badly needed. In common with other members I very much regret that the former Premier (Hon. P. Collier) has had to relinquish office on account of ill-health. I hope he will soon be restored. The Government have suffered very severe losses during the past few months. The member for Boulder is no longer the Leader. Mr. McCallum has left politics, and Mr. Kennally is out of Parliament for the time being. We on this side of the House have also had our losses. Some time ago I heard the Minister for Employment and Industries speaking over the air. He urged the electors to support the Collier Government. He pointed out that one reason why they should be supported was that they had the ability to administer this country, whereas we had lost most of our best men and had not the ability to form a Government.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I heard the suggestion that they should keep in the mess they were in.

Mr. McLARTY: Leaders come and leaders go, but I always feel there is someone who will take the place of those who have gone. Despite the fact that we have lost so heavily in our leaders during the past two years, I still think there is sufficient ability in the Chamber to guide the destinies of Western Australia. When the occasion arises, as no doubt it will, I feel that we shall quickly prove that we have sufficient ability to form a very excellent Government. I have no wish to indulge in parochial questions this evening, but there is one urgent matter to which I wish to refer, namely the shortage of water for the irrigation areas. Thousands of acres have had to be excised for lack of water.

The Minister for Mines: Have you not had enough during the last 24 days?

Mr. McLARTY: This month has been all right. Thousands of acres have had to be taken out of the irrigation area because of a shortage of water. Many of the settlers were looking forward to irrigating their holdings and preparing for it. The position represents a very serious loss to the people concerned. I am sorry the Minister for Country Water Supplies is not present this evening. At the first opportunity I intend to bring this matter under his notice and hope he will make a statement concerning it. I could have dealt with other matters of local interest, but do not intend to do so. I will bring them under the notice of the Minister concerned when the opportunity arises.

On motion by Mr. Boyle, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.*

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

*House adjourned at 1.33 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

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

### QUESTION—STATE INSURANCE OFFICE.

Mr. WATTS asked the Treasurer: 1, What was the revenue received by the State Insurance Office for premiums on workers' compensation insurance of all kinds during the financial years 1933-34, 1934-35, and 1935-36? 2, During the same periods, what was paid out in respect of workers' compensation claims of all kinds? 3, During the same periods what was the cost of administration apportioned to such insurance and settlement of claims?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Treasurer) replied: 1, 1933-34, £128,335; 1934-35, £174,419; 1935-36, £242,096. 2, 1933-34, £111,407; 1934-35, £148,033; 1935-36, £173,022. 3, 1933-34, £2,636; 1934-35, £3,148; 1935-36, £3,796.

### QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

*Medical Examination of Employees.*

Mr. HEGNEY asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it a fact that any new employee of the Commissioner of Railways at the Loco. Workshops, Midland Junction, has to undergo a medical examination before being engaged? 2, What is the reason or necessity for such examination? 3, How much is such employee charged for the examination? 4, Is the fee charged retained by the examining doctor, or is it placed into a special fund under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Minister for Railways) replied: 1, Yes. 2, To ensure that any appointee is physically fit. 3, Five shillings, provided he is accepted for appointment. 4, It is paid to Railway reserve.