

will ensure an adequate supply of electrical current for industrial purposes.

Of course, "industrial purposes" would include agriculture, and when that happens, I shall indeed be pleased not only with the previous Minister for Railways, now the Premier, but with his successor who is equally sympathetic and considerate in regard to these extensions. When the extensions are made, a new era will open up for the outer suburban areas. Without this cheap means of raising water for use on growing crops, our position will become worse. I thank the Minister for this added assurance. I hope that everything which has been suggested will be effected, and that the advantages of electricity will be available in these districts.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [10.2]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Question (that the Address-in-reply be adopted) put and passed: the Address adopted.

BILLS (7)—FIRST READING.

1. State Government Insurance Office.

Introduced by the Premier (for the Minister for Employment).

2. Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Premier (for the Minister for Employment).

3. Air Navigation.

Introduced by the Minister for Works.

4. Main Roads Act Amendment Act, 1932, Amendment.

Introduced by the Minister for Works.

5. Rural Relief Fund Act Amendment.

Introduced by Mr. Watts.

6. Sales by Auction.

Introduced by Mr. Watts.

7. Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment.

Introduced by Mrs. Cardell-Oliver.

House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 24th August, 1937.

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

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

Hon. J. J. Holmes (North) took and subscribed the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. J. Holmes, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. E. H. Angelo (North) on the ground of urgent private business.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the 19th August.

HON. C. G. ELLIOTT (North-East) [4.39]: In speaking to the Address-in-reply I shall content myself with the chief matters affecting my electorate—the mining industry and the pastoral industry. The mining industry, which has been of wonderful value to Western Australia during the world depression, is still expanding, and the production for last year showed a considerable advance on that for the previous year. The production from July 1935 to June 1936 was 769,029 fine ounces, equivalent to £6,713,027 in Australian currency. From July 1936 to June 1937 the production was 936,125 fine ounces, representing £8,191,968. The increase for the year thus is 167,096 fine ounces, or £1,478,141. It is highly satisfactory also to note that the producing mines are steadily increasing their ore reserves by development work. At least three mines that have been discovered since the revival of the industry have been fully equipped with treatment plants, and are now producing thousands of pounds worth of gold monthly. Others are being developed to the producing stage during the current

year. Among these are the gold mines of Kalgoorlie, which are erecting a treatment plant costing over £200,000 on the eastern side of the Golden Mile. Again, the Big Bell on the Murchison is erecting a wonderful treatment plant, which will be in production, I understand, in the course of a couple of months. Spargo's Reward Mine is also erecting a treatment plant, and should be in production during the coming year. There are many other shows at an interesting stage of development, and no doubt in the near future they also will enter the list of producers. I believe I do not express undue optimism when I say that the gold production for next year will likewise show a substantial increase on the production of the present year. One of the most important questions in the goldmining world is that of the stability of the price of gold. This is not a question on which I will presume to express an opinion; but it is interesting to know that qualified authorities in Great Britain and the United States of America are of opinion that the price of gold is not yet in jeopardy. The eminent English banker, Sir Henry Strakosh, who has also written books on currency and monetary stability and has been a member of the Financial Committee of the League of Nations since 1920 and a member of the Council of India since 1930, in a recent article wrote:—

To call the present price level inflationary, with vast reserves of man power still unemployed, is a gross misuse of words. To suggest that a further moderate 10 to 20 per cent. increase would involve the ruin of recipients of fixed incomes is a wild exaggeration. A reduction in the price of gold, or in other words an arbitrary increase in the purchasing power of the currencies affected by such an enactment, would mean a sudden fall in the level of commodity prices, a loss of profit margins for every industrial and trading enterprise, a general loss of confidence, and a deliberate reversion, in fact, to the conditions which resulted in the crisis of 1931.

To attempt to restrict output of newly mined gold by the deflationary method of reducing its price in terms of currencies would be to invite economic, social and political catastrophe. Effected by any single country, without similar action by the rest, such a step would involve renewed chaos in exchange rates, seriously detrimental to international trade. Taken universally, it would spell another world-wide depression, a disastrous renewal of business bankruptcy and working class unemployment, and the encouragement of all the subversive forces which threaten the stability of the world on which not merely gold pro-

ducers and capitalists, but also the man in the street depend for a livelihood and security.

That is from an English authority. I propose now to quote an American authority. "The American Engineering and Mining Journal" in an article headed "What Price Gold" states:—

Sceptics have questioned the ability of the United States of America to continue buying gold and sterilising it. They have also asked what eventually we are to do with it. Undoubtedly the mal-distribution of gold and its flow into the United States of America are matters of concern to our Government and others. Eventually some stabilising action will be taken, but hardly without consultation and accord between the United States and Great Britain, and possibly with other Governments. Considering the intricate and time-consuming nature of such an international agreement, a materially lower price for gold does not seem imminent at this stage of foreign exchange development.

It would therefore appear that there is no need for pessimism on the score of the present price of gold and its value to this State. I now intend to refer to a body of men who, I consider, are responsible for the growth of our great goldmining industry—I allude to the prospectors. The prospectors in the early days blazed the tracks. They were responsible for the finding and opening up of all the known goldmining districts in this State, and they still have their place in the scheme of things. It might be interesting for members to know that since the revival in mining, that is, since 1932, many thousands of pounds have been spent in the scientific search for new gold mines, but without definite results. During this same period many important finds have been made by the prospectors. Among them are Cox's Find in the Laverton district, Spargo's Reward in the Coolgardie area, Yellowdine in the Southern Cross district; the Comet at Marble Bar, and the Edjudina gold mine at Yarri. Many of these finds have been taken up by mining companies, and have been developed and equipped with treatment plants. They are now producing high monthly outputs. On these mines and at others which I have not mentioned, developmental work has been done, and they have been brought to the producing stage. All this goes to prove the value of the genuine prospector to this State. It also makes clear the necessity for the encouragement of these men, and the need for giving them a measure of assistance where it is warranted. Forms of assistance definitely due to the prospec-

tors are a reduction in lease rents to bona fide prospectors, cheaper treatment of tailings by the State Batteries Department, a reversion to the former scale of rebate on cartage charges, and the deduction of the actual moisture contents of ore crushed by prospectors. In past years 6d. per ton per mile was allowed prospectors in connection with their cartage charges. Since February of the present year a most complicated scale has been brought into operation by the State Batteries Department. The amount has been increased from 6d. per ton to 9d. per ton, but to counteract this apparent generosity 1s. 6d. per dwt. is deducted from gold produced up to a maximum of 12s. 6d. This, I consider to be an imposition which is absolutely unjust and, I venture to suggest, probably illegal. In connection with the deduction of moisture, on a parcel, say, of 100 tons of ore being treated at the State Batteries, the Battery deducts 10 tons for moisture. That is to say, the prospector is paid for only 90 tons of tailings, but the department does not forget to charge for the treatment of 10 tons deducted. They charge for the whole 100 tons treated. There is no reason why the actual moisture could not be arrived at, and the prospector paid accordingly. It is only a matter of taking a sample of the ore when it is arriving at the battery, weighing it, then oxidising the moisture, and weighing it again, and the difference between is the actual moisture. That system is at present in operation in connection with the treatment of thousands of tons of tribute ore on the Golden Mile. It is a simple operation, and I am quite sure no objection could be raised to the State Batteries putting the same system into operation in connection with the treatment of prospectors' ore. The prospectors are engaged in searching for new fields, and it is to them that we have to look for the continuance of the mining industry. It is to them that we have to look for the finding of new mines to take the place of the older mines which are becoming exhausted. Thus they should receive every consideration it is possible to give them, for their finds are our prosperity. I desire now to say a few words regarding compensation. Every session since I have entered Parliament I have requested that more adequate compensation be given to those who are suffering as a result of their work in the mining industry. It is said that constant dripping will wear away a stone, and I am very pleased to state that an advance has been made in connection with

this particular matter. During the present year the No. 2 Schedule of the Mine Workers' Relief Act was amended by a regulation to provide that a man on exhausting his £750 compensation from the Workers' Compensation Act will now draw from the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, £1 per week for his wife, in addition to the £1 5s. a week he already receives; that is, £2 5s. per week for himself and his wife. Although this is an improvement, it is nothing to boast about, because the amount is not sufficient to keep two people on the goldfields, particularly when one of them is a man needing special nourishment on account of his condition. Still less adequate even is the amount of £1 5s. per week allowed under this Schedule to a single man, particularly in view of the fact that most single men have usually no home, and have to pay rent or board. Where they are to get this rent and board and money to pay for clothing when they receive only 25s. a week, is a mystery. This is a matter calling for the immediate attention of the Department in control.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you think that charge should be upon the revenue of the State?

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: There are three parties concerned. The mine owners pay 9d. a week for each employee, the employees each pay 9d., and the Treasurer pays a similar amount.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I refer to the additional amount you think should be provided. Do you think that should come from the State or from the mines?

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: If the hon. member will wait for just a moment, I will explain. With the gold profits tax—a measure supposedly brought in for the purpose of providing further funds for relief of industrial disease—returning £89,090 to revenue this year in addition to the other funds available for the purpose, there can be no claim that lack of funds prevents adequate payments being made to men suffering from silicosis. Those funds include money held by the State Insurance Office under the Workers' Compensation Act, and that fund, I understand from the Auditor-General's report, amounts to about £250,000, notwithstanding that £145,000 has been paid into the revenue. The Mine Workers' Relief Fund to January 31st, 1937, shows an excess of income over expenditure since its inception amounting to £92,135 9s. 1d. So it

can be seen that there is money available and steadily accumulating to meet any possible demand for the payment of adequate compensation. I desire now to speak briefly about the pastoral industry, chiefly in my electorate. Last session a measure was passed to amend the Land Act, 1933-34, by making provision for relief from payment of rent by pastoralists situated in drought-stricken areas. The amendment was unanimously approved, and I am quite sure Parliament intended that, owing to the severe drought conditions that had prevailed over the pastoral areas during the previous five years and the consequent loss of stock suffered by pastoralists, the fullest measure of relief should be given. We find, however, that it has not been given. In my electorate, where loss of stock has been very severe, some lessees have been refused this relief, while others have been successful to the extent of obtaining only about 25 per cent. reduction of rent, which is quite out of proportion to their needs. The pastoralists of this State are a body of valuable citizens; they are people who meet their trials with very little complaint. They seldom or never seek Government assistance. Seeing that drought conditions made the amending legislation of last session necessary, I consider that the intention of Parliament should be given full effect. I hope that the board of appraisers will act in accordance with the expressed intention of Parliament in this very important matter. I support the motion.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [5.5]: The Speech delivered to Parliament by his Excellency, the Lieut.-Governor, after referring to the Coronation festivities, proceeded to give figures relating to the revenue and expenditure for the financial year ended the 30th June last. To the uninitiated it might appear that those figures were of no consequence to members of this House, because they were addressed specially to members of another place. I am aware that in adopting this course the Speech merely followed an old-established custom, but I have been wondering whether there was any more need to continue it than to continue that other ancient custom just abolished by this House, namely the prohibition against ladies wishing to occupy seats in the President's gallery. On the third day of this session, a Supply Bill was introduced, seeking the approval of members of this Chamber for the

expenditure of £2,500,000. Three minutes sufficed to explain to members how, when and in what manner this money was to be expended. Only one member of this Chamber thought it worth while to offer any criticism or suggestions on the Bill, and within half an hour the necessary approval had been obtained enabling the Government to go ahead and spend the money—if it had not already been spent—just as they thought fit.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The larger portion of it would have been spent.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Auditor General, who reports direct to Parliament and is not under the domination of any particular Minister, has not yet been able to furnish members with his exhaustive and critical account of the financial operations of the State to the 30th June last. Yet, in spite of that, we are asked to approve of the expenditure of £2,500,000. The present Government are no different in this respect from their predecessors. That this question of Parliamentary control over public funds is exercising the minds of people who have the welfare of the Parliamentary system at heart is very evident. I intend to quote the opinions of Mr. Ramsay Muir, President of the National-Liberal Federation, United Kingdom, who said—

Parliament does not and cannot perform the work it is supposed to do. One reason is that its procedure is cumbrous and inefficient. Parliament does not really make laws. The Cabinet does that. It does not control finance. No single estimate has been reduced by the House of Commons during the present century. Parliament is so organised as to make any detailed criticism of expenditure almost impossible. Any challenge of the work of a department is usually met by the brute voting power of the Government majority. During the last generation, to an extent never known in the nineteenth century, the Cabinet has seized control of all the functions of government. In truth, we live under a system of party dictatorship. If democracy is to be made real, if our system of government is to regain the confidence which it has lost, and if it is to be made a fit instrument for the vast work which lies before us, these defects must be removed.

So not only in our own State but certainly in the Mother Country, and I dare say throughout the Commonwealth also, the same thought exists regarding our Parliamentary institutions. It is therefore the more necessary for those of us who prefer this system of government to that of a dic-

tatorship jealously to guard the privileges we enjoy. I beg leave to quote some remarks made by the Premier in a debate during the present session. He said—

Everybody knows that the people representing Labour meet together at a triennial conference to formulate the policy and platform of the Labour Party. Then it becomes the job of the Labour Government to give effect to that policy. That is what we do.

It has been stated recently, and it was stated in former years, that the time devoted to the Address-in-reply is time wasted. In view of the utterance of the Premier a few days ago, I am entitled to ask whether all Parliamentary debate is not a waste of time. We were told by the member who moved the motion for the adoption of the Address that if certain members of this Chamber did not see their way to alter their attitude to certain industrial measures rejected last session, certain action would be taken. We have it from the Premier that it is not the policy of the Labour Ministry, and that it is not the policy of the Parliamentary Labour Party that counts: it is the policy laid down every three years by a Labour conference. I cannot see that we have any quarrel at all with the Labour Government; the Premier made the position quite clear. I am not aware whether reporters are admitted to the Labour conference, but a resume is published of the decisions arrived at, and surely nobody is in doubt as to the policy of the Labour Party.

Hon. G. Fraser: Neither are the public when they elect the members who form the Government of the country.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If we are not in any doubt on that point, why express surprise at the measures introduced to Parliament? As the Premier told us, the Government are pledged to bring down that legislation, not because they consider it to be in the best interests of the State, but because the rank and file of the Labour movement, at their triennial conference, have said that it shall be introduced. Why waste time in considering such legislation in a Chamber in which the Labour Party have a majority, even if it be a majority of only one? Is it not to be taken as a natural corollary that such legislation will pass the Assembly as a matter of course, and then be transmitted to this Chamber? I shall probably raise a storm of criticism by stating that when such legislation arrives here, it is considered by members who, de-

spite what may be said to the contrary, are tied to no political party and who are able to exercise their free and independent judgment. Though I often differ with the opinions of such members, still there are members of this Chamber that do not attend the meetings of any political party, and if we are fair, we must admit that those members exercise their independent judgment, based on a long experience of men and affairs. Yet we were told by the member who moved the adoption of the Address-in-reply that if we did not alter our methods in this Chamber, efforts would be made in the future, if they had not been made in the past, to unseat us. That is only what we might expect. Getting back to the statement of the Premier, I am only repeating what has often been said, that at the triennial conference it was decided that the Legislative Council was no longer necessary. I am open to correction when I say that the Labour platform provides for the abolition of the Upper House. If it is a fact, I ask why do not the Government set about the task of abolishing this Chamber? If that decision was not arrived at at the conference, we can understand its not being carried into effect; but I have always been under the impression that the Labour Party stands for the abolition of the Legislative Council. If they are consistent, why do they not set about it, instead of allowing one of their members to stand up in this Chamber and threaten other members who oppose the Government's legislation? I cannot say that I am one who has always opposed the Government's industrial measures. I have voted for some, and I will do so again. There are other members in this Chamber besides myself who do not vote at the behest of any political party; they exercise their own and independent judgment. I challenge the Government to set about putting into operation that plank of their platform which was endorsed by the triennial Labour conference which provides for the abolition of this Chamber.

Hon. G. Fraser: You want another football to kick.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: If the Premier is correct when he says that the Government are there to carry out what has been decided by Beaufort-street, I wonder what he will have to say to a letter I have here, and which I intend to read, signed by 17 men, all members of the Australian Workers' Union. It is addressed to the secretary of

the A.W.U., Stirling-street, Perth, and reads—

During the last 15 political years the Treasury benches have been occupied by Labour for 12 years. Yet during the long period of Labour Government 10,000 workers with their 30,000 dependants have reached the nadir of economic damnation. What a commentary upon Labour's boast of superiority in the handling of State finance. Mr. Kennafick, the Labour Party campaign election director, instructed us in a pre-election pamphlet to this effect:—"A drastic change is necessary . . . To change conditions we must change the Government." We thank Mr. Kennafick for this instruction, and our conditions being worse than ever before, we intend to follow his advice. It is useless to preach to us that Labour's policy is always frustrated by the Upper House, for we know that in Queensland, where a uni-cameral system of government prevails, the lot of workpeople is just as unhappy under Mr. Forgan-Smith as in Western Australia.

So that much for the Legislative Council of this State being responsible for any of the shortcomings of the Labour Government. The Premier has told us that they are here to carry out what is decided at the Labour Conference, and I wonder what the Labour Conference will have to say about this: It is a letter of the 16th February to Mr. . . . from the clerk in charge of the relief department, Perth—

I have your letter of the 2nd inst. in which you point out that you have two children under the age of 14 years. In determining the rate of sustenance, it is necessary to have regard to the total income received into each family, and in this connection it is noted that you have two elder members of the family in employment. For this reason it is felt that you should be able to manage on the rate allowed you.

On the 17th February I received from the same officer a letter reading as follows:—

I have your letter of the 11th inst. regarding the case of Mr.——, Geraldton. The application lodged by Mr.—— has been approved for work at a sustenance rate of 14s. per week, but Mr.—— has protested that the rate should be greater than this. My letter of the 6th was designed to explain the reason why the rate was fixed at 14s., and unless there are any very special circumstances attached to this case, I see no reason to alter this decision. When Mr.—— is employed on relief works the following would be the family position:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---------------------------------|----|----|----|
| Husband's earnings (average) .. | 2 | 13 | 0 |
| Earnings of children | 1 | 17 | 0 |
| Total .. | £4 | 10 | 0 |

You will appreciate that with an income of £4 10s. per week, between six members of the family, it is difficult to agree to an improvement.

One can easily work that out—90s. divided amongst six people represents 15s. each per week. I wonder what the Labour Conference would say to that. A son of this man aged about 18 was working in an office at Geraldton for £1 a week and out of that he was paying 3s. or 4s. a week for his accountancy studies. The girl of the family was in domestic employment, and more often out of work than in it. On the 27th April I had another letter from the same official about the same case, reading:—

I have your letter of the 19th inst. regarding the case of Mr.——. His request for a review of the sustenance grant approved in his favour is receiving attention, and I will notify you when the action is completed.

On the 8th May I received the following letter from the department:—

As a result of further consideration having been extended to the case of Mr.——, it has been decided to increase the sustenance rate from 14s. to 21s. per week. I am notifying the local police of this decision, and in the event of Mr.—— being in employment under the Government relief scheme, kindly let me know, and I will arrange to notify the employing department to adjust his working basis.

It took from the 6th February to the 8th May to get for that man that to which he was entitled. Having dealt with the question of unemployment as touched upon in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech, I now come to that class of man who calls for very great sympathy from every section of the community—the "C" class individual. Just why the Government have not been able to do more than they have done for this class of person, I cannot understand. Before the member for Geraldton in another place became the head of the Government, and while he was a Minister of the Crown, I introduced him in Geraldton to one of this class of men. The hon. gentleman said, "Try and get him some light work somewhere," but the private employer is generally in competition with someone, and it is not a fair thing to ask the private employer to find light jobs for people of this type. Only last week there was a man of this class before the court on a charge of having attempted to commit suicide. This was what the court was told:—

On the afternoon of 7th August the accused saw his wife, who had employment as a maid,

and told her that the best thing he could do was to end his life. Later he walked down to the river side at Peppermint Grove where he took the poison. To the magistrate he said that he realised it was his duty to provide for his family, but because of his failure to secure permanent work he considered himself only a handicap. Therefore, suicide had seemed the best way out. He had applied for sustenance, but because he was regarded as a "C" class man he was only entitled to rations. As it had been necessary for him through sickness to attend the Perth hospital twice a week, he had not had much chance to seek employment.

Only a couple of weeks ago a man came to me in Geraldton. He was, unfortunately in his infancy, a sufferer from hip disease and one leg was shorter than the other. He told me he had been in the metropolitan area and, very naturally, I asked him if he had got into touch with any member of Parliament. He replied that he had, and mentioned the names of two Labour members, who told him that the best they could do for him was to get him into the Old Men's Home. This man, who is about 35 years of age, said that he went there because he was starving. While there he took an interest in the garden and, after having remained there for four or five months, he concluded that if he was willing and able to do a bit of work there, he could also do something outside. I do not think this man was a train jumper, but he managed to get lifts in motor cars and so found his way to Geraldton, and we have been successful in finding light seasonal work for him. What a state of affairs, sending a man of that age to the Old Men's Home! This kind of thing is still going on notwithstanding the fact that an increase in the rate of sustenance has been made from 7s. to 9s. weekly. Men are wandering about the State in search of work to such an extent that one municipality, Wagin, took exception to men camping on the recreation ground in that town. In spite of the enormous revenue that is being obtained from the financial emergency tax, considerably more than it was ever anticipated would be raised, funds are not being made available by the Government to relieve the many people who are in distress. The Jubilee Youth and Motherhood Appeal resulted in a considerable sum of money being raised and trustees to administer the fund were appointed. The trustees were the Minister for Employment, Sir Talbot Hobbs, Mr. J. J. Poynton, Miss Holman

and Mr. Somerville. The two last-named, according to the "West Australian" of the 12th February, were absent from the State and later Mr. Poynton was also absent for a considerable period. So that we had three of the trustees absent from the State and the fund remains unadministered, while to-day we have unemployed and untrained youths still in the community. Mr. Thomson the other evening went fully into this matter and I have no desire unduly to detain the House. The newspapers are continually voicing the views of people experienced on this question, telling us what has been done in other countries. Yet here nothing whatever has been done. The Superintendent of Technical Education, Mr. J. F. Lynch, in the "West Australian" of the 10th December, 1936, wrote—

This is one of the most acute problems which the community has to face, and it is one that must be solved as early as possible.

Yet nothing has been done. Here is another gentleman whose words I shall quote. I do not know him, but I believe he is a teacher and has a considerable knowledge of youth. In a letter published in the "West Australian" on the 27th February last, Mr. Hal McKail said—

There has been some trumpet-blowing at a "vocational training" class arranged in the daytime and unavailable to the best of these lads who are, to save their self-respect and morale, doing their best to earn their living as casual labourers. But of real action there has been none, and the money lies untouched while hopes of their due place and the right to a home life of their own recede into the future. Can one wonder if the literature of those who teach that the destruction of the present order will give them the opportunity they desire, meets a ready reception? The hoping that the situation will right itself (as it is doing for the present generation) is a dangerous line to take.

At present there are lads of good ability and personality among these, not altogether unemployed, but making an unsatisfactory living at unskilled or casual labour. These should have had the opportunity for training by apprenticeship. It could be given even now in one or two ways: (a) By a revision of the apprenticeship conditions providing that the duration of the apprenticeship and not the age should govern the wages; (b) by arranging, say, for the Boys' Employment League, which is presumably the body most closely in touch with youth employment problems at present, to ascertain in what trades such trainees could be absorbed, and to place these lads with the employers at the wage they are legally entitled to. The employer should then be reimbursed from the fund to the extent of the dif-

ference between that wage and the value of the learner as he progresses. The majority of lads suitable for such enrolment would learn much more quickly than apprentices of the usual age. In fact, I know of some who have been attending classes to fit themselves for such positions.

I am rather puzzled by the fact that the Boys' Employment League, which has apparently been doing very useful work for unemployed youth for several years, is, according to a notice received by an organisation to which I belong, in serious straits for money, while money subscribed to help those who are being helped by the league, lies idle. If the fund is to do the job surely it should do it; if the league, then surely money should be made available. Are we all mad?

It would certainly seem so. I am sorry that Mr. Bolton is away. He is engaged in doing something in the interests of the State. I know he has taken great interest in the Boys' Employment League. I, as a non-metropolitan resident, wonder just why that league has been treated in the way it has been by the Government and also by the trustees of the Jubilee Youth and Motherhood Appeal Fund. Most of the trustees seem to have been away from the State for a great part of the time. Those people were not compelled to accept their appointment as trustees. If they knew they were going away, why did they not say so and let someone else do this most important work? The next matter dealt with in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech to which I shall refer relates to mining. We have just listened to Mr. Elliott on this subject, and he is more au fait with the matter than I am. Nevertheless, I always take the opportunity to remind members that the Central Province is the best in the State, and we have facts with which to prove that claim.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: We have your word for it.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If the hon. member likes, he can inform his mind from official publications that will make it clear to him that figures support my claim. The Central Province includes Wiluna and Cue. I hope that all of us will shortly visit Cue as a delegation, headed by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, for the purpose of opening the Big Bell mine. I understand the opening is to be celebrated in a right royal manner. There is something that the Government could have done not for gold mining, but in the interests of the first mining field of the State. I cannot under-

stand why the Government have not taken the necessary action, because they would certainly be "on a winner." When the Minister for Works was at Northampton a few months ago, he was requested to instal a plant there for the treatment of lead. If members have not visited Northampton, I would like them to go there because at this time of the year it is one of the most picturesque places in Western Australia. Lead is certainly not as valuable as gold, but that metal abounds in the district, and there is a lot of copper as well. If the Government could see their way clear to provide a plant to enable lead to be treated, at least 20 or 30 men could find employment in that direction and be taken away from the road work that is usually allotted to those in need of employment. Under that system, married men are sent all over the place, many of them miles away from their homes. If that plant were installed, quite a number of men could make a good living without much expense to themselves. No costly equipment is necessary. At present there are deposits all over the district and men so employed would be able to deliver large supplies of lead at the plant for treatment.

Hon. J. Cornell: Have you ever heard of the Government smelters at Ravensthorpe?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Those works were located at the other end of the State. If those works had been erected in the Central Province, they would be a going concern today. Of course I do not say they would be payable at all times because no one knows better than I how the price of lead fluctuates. The price has been satisfactory for some time, and it would appear that it will continue at a reasonable figure for quite a while yet. However, the plant could not be installed; the Government did not have the necessary money. I have yet another suggestion to advance from the Central Province, and I have a recognised authority in support of my remarks. I refer to Dr. Herman, who was engaged by the State as a Royal Commissioner to inquire into the coal industry. In his report, he strongly recommended that an investigation should be made of the known coal seams in the neighbourhood of the Irwin River and estimated that the opening up of a coal mine in that locality would save the Railway Department from £30,000 to £40,000 annually in freight. He also said that it was quite within the bounds of reasonable probability that some-

where within an area of several hundred square miles there might be found, by further boring, a coal seam or seams comparable with the Collic deposits. Not at Irwin River but at Eradu, which is 30-odd miles away on the Mullewa-Geraldton line, those seams have been found as a result of boring. A company has been formed at Geraldton, without asking the Government for any money—well, not as yet.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That will come later on.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The company was formed to prove the value of the coal seams. Perhaps, as Mr. Macfarlane, with the perspicacity for which he is noted, has suggested, a request for assistance may have to be made later. I hope the Government by that time will have been able to raise some money in order that they may contribute towards the development of that undertaking. If the Government will not find money for such projects, who can be expected to do so? Now we have the member for Geraldton as Premier of the State, I and other members representing the Central Province will keep the matter in mind, and if we cannot do something it will certainly not be for want of trying.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Never mind whether it is right or wrong.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I do not say that. Dr. Herman has already pointed out the saving that would accrue to the Government if they were to open up the coal seams in the neighbourhood of Geraldton.

Hon. A. Thomson: At any rate, they are worth testing out.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: In years gone by boring plants were sent out before general elections; and after the elections were over, the plants were taken away.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That happened in the bad old days. Next I come to the problem of the North-West. I read the speech delivered by Mr. Miles and I noted that he had been to Queensland and had ascertained that they are doing things there that, with a little assistance from the Government, we might be able to do in the same latitude in the North-West. On looking up a speech I delivered in this Chamber last year or the year before, I was reminded that, although I have not had the close association with the northern parts of the State that I would like, I spoke along much the same lines as Mr. Miles. I even went so far as to say—I am quite serious on this point, notwithstanding

that I voted for secession, voted against the Financial Agreement and do not altogether like the Federal Government—that I could not see any reason why we should adopt a dog-in-the-manger attitude. With the State Government so short of funds with which to cope with the requirements that are so essential in the south-western corner of the State, I fail to see how it is possible for us to do justice to the huge territory we have in the North. Mr. Miles stressed that point in his speech, and I hope we shall continue to press the Government to take action. The State Government do not appear to be able to do anything in that part of the State, so let us request the Federal Government to take a hand in the work.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: On the lines of the experience of Darwin?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I knew that would come. I appreciate the fact that the Federal Government have perhaps not got very much to show for the millions that have been spent in the Northern Territory. Nevertheless, let us endeavour to get something done in the North. We are not doing anything with that part of the State. If Federal money is available for expenditure there, will not the State reap a consequent benefit? That may be a rather selfish point of view, but, viewing it from higher motives, I certainly think it is essential that the country should be opened up and developed either by some governing authority in Australia or perhaps in co-operation with English capital. Next I come to the question of roads. One cannot refer to roads without having in mind motor traffic. It is generally recognised, and admitted, that for that form of traffic the old macadamised road is useless. Mr. Piesse told us that he had some contrivance installed in his car that prevented him from travelling at a rate exceeding 40 miles an hour. It is a pity we cannot compel everyone to follow suit, but we cannot do so. In the existing circumstances, we must provide money so that up-to-date roads may be constructed. I think Mr. Fraser must be given the credit for first mentioning in this House the problem of the third party risk. The Government can be justly blamed for not having brought it in. Their failure to do so has had very dreadful results. I do not know what effect it will have on me, but I am afraid that my old bus will have to stop in the shed if I have to carry this risk. I say that no person should be allowed on the

road in a motor vehicle unless he is covered by the third party insurance. I find that in the metropolitan area there are 16,208 motor cars, while in the country there are 16,121. In the metropolitan area there are 4,582 motor trucks, and in the country 12,446; in the metropolitan area there are 241 buses, and in the country 93. As for motor cycles, there are in the whole State 6,861. I suppose I shall get into trouble with my National-Country Party friends about this, but that does not matter, for we have to say what we believe to be right. Party or no party, it does not matter. I think that when we go to the police station to pay our license fees, if every license holder in the State would take £2 along with him, it would not be very much extra cost, and there would then be no expense represented by officials running about all over the country. If we had £2 from each of the car owners it would represent £64,658. Then if we had £2 for every city motor truck it would represent £9,000, and, say, £1 for each country truck, would give us another £12,000, while metropolitan buses at say, £5 each would return £1,205, and 93 country buses would return £279. From 3,861 motor cycles at £1 we would receive £6,861, making a grand total of £94,693. In all that would give us an aggregate of £94,000 odd. It is only a suggestion that I make, but it could be done, and I ask why has it not been done? Just think of the results that have happened for want of a properly established third-party risk insurance. Think of what happened at Leighton Beach in the metropolitan area when an unfortunate man, Mr. Bride, was killed in the presence of his wife and two children. I understand that the poor unfortunate widow and her young children are in receipt of assistance from the Child Welfare Department. Notwithstanding that the man who knocked down the victim had to pay a fine of £200, the Minister, when appealed to said that the fine had to go into revenue. On previous occasions I have complained about compassionate allowances, but surely if ever there was a case that warranted the granting of a compassionate allowance it is the one to which I am referring. Is there no member of the House that could assist towards persuading the Government to do the right thing by that unfortunate widow? We have every right to ask that

question. Only this afternoon a member whom I hold in high esteem told me that in his speech on the Address-in-reply he intended to confine himself to things arising in his own province. That is all right, but we are here representing, not only our own provinces, but also the State as a whole, and so I do not intend to beg anybody's pardon for having referred to so pitiful a case.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Has nothing else been done for the assistance of the widow?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: No, nothing. The next item in the Speech to which I would allude is also a very big subject, one that no doubt has occasioned the Government a great deal of thought; it is that of education. I know that the position is very difficult, and the Education Vote very large, but as I said last year I do not want to utter a word about the thousands of pounds spent on that East Perth Girls' School, although if the Government are going to spend thousands of pounds on these elaborate buildings in the city they must not be allowed to forget the country. Here is a letter I received from the secretary of the Parents and Citizens's Association at Perenjori—

I have been instructed by this association to draw your attention to the following in the hope that something will be speedily done to effect an improvement.

1. There are at present 59 children on the roll with the likelihood of that number being increased in the near future.
2. Seating accommodation for only 47 exists, the remainder being only allotted boxes. More desks are urgently required.
3. The capacity of the room, 20 x 30 x 10, is considered inadequate for the number of pupils attending. The suggestion is that a room of similar dimensions be attached, so that the younger children under the control of the monitor could be taken separately from the elder.
4. The sanitary conveniences are far from satisfactory, only one E.C. and a 4ft. urinal being provided for 81 male pupils. Further, the uprights of the screen around the latter have rotted away, and one section has fallen down. The 28 female pupils have only one E.C.
5. The fencing surrounding the school reserve is in a dilapidated condition, numerous posts having rotted out, rendering the structure a useless mass of tangled wire.

I think you will agree that the foregoing could quickly be rectified. I have already sent a similar letter to the Education Department.

The Chief Secretary: When was that written?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: On the 31st May, 1937. I understand that tenders are being called for some of the necessary repairs. At a recent meeting of the Country Women's Association a delegate produced a photograph showing the conditions under which children at a country school were required to work. It showed three children sitting in cramped positions at a well-worn desk, and did much to help the following resolution to be carried unanimously:—

That we appeal to the Minister for Education to improve the deplorable state of country school desks, especially in the upper standards, many children being compelled to work in a cramped and unnatural position.

I remember when there was a party of two or three Ministers and members of Parliament at Wiluna a year or so ago, we saw a school the conditions of which were by no means satisfactory. But there was some excuse up there, because of the sudden influx of people. However, it is very different in an old settled centre like Perenjori, where only the normal increase in population has taken place. Surely in such a district the Education Department could keep pace with the normal increase.

Hon. J. Cornell: Do the settlers there never grow old?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I suppose they do, but it is a great district. All that is needed there is some more rain. We have the Premier, but unfortunately he cannot control the seasons. It has been said by some people that I was not in favour of bulk handling of wheat, but I say that people should not run away with the wrong impression. Of course the farmers are entitled to the advantages of bulk handling, but they know better than I do what it means. It means that men who have gained a livelihood handling wheat on Fremantle and Geraldton wharves for years past, have had their means of livelihood taken from them. That is what has happened, and how we are going to meet the position I do not know. However, let me get back to the schools. Our Premier, who is the member for Geraldton, has been away for some time, and it is only right that the Chief Secretary,—who never takes much notice of what I say—should pass my remarks on to the Premier. I have been asked to bring before members the lack of facilities at the Geraldton High School in the matter of courses and subjects, equip-

ment for teaching purposes, general accommodation and desks, conveniences for students such as shelter sheds, lockers and wash-rooms. In regard to those matters, Geraldton is very much inferior to Northam and Bunbury and Perth. In other high school districts children are able to study subjects, particularly science subjects, that are not provided at Geraldton. Some members might query that, but I should like to tell the House that we have in the high school at Geraldton pupils who have won scholarships as far north as Broome, and as far south as Perenjori and Dalwallinu. There may be some reason for the absence of buildings—such as general lack of funds—but surely the children from the Murchison, the North-West and districts in the neighbourhood of Geraldton are entitled to the same courses as those available to students at other large centres. Coming to the lower classes, there are over 200 children in the infants' section, and they have no wash basins and a very poor playground. The Parents and Citizens' Association was informed last year that certain items had been placed on the urgent list. These include shelter sheds for boys and girls to replace the present dilapidated structures, washing facilities for upper and lower classes, a bicycle rack and minor improvements in paths and drains. To date no expenditure has been authorised for those items. The fence around the school property is in a disgraceful state, yet the item is not on the urgent list. It is a paling fence and a great deal of it is lying flat on the ground. This sort of thing would provide work for some of the men who are at present roaming about. The hospital fence is in the same condition. Beyond the stone wall at the back, there is a double gate opposite the residence of the Hon. J. M. Drew. That portion of the fence is also on the ground. If these things ran into thousands of pounds, one might understand why they were neglected, but they are trifling matters, although these dilapidations look very bad. During the year, the Government certainly spent £300 on renovations to buildings, repairs, and replacements of worn out fittings. The grading of the ground also cost about £25. It is said that self-help is required. The parents and citizens' association have raised several hundred pounds in the past few years for equipment, libraries, sports material, etc., and have ordered an

apparatus for visual education costing about £50. In Geraldton, as a result of local effort, a home for girls was erected some time ago, and a very fine institution it is. The home was recently enlarged. Our case for the high school is that the Northam and Bunbury high schools were opened about five years after the district high schools were established. In Geraldton we have a high school in name. To a certain extent, the curriculum is that which is in force in Northam and Bunbury, but the science course is definitely inferior. We have no high school building, so that the classes are all held in the one building. Separate high school buildings were opened about five years after the district high schools were established in the other towns. At these schools children who have won scholarships and those who are proceeding to a secondary education are provided with a full secondary course in modern languages, physics, chemistry and biology. Good laboratories and other facilities enable the children to undertake their work under comparatively good conditions. Under the present arrangements, children in the northern district cannot be given those educational facilities that are available to children in the central and southern districts, despite the fact that scholarship holders are obliged to attend the Geraldton High School. It was recently reported to the Parents and Citizens' Association that a gentleman at Carnamah, a recent arrival, is keeping his two boys at the Bunbury High School. When he found that his boys could not take a science course at the district high school at Geraldton, he allowed them to stay on at Bunbury.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It does not seem to be any advantage having the Premier as member for Geraldton.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Strange to say, I was thinking that myself. If the honourable member had waited a minute or two, he would have been still more justified in making that remark. I now wish to deal with railway matters. We talk about the Education Vote: that is nothing to be compared with the Railway expenditure. Something will have to be done about these matters that I am now bringing forward. I refer to them without heat. The waters round about Shark Bay teem with fish, and large quantities are unloaded at Geraldton for consumption in the metropolitan area. We frequently read of complaints in the metropoli-

tan Press about the high price of fish. When I have finished, members may realise what they have not done before, why fish is so costly in the metropolitan market. Possibly our old friends, the middlemen, are largely responsible for the price, but there are other factors which go to make up the prices that are charged. Over the Midland line, the distance from Perth to Geraldton is 306 miles. To get the cheapest freight it is necessary to consign a minimum of two tons of fish. Such a quantity can then be railed over the Midland line for £5 a ton. If rabbits are consigned, they are catered for in specially insulated vans. The minimum freight for the lowest charge is four tons, and that works out at 50s. per ton. It is no use sending fish to Perth unless it is packed in ice.

Hon. V. Hamersley: That is not included in the weight, is it?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have verified my figures. For every ton of fish, half a ton of ice must be used. The rate on ice is 50s. per ton, but when used to preserve fish, everything is charged at the rate for fish. This means that fish is consigned to Perth at the rate of £7 10s. per ton, compared with rabbits at £2 10s. per ton. In the case of vegetables, for a minimum of 10 cwt., the rate is £3 7s. 1d. per ton, and for fruit the freight is the same. We are told that fish is a necessary article of diet. There are continual complaints about the cost of it.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Could not the fish come down by boat?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: For smaller quantities of fish, the charge for the first cwt. is 7s. 3d., and for subsequent cwt.s. 7s. per cwt. I wish to show what the trade is worth to the railway in question. During 1934, 396 tons brought £2,067 in freight; in 1935, 407 tons brought £2,098 in freight; in 1936, 414 tons brought £2,109 in freight, and for the seven months of this year 323 tons have brought in £1,640.

The Honorary Minister: Over the Midland Railway?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It all comes from the great North-West.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The major portion of it does. If this fish were canned, instead of being railed fresh, and were put into cases, it would come to Perth for 50s. per ton. If it were canned for overseas or Eastern States consumption, it would come to Perth at that price. Is there any rhyme or reason about the situation?

The Honorary Minister: There is private enterprise for you!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: On the 17th of this month, one consignment of 148 dozen crayfish, being 22 cwt. 1 qr. 18 lbs., was consigned to Perth, and the railage paid was £7 17s. 9d. This works out at 1s. 5d. per dozen for freight alone. Last year or the year before, I called for the Act under which the Midland Railway Co. operates. I found it there laid down that the freight rates and passenger fares must be approved by the Minister for Railways, and for many years that Minister was the member for Geraldton. The Transport Board has been approached, but without success. Two of the largest ice and fish firms in Geraldton declared they would rather take their fish by motor truck to Perth. The board were approached, and the figures submitted to them, but they wrote back refusing the request. We do not want to have to use road transport. The individual fisherman could not afford to send his fish by motor truck to Perth; only the big men could do that. The railway was built to serve the people and the trade of the districts through which it runs, and this is how it does so. I shall persist in bringing this matter before Parliament. It is an injustice to the people concerned. The Midland Railway was built to open up and develop the country between Geraldton and Perth, and this is the way in which the company is allowed to exploit the people. A ton of wool from Geraldton to Perth, via the Midland Railway, a distance of 306 miles, costs 50s. The same quantity of wool from Mingenew to Perth, a distance of 227 miles, costs 82s. 8d. on the Midland line, and over the Government line for a similar distance the cost is 62s. 8d. A ton of sugar from Perth to Geraldton on the Midland line, a distance of 306 miles, costs 50s. From Perth to Mingenew, 227 miles, the cost is 91s. 2d., and on all Government lines for a similar distance the cost is 54s. 10d. Where is the justice or equity about that sort of thing? The residents of these districts are taxpayers and they should be given the protection that is their due. Three cwt. of groceries from Perth to Geraldton on the Midland line costs 9s. 3d. Over that line from Perth to Mingenew, 227 miles, the charge is 22s. 3d., and on all Government lines over the same distance it is 15s. And yet the Transport Board refuse to act in the matter.

Hon. H. Tuekey: That is the port-to-port rate?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: No. The port to port rate over the distance of 306 miles would be 9s. 3d. According to the Act under which the Midland Railway Co. operates, all freight rates and passenger fares must be approved by the Minister for Railways.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Before the tea adjournment I was quoting railway rates charged on Government lines, and the altogether inequitable rates levied on the people who are developing the Midland lands of Western Australia. The Midland Railway concession was granted, I take it, not only to connect Geraldton with the capital but also for the all-important purpose of enabling the lands along that railway to be developed. I have asked frequently, and it is necessary to be asking continually, how on earth can the Government continue to allow such an inequitable state of affairs—"inequitable" is the right word. It passes my comprehension, especially when I call to mind that the member for Geraldton in another place has been a leading member of Governments for many years past and to-day is Premier and Treasurer of the State. I consider that if members for that part of the State held indignation meetings all along the line to compel the Government to deal out even-handed justice to the Midland people who have put up such a battle without any assistance from the Agricultural Bank, it would be only right. Moreover, the Midland people are refused any redress of their grievances by the Transport Board. They are entitled to feel indignation at such treatment. To be quite fair about the comparative railway rates, I wish to revert to that subject and say that the highly inequitable feature between the rate on fish and that on rabbits is this. The rate on fish, with a minimum of 2 tons, is £5 per ton, and the rate on rabbits, with a minimum of 3 tons, is 50s. per ton. That is the only further remark I have to make on the subject of railway rates. The other figures I have quoted are official figures given to me by the department. I believe it is known to most members that there is in Geraldton what is known as a distilling plant, which condenses sea water into fresh water for the use of locomotives. I have not the figures for the financial year which closed recently, but the following

figures appeared in the Commissioner's report for the previous year. The distilling plant condensed 8,547,465 gallons, at a cost of 9s. 9d. per 1,000 gallons, the total cost being £4,167, equal to £80 per week. The condenser was erected many years ago, additions being made to it a few years back. I am wondering whether the Government could not detail some officer for the job of discovering whether there is not a more economical method of getting a locomotive water supply at Geraldton. I think there must be. Like everything else nowadays, the railways are being run at a loss. The profit formerly made by the department has turned into a deficit. I am not a practical railway man, but I read the newspapers, and I have been wondering whether the large amount of money which must be paid away in overtime and travelling expenses—the latter applying to the Commissioner, the heads of sub-departments, and their staffs—would not startle most of us if we could get to know the total. I have been wondering whether we could get to know. I shall try. I shall ask a question. I have often asked questions, which possibly might be thought impertinent, about Ministerial travelling expenses. Perhaps I shall ask some more questions on the subject during this session. Probably it would shock the House to learn how much of the taxpayers' money goes in travelling expenses for heads of the Railway Department. I believe the figure is amazing. I happen to know something about travelling expenses, having been a relieving postmaster for many years. Let me say that I used to live on my travelling expenses, and easily. It will be said that I was a Federal officer and that perhaps my rate was rather liberal. I do not know about that. I do not want to be hard on anyone who has to travel in the discharge of his duties. I travel now. I spent 24 hours in the train yesterday together with a colleague in the representation of the Central Province. Our friend Mr. Drew made the same journey for many years. He does not do it now, as he is able to live in the city. I am putting in time on my parliamentary job, by way of travelling, while city members are attending to their business. However, that is all right. Let me mention that I do not get any travelling expenses. We should know more about Ministerial and other travelling expenses when we are being asked to do something for those of

our people who are so badly off nowadays. I feel it my duty to say something about the disgraceful state—"disgraceful" is the only word—of the Perth Public Hospital and the Claremont Mental Hospital. In this respect the question has been asked, "What power has the ordinary member of Parliament?" It is a humiliating admission to make, but I say frankly, for myself, that as a private member I have no power whatever. As the President of the National Federation in the United Kingdom said, we are living under Cabinet dictation, no matter what party may be in power. The fact that money has not been raised for the proper accommodation of our physically sick and our mentally sick people is a disgrace to the Cabinet that is responsible. What are Ministers afraid of? In another place a few days ago the question was asked how much the hospital tax realised. From a paltry 1½d. in the pound—concerning which I have heard a great deal of criticism—the hospital tax for the year ended 30th June, 1937, produced £234,599. If there is need for funds, that need should be met. If the 1½d. in the pound were increased to 3d., the hospital tax would produce half a million sterling. That amount would enable us to do something to assist many poor unfortunate people in our midst. Now I wish to describe the way the State treats widows and fatherless children. I wonder whether the Triennial Labour Conference, which the Premier spoke about recently, endorses this kind of thing. Here is a letter dated the 8th November, 1934, addressed to me by the Child Welfare Department—

I am in receipt of an application for assistance from Mrs.—, of Bluff Point, via Geraldton, and note that she has several sums of money due to her.

Assistance from this department will be granted at minimum rate when proof of careful expenditure of the amount in hand is submitted to this department. She will be permitted to retain approximately £20 of the sum stated above.

Investigations are being made regarding her case, and you will be informed as soon as same are complete.

Yours faithfully,
H. H. Brodribb,
Secretary.

The money referred to was subscribed by the people of Geraldton. This woman's husband was a sustenance worker, and he was killed while riding on a truck either going to or returning from his work. The Geraldton

people generously subscribed money to tide her over for a month or two until she could get assistance from the State. She spent the money thus subscribed, and on the 14th October, 1936, by which time she had got down to £20, the department agreed to give her an allowance. Then they found out something, and she came to me and I wrote to the department. This is the reply I received, dated the 14th October, 1936:—

With reference to your recent visit to this office regarding the case of Mrs.——, I have to inform you that the present position of this family is as follows:—

| | per week. | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|----|----|
| | £ | s. | d. |
| Grandfather, invalid pension .. | 0 | 18 | 6 |
| Mrs.——— earns | 0 | 12 | 3 |
| C.W.D. allowance | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| Total .. | £2 | 8 | 9 |

No rent to pay.

To maintain two adults and three children.

The above assessment is arrived at as the grandfather has a legal responsibility under the Child Welfare Act to contribute towards the support of his grandchildren. Also, as he is a pensioner, he could arrange suspension of rates on his property, but even with the above assessment provision is made in arriving at our figure. Should he vacate the house and let it at any time, I understand that the Pensions Department would regard this as income and deduct certain portion of the pension he is receiving.

I regret I am unable to increase the allowance in this case.

Yours faithfully,
F. E. Meacham,
Secretary.

The total income does not amount to 10s. per head per week for the household. The poor grandfather had reared a large family. Is this what the Triennial Labour Conference instructs the party in power to do?

The Honorary Minister: Did the National Government act any differently?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have a letter dated the 2nd August, 1937, addressed to a woman who had been cooking at Wyndham for five years, with the result that her health gave way. She came to Geraldton and took a job there, but fell ill. I was requested to go and see her, and did so. This is the letter addressed to her by the Child Welfare Department:—

With reference to the assistance you are receiving from this department, I shall be pleased if you will inform me by return mail whether your two elder children are making any payment into the home, or whether you

anticipate any possibility of their doing so at an early date.

When the Child Welfare inspector went to Geraldton, the boy was working in a garage. His age was 15 years, and he was receiving £1 per week. Later a factories inspector went to Geraldton. The law as laid down must be carried out. This inspector discovered that the boy was not receiving the full wage to which he was entitled. The eventual result was that as soon as the inspector went away the boy lost his job. At the same time the mother's allowance was curtailed. We hear a great deal about child delinquency. Let me make it plain that I do not blame the departmental officers, whom I have found most humane. However, they have to work under an Act. We are not going the right way about bringing up young people by insisting on children contributing to the support of their mothers, brothers and sisters, and not leaving them the wherewithal to dress themselves and obtain the amusement and pleasure they are entitled to. It is true that they have a duty to perform and we should see that they perform that duty, but we should not insist upon their sacrificing everything. I had a harrowing case brought under my notice of a mental defective who was charged before a Geraldton magistrate with having interfered with a little girl. Strange to say, he was bound over to be of good behaviour for six months on his mother's recognisance of £10 and his own recognisance—the recognisance of a mental defective—of £10. He is a big lump of a fellow 18 years of age and gathers wood for his mother who earns her living at the wash tub. Five months elapsed and the same thing happened again. He was brought before the court and sentenced to three months' imprisonment, which he served in Geraldton. Generally anyone sentenced to more than three months' imprisonment has to come down here. The bail was estreated. The woman had no money to pay and the magistrate said he had no option but to commit her to prison. She came to my house and I saw the Minister for Justice. It is to the great credit of the Minister that the matter was satisfactorily attended to. The point I want to make is, as I said to the Minister, that we should hang our heads in shame at the absence of any law in this State to enable us to get hold of a boy like that and bring him down here to see whether something can be done with him.

He is fully developed, physically and sexually, but not mentally. What are we doing about it? Nothing. He is not the only one. I have been very pleased, however, to read that the present Minister for Health and those interested have decided to do something in this matter. I congratulate the Minister and I hope that no paltry excuse of lack of finance will stand in the way of our doing our duty to these unfortunate children. In conclusion, I feel I should draw attention to a speech made by Sir Talbot Hobbs at a church conference last week. I think we might take notice of the remarks of a man like Sir Talbot who, on this occasion, was dealing with the state of the church extension fund. The report of the address was as follows:—

He (Sir Talbot) sympathised from his heart with the clergy in country parishes who had to cover long distances to reach people who were practically destitute. Before men and women could be expected to take an interest in their church something should be done to supply their material necessities. Under present conditions, he could not see how the clergy could look after the needs of these people, spiritual or other, and "we people of the town should be ashamed of ourselves to let things come to such a pass," said Sir Talbot. Resolutions had been carried to increase the Church extension fund, but the appeal had met with very little support in the metropolitan area. As a trustee of the Youth and Motherhood Appeal, Sir Talbot continued, he had inquired into the best way to benefit the people for whom the money was raised. He found often that the position of women in country districts was perfectly appalling—it was parallel to slum life in London years ago. He intended to bring some of the worst cases under the notice of the trustees. Lives of infants were being sacrificed because there was no one to look after the women.

Only a month or so ago the Honorary Minister, Mr. Gray—and this is to his very great credit—came to Geraldton and his visit was responsible for the inauguration of a health welfare clinic. He pointed out to the meeting at Geraldton that Geraldton and Collie were the only two towns of any size which had not formed infant health clinics. Accordingly one was formed. But if what Sir Talbot Hobbs pointed out is true, and there is every reason to believe it is, there is need for us to do something for the expectant mother. I come now to the end of the story. I have here an article from the "West Australian" on the 12th July headed "Reduced Taxation." When we read in a

paper such as the "West Australian" that this is no time to talk about reducing taxation it strikes me that there must be something in it notwithstanding the fact that a huge amount of money is extracted from the people of the Commonwealth and of this State. Figures show that the amount of State and Federal taxation levied in the six years ended 30th June, 1935, was £539,000,000. I had the figures for the State here, but I cannot locate them just now. Many people object to being so heavily taxed but I happen to have two sisters in England and they write and tell me things that do not appear in the paper concerning the state of affairs in the Old Country. According to them we do not know what taxation is in this State. I daresay that many in this Chamber will feel very disappointed with me, but I feel that I must say that if any measure is brought here to increase taxation that will mean providing the bare necessities for those who are not so fortunately placed as we are, I shall support it. I daresay too that I shall get myself disliked by those politically opposed to me when I declare that I shall take every means in my power of obtaining information as to how the money raised from the people in this State is expended. I support the motion.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [7.54]: I do not propose to deal too much with details, but there are some things which I think should be said. I am not concerned, like the previous speaker, about whether I make enemies or not. I have a duty to perform and I am prepared to take the consequences of performing that duty. I was not present to hear His Excellency's Speech but I have read and re-read it and I am bound to say that we have been told a lot of things we need not have been told at all; while, on the other hand, we have not been told a lot of things we should have heard. When I read the Speech there came to my memory the remarks of a prominent citizen of the British Empire who said that "Politics is the art of obtaining money from the rich and votes from the poor on the pretext of protecting one from the other." I think we have reached that stage of politics in this country, because that is the game now being played. The Speech told us a lot of things that we knew or which we could have found out from departmental returns. We were

told that the railway revenue increase last year over that of the previous year was £41,000 and that the increased expenditure was £220,000, leaving a deficit of £176,000. One explanation was that the department carried fodder for starving stock at a reduced rate owing to the drought conditions in the North. I suggest, however, that but for the drought the railways would not have had that traffic at all. Another explanation of the loss was that there had been an increase in the basic wage and consequently in the salaries of railway officers. When it is realised that £37,500,000 of borrowed money is involved in the railways the seriousness of the position will be understood. The waste which has taken place is evident when one remembers the number of railways that have been built which should never have been built, and the money authorised for the purpose of building lines which have not been built, including a railway to carry wheat grown in the Northern areas. That, we were told was a matter of urgency. The railway was authorised three or four years ago, and the money was borrowed, but the railway has not been built.

Hon. J. Cornell: Like the miners' settlement railway.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The hon. member might be responsible for that. I remember the hon. member voted for Mr. Drew's Murchison railway on the understanding that Mr. Drew would vote for his. That sort of thing has been going on for the last 20 years to my knowledge, and has landed us where we are with our railway administration. The Speech did not tell us the total of the State's indebtedness over the last five years. My figures go to the 30th June, 1936. Others are not available. Any five years might be taken, however, and the same result would be found—a growing indebtedness. For the five years ended the 30th June, 1936, our indebtedness increased from £79,000,000 to £92,000,000, an increase of £13,000,000. During the same period our revenue increased from £8,000,000 to £10,000,000. We do not object to taxation, but we do object to the manner in which the revenue is expended. No one will object to taxation for legitimate purposes, but when the Government increased their revenue from £8,000,000 five years ago to £10,000,000 in 1936 and we get the results complained of by Mr. Hall, what is the use of imposing

taxation, seeing that the money must be squandered and not used as it should be? Another important matter to be borne in mind is that the excess of births over deaths during the same period totalled 20,000, but the population of the country in the same period increased by only 16,000. Thus 4,000 people must have left a country that is hungering for population. True, in 1935 a sum of £80 was spent on migration, and in 1936 a similar amount, and this in a country with all the possibilities that here await development. I understand that the per capita basis is the only accurate way of estimating the indebtedness that a country is able to bear. Living under reasonable conditions as most of us are, a capital indebtedness of £100 is a fair calculation, but when I looked up the records I found that the State indebtedness is £200 per head, and that our quota of the Federal indebtedness is £125 per head. Thus we have reached a per capita indebtedness of £325 instead of £100 that sane finance would advocate as a reasonable figure. If we work that out at the present rate of interest we find that every child born in the State enters life with a liability of 5s. a week around its neck, and yet we wonder why there has been a decline in the birth rate.

Hon. T. Moore: The babies have gone on strike.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It is not the babies that have gone on strike. This is the stage we have reached. If we stopped at that I would not mind so much, but every year the same process continues of extracting more money from the public—taking it out of the hands of people who would devote it to the development of the country—and putting it into the Treasury where it is utilised in a manner not advantageous to the State. In order to show that the finances should be improving, let me point out that the reduction of the interest bill, owing to a readjustment of interest rates in London and elsewhere amounts to £500,000 per annum. That saving ought to be reflected in the balance sheet of the State, but apparently it is not. Where this is all leading to, anyone who looks the position fairly in the face must realise. He must also admit that there are any number of items that ought to appear to the debit of revenue and are not shown. Ten years ago we entered into a Financial Agreement whereby the Federal authorities undertook to pay our debts conditionally upon our

providing a certain amount of sinking fund over a period of 58 years. The Financial Agreement, however, also contained a wise provision stipulating that money borrowed for deficit purposes, for which there was no asset, should bear sinking fund, not at the rate of 7s. 6d. or 10s. per cent., but at the rate of £4 per cent. per annum. The unfunded deficit since that date amounts to about £5,500,000, and if we had lived up to our obligation last year only, to say nothing about the other nine years during which we have dodged this sinking fund payment, it would have entailed a charge of £225,000 upon the revenue of the State. Much of this money that we have spent out of revenue and out of loan funds has been used for the benefit of friends of the party in power. But now we are advancing a further stage. Not satisfied with what they have had in the past, namely, preference to unionists on Government works, the Government have thrown out a dragnet to draw into the fold workers employed by private enterprise. In effect, the Government say to employers, "Unless you agree to the terms and conditions of this contract, which means that all your employees must be unionists, your tender will not be accepted." I have heard some suggestion about deleting that clause from the tender form. While the past was bad enough, the position with which we are now faced is not only dastardly but disgraceful. The serious feature of it is that those who pay most of the taxation to which I have referred are those who get the least out of the participation in the plums. It seems to me that so serious is the matter that private employers would be justified in taking drastic action by saying to the Government, "Well, you employ all the unionists and we will employ all non-unionists." It is just as logical for the Government to say that none but a unionist may work for the Government as for private enterprise to say that it will employ only non-unionists.

The Honorary Minister: You could not run your business without unionists.

[The Deputy President took the Chair.]

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Could we not? Nobody can tell me that all the best men join the unions. I believe that a great percentage of men join because they are thus able to get the better men to carry them. The second-rate man can get in on the same floor as the first rate man: he gets the same

pay, but the employer does not get the same return for it. From time to time we have heard a good deal about the sustenance payments, and the extraction of 25s. from each sustenance worker, even if he worked only portion of the year. That has been denied by Ministers and others, but it has been proved to be correct. That was bad enough, but I want members to understand that when all this money was being expended in the country, some of which had been obtained from the Federal Government, road board and other similar bodies were required to supervise the expenditure. A surveyor would go into a district and lay out a road and say, "You have to construct a road on that basis and pay these specified rates to the men." One would have thought that was going far enough, but there has been a distinct attempt to make road board secretaries the means for collecting union fees. Talk about Russia and its methods! Here is an extract from a circular letter sent to a public body with which I came into contact during my sojourn in the country—

Unionists are to be given preference, and men who are not unionists are to be given an early opportunity of paying their dues out of their earnings.

The result is that if they do not pay their dues to the secretary of the road board or someone else, they have to get out, for unionists must be given preference. If any other party imposed a similar set of conditions that Government money would not be paid to anybody but a non-unionist, the roof would be lifted off the Trades Hall by the uproar that would be created. While I have occupied a seat in this House I have always tried to look at both sides of every question. On that matter I have asked myself what would have happened had the same set of conditions been imposed in favour of non-unionists, failing which the Government would have refused to consider a tender. I welcome the proposal to introduce uniform taxation which I consider is long overdue. I also welcome the announcement to introduce a Bill to amend the Municipal Corporations Act, another measure long overdue. The State Transport Co-ordination Act is having a far-reaching effect, and some provision must be made to overcome the difficulties that have arisen. Let me give one instance. Carnarvon has no railway within 300 miles of the town, and, broadly speaking, the people there grow perishable products—bananas and pineapples—while they

do a wonderful business with beans, which are grown there and sent south. When the beans ripen, however, they have to be picked, and when picked they must be sent to market without delay. Unfortunately, steamers call at Carnarvon only periodically, once a fortnight or three weeks. A motor lorry could take the products to Ajana, from which place there is a train a week, or perhaps two. Of course the products cannot be taken to Geraldton, from which town they could be got to Perth in 24 hours; they cannot be sent because there would be a conflict with the Ajana railway. Surely the joke in that respect has been carried too far. I come next to the all-absorbing topic, the invasion of the Japanese fleet upon the pearling banks near Darwin. So far as I understand, the Japanese is a very aggressive person, and it will no be long before he will be in Broome doing the same thing. I should like to know from the Minister in his reply exactly what the State Government have done in connection with this matter. I understand that the Federal attitude is that they can police the waters adjacent to the Northern Territory, but cannot police the waters adjacent to the State territory, unless at the request or with the consent of the State Government. I should like to know what has been done in that direction. Surely, if the Federal Government are prepared to police their coastal waters, and they seek permission to police our waters, that permission should be given. I go so far as to say that I shall be surprised if the State Government have not already given permission. There is another matter that concerns Broome particularly, and that is the Bill we had before us last session, and which failed to pass, having for its object the compensation of disabled members of pearling crews. That Bill went out through the pure cussedness of another place. The amendments included in that Bill by this House broadened the measure in every respect, and made it a better Bill, while it did not put an embargo on the State Insurance Office, or any insurance company. I have been troubled to find out exactly why the Bill went out, but I am satisfied it was not because of the amendments made in this House. I think it was because the Bill provided that the employee as well as the employer had to contribute to the fund. It was a new principle adopted that the employee as well as the employer should contribute to the compensation fund. That, we

know, did not suit Trades Hall. We can see the same thing to-day in connection with national insurance proposals; the under dog is not going to pay anything, it will be the top dog that will have to contribute. Not only are the Japanese depleting our pearling beds, but they are coming down our coast. I was told by the master of one of the vessels trading along the North-West coast that it is not an unusual thing to see a big Japanese boat somewhere near Cos-sack, engaged in fishing. So we have them now, not only invading our pearling beds but taking our fish in large quantities and conveying them to Japan. I have heard a great deal about the possibilities of fishing in the North, but I have never understood it until lately. I should say that from Northampton to Broome there is a thousand miles of coastline, and anyone can go down to the seashore and get as many fish as he wants in no time. I do not claim to be a fisherman, except that I try my hand at it sometimes, but up there recently my son and I, in the short space of three-quarters of an hour, caught no fewer than 24 fair-sized schnapper. We have a coastline teeming with fish, and we sit down and do nothing, but allow the Japs to take it from us. On approaching Carnarvon recently, we passed a mother whaling ship, which, I believe, was the old *Ulysses*, one of the biggest ships that came into Fremantle during the war. I am not quite certain, but I believe this was the vessel that struck a rock there. At any rate, it is the mother whaling ship, and she has eight or ten chasers, and is claimed that they are getting at least 40 whales a day. The vessels can handle 50 whales a day, and they deal with the whole carcass. Such a fine equipment for dealing with whales is a credit to all parties concerned. A party that went out from Carnarvon by invitation saw 43 whales treated in one day. It is claimed that a whale is worth £150, and so a decent day's catch of 40 at £100 each would be worth £4,000.

Hon. E. H. HALL: What is the nationality of the company?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I believe it is an American company, although I did hear that Sydney people had an interest in it. The company fish over a period of about 150 days during the time the whales travel north, beginning in April, and they are caught going up, and when they are returning in September. Then away they go, the

mother vessels with about £600,000 worth of whale oil; that is a conservative estimate, and it is a business that we ourselves should be engaged in. I am asked, why is this? It will be remembered that we had a whaling station at Point Cloates, built by private enterprise. The first thing the Government did was to impose a royalty of £1 per whale. That was number one attack. The next was that the Government wanted to impose all sorts of Australian labour conditions regarding wages, factory and health conditions, etc. What happened? The company packed up their traps and got away. That is why private enterprise is not handling the whaling business. They were driven out of it by our autocratic legislation. Now, the operations that should be carried out by ourselves are being conducted by a foreign company on the high seas. The industry which has been the backbone of the North, and which has done so much for the development of the State, is in a worse condition than it has ever been in before. Unlike my friend, Mr. Hall, I am not blaming the Government for that. Mr. Hall blames the Government for everything; I blame the season for the condition of the pastoral industry. It is indeed in a very bad way. It is supported by private enterprise, and my friend, Mr. Moore, will know that those who are engaged in it have stout hearts and are prepared to go on with the job. I could if I liked refer to the spoon-fed people in the southern areas who, if they do not get more Government assistance, threaten to go off their holdings. I have never once heard a person in the North, although some have been right up against it, say anything about walking off his holding.

Hon. T. Moore: And conditions are very bad on the Murchison.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That section between Northampton and the Wooramel River for about 250 miles is as bad as anything can possibly be, and that is along the coast: the further one goes inland, the worse it is. I should like to say a word about the vast improvement in the conditions in the hospitals in the North, and also the better treatment that is being accorded to the natives. I will, however, leave the latter subject for the moment, because it can be dealt with when the debate is resumed on the disallowance of certain regulations affecting natives in the

North. Mr. Elliott, earlier in the evening, referred to mining development at Marble Bar. I saw the Comet Mine there, and I understand it is unique in the history of Western Australian mining. Ore is being obtained from the top of a hill and is being sent down by means of a flying fox, to be treated on the level ground. It has to be carted, though, a distance of about eight miles to the nearest battery. A certain amount of secrecy is being observed about the mine, but I am quite satisfied that a considerable quantity of gold is being obtained. I think that a lot more gold can be got—I am speaking as a layman—from surrounding hills, because I was unable to see any difference between those hills and the hill from which the company controlling the Comet Mine was obtaining its ore. It appeared to me that there was gold in all those hills, but unfortunately it is the way of the north. Everything is scattered; there are minerals of every description in that area—tin, tantalite, copper, silver, lead, and in fact almost every known mineral.

Hon. H. Tuckey: We do not want to give that to the Federal Government.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We do not, but I propose to tell this House what I think we should give to the Federal Government, and why we should give it. The district of which I have just been speaking is the Pilbara area, a long way south of Broome. I consider that we should give the Kimberleys over to the Federal Government, and I will tell the House why. When I say the Kimberleys, I mean that part including Broome, Derby and Wyndham, outside the sheep areas. The Commonwealth Government could deal with the pearling areas, and no matter what they may have done in the past, they have awakened to the fact that they must do something with the Northern Territory. I honestly believe now that it is proposed to do something with the Territory, and what the Commonwealth propose to do there can also be done for the Kimberleys. While the Kimberleys remain the property of the State, they will remain as they are to-day. The Commonwealth Government can exclude the Northern Territory from all customs taxation, and they have reduced the cost of transit from the Territory to Melbourne and Sydney. They are extending the pastoral leases, and the rents for

pastoral leases in the Northern Territory are about a third or a fourth of the amount of the rents charged by the State for leases in the Kimberleys. I ask the House: With an imaginary line surveyed between the Kimberley area and the Northern Territory, in view of all these concessions that are to be made to the Northern Territory, all the impositions now imposed upon Kimberley and conceding that they are to continue to be imposed, what possibility is there of developing Kimberley in the face of such conditions? The Federal Government are doing all they possibly can. I am certain they are out to promote development in the Northern Territory. It is quite likely that the Imperial Government have advised them to get busy. The fact remains that the Federal Government are developing the Northern Territory. If we are to continue to control the Kimberley area, and we cannot promote its development because we have not the money, and at the same time all the concessions I have indicated are to be conceded to the Northern Territory, the Kimberley area will continue to stagnate. I will give one instance to illustrate what is going on. The State Shipping Service, in an endeavour to compete with the shipping that serves Darwin from the Eastern States, have provided an accelerated service. In addition, they transport goods to Darwin, which is in Federal territory, at £1 per ton less than is charged to the people in the Kimberley district, which is State territory. That is only a beginning. The State is trying to grab a bit of the Darwin trade, but the more concessions the Federal Government make to the Northern Territory, the more difficult will become the development of the State territory. To show how keen I should say this well-organised State Shipping Service is to obtain business, a firm in Darwin ordered a set of motor tyres to be shipped from Fremantle to Darwin. Subsequently they found that the tyres were required at Wyndham, and they telegraphed to their agent at Wyndham to take delivery of the tyres there. When the agent endeavoured to take delivery, he found he could not get the tyres until he had paid the increased freight to Wyndham, which is 36 hours less steaming than to Darwin. I have frankly made up my mind that if we are to develop the Kimberley area in conjunction with the Northern Territory, the

Federal Government must do it and not the State. I have briefly made a hurried survey of the position as I view it. I am more than ever satisfied that we have a wonderful heritage. We can, given normal seasons, grow anything and produce anything, but while I claim that we have a wonderful heritage, I must add that, in my opinion, that heritage is now being very badly governed.

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.34]: I support the motion moved by Mr. Fraser to express our loyalty to His Majesty the King and to thank His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor for the Speech he delivered to Parliament. While expressing full loyalty to our Sovereign, I feel a deep sense of gratitude to our abdicated King, Edward VIII., for his loyalty to the Empire by doing everything in his power to see that peace was maintained as the result of his abdication. He was such a world figure and popular prince that it is easy to visualise the trouble that could have ensued had he encouraged the feeling that manifested itself when the possibility of forced abdication first became known. In regard to His Excellency's Speech, there is little to feel elated about and much to regret. It is a brief tale of seven months' administration of the various departments and activities, and the winding up of the year's financial position with a deficit of £371,000, the Railway Department providing a goodly portion of it. In his Speech, His Excellency foreshadowed an active year of legislation regarding new Bills, and I congratulate the Government on their intention to save time by introducing in this Chamber some of the many contemplated measures. Industrial legislation again takes a prominent position in the proposals of the Government, and some of those Bills may be classed as hardy annuals. Mr. Fraser felt it his duty to chide members for their action last session, and in a fatherly way promised reprisals if they did not give those Bills kinder consideration this session. As one of those to whom his remarks applied, I cannot promise him that I will do his bidding by not casting a conscientious vote when those Bills reappear. Most of them were against the public interest, and I cannot visualise an improved or broader outlook being embodied in the Bills to come. If one analyses the objective in industrial measures introduced by the Government, one can discern what an utter disregard there is

in them for the public welfare, and how the trend of their juggernaut action is against the workers' best interests, for it surely means an autocracy of labour with a checking of all genuine progress and prosperity, and the rising of a dictatorship ultimately to sweep such a condition away. If we compare the objectives of those Bills with the demands of unions on the employers through the Arbitration Court from time to time, it will easily be discerned that what the Arbitration Court has refused they are asking Parliament to grant, and then they express resentment because members stand by the findings of the court! We must realise also that the soaring public debt, with its increased interest bill, must largely be borne by the employer, and that adds to the burden on industry. Those burdens are as much the concern of the worker as of the employer. Then, again, there is the heavy impost involved in having to pay 12 months' wages for 11 months' service, with other irksome conditions such as the new clause in the Tender Board's forms, and the shortening of hours by regulation. All these have the effect of destroying close co-operation and understanding between employer and employee instead of cementing them. We might get away with all this provided we were not an exporting people, who have to sell in outside markets at prices a good deal lower in value than our own, so that each increase in cost of production must reflect itself in the loss of turnover, and, finally, in loss of employment both for master and man. This must be accentuated by the various unions' claims now before the Arbitration Court, and that most dictatorial act of the Government in inserting the objectionable clause in the tender form, thereby endeavouring to turn all tenderers into compulsory recruiting agents for the unions. Should the electors for the Legislative Council stop and think for a moment, Mr. Fraser and his colleagues, the Minister for Labour and Mr. Rodoreda, will have to answer their masters as to why members of this Chamber cannot accept the Government's industrial Bills lock, stock and barrel. For my part, I desire to see the State grow and prosper, its people happy, with a future for all, enjoying freedom of action and thought. Any legislation designed to rob the people of those objectives must have my opposition. I am convinced that the real avenue to progress is through increasing production efficiency, making available more

goods for the people at less cost. This can be accomplished by a better understanding between employee and employer rather than by the coercive and separative actions of the Government of the day and the unions, whose behests Ministers must obey. I agree with Mr. Baxter that members of this Chamber would be lacking in their duty if they did not interpose this House between the Government and the people they are attempting to oppress. Dealing with other subjects, I feel that a few words regarding road transport would be appropriate. It is pleasant to hear that the Transport Board are so managing road transport as to give satisfaction to farmers throughout the country, particularly in those parts difficult to serve by any other means. It is a different story when we review the position of the railways, with a loss of £222,206 on the year's operations, and this on an increased revenue of £44,163! Earnings are given as £3,462,037. Expenditure, however, rose from £2,488,117 to £2,620,093—an increase of £132,000. Had the earnings dropped for the year, we could feel less concerned and blame the dry seasons. But the reverse is the position, and to some other cause has to be ascribed the serious loss. To my mind, the real position is that our railway system is obsolete and requires modernising, as other countries have found it necessary to accomplish. Anyone who has much to do with the receiving and despatching of goods must sigh for the removal of restrictions on road transport, where speedy carriage is sure, freed from the excessive red-tape regulations of the Railway Department, who appear to make it an obligation on their part to take the goods and convey the impression that there is an indifference as to when the client shall receive them. I feel sure that, with a thorough overhaul and modernising of conditions, the railway revenue would improve, and road transport could be held in check. According to the last published report, it will be six months before any section of the trolley-bus service will operate. In the meantime the convenience and comfort of the people are being ignored, and another obstacle springs up in the cluttering of the city footpaths with unsightly poles and the roads with overhead gear. The Minister's attitude in refusing demands to permit motor buses and charabancs to cater for passengers in the meantime is purely an act of stubborn injustice. In support of this contention I would quote Mr. H. H. Bell, the chairman of the Mel-

bourne Tramways Board, who when speaking of trolley-buses said—

The trolley-bus is a nondescript vehicle. It is neither a good tram nor a good bus. The trolley-bus is as route-bound as a tram. It has to have special turning points and garages; it needs overhead gear for four wires, instead of two; it is more expensive to buy; its economic life is less than half that of a tram; it carries a heavy seat tax, and will be very expensive to convert and to run.

In addition to what Mr. Bell has to say, I might add that another objection is that there is a complete stoppage of the service when current or other breakdown troubles occur, whereas the loss of one bus on a road is never felt. Coming to group conditions, Mr. Wittenoom and his colleagues painted a very doleful picture of the settler in the Denmark area, citing a case where 11 cows gave only four gallons of milk per day. I find it hard to accept the statement that the groupie is a capable man: why, 11 goats could do better, and at less cost! As a contrast I should like to quote the "West Australian" of April 22nd last. It reads as follows:—

"You ask me concerning the holdings about here," says a group settler friend in the Busselton district, in a recent letter to Mr. W. G. Pickering. "I am sorry to say that most of them are vacant, and most of the settlers left have incomes other than the returns from their blocks.

"I am on a backward block, with 50 acres of pasture, but I chopped down 20 acres of bush last year, and am seeding down that. I really think that if butter-fat keeps up in price, and pigs and cattle do the same, a good man will make a do of it. I have battled along since 1930, when the block was carrying only two cows, two young heifers, and a horse. Now I have 24 head of cattle, a mare, plenty of pigs, and tons of feed, so, really, I cannot grumble. I have potatoes to come out now. I have planted rape and oats, and have a shed half-full of hay.

"Of course, I have a good wife and two good children, which goes a long way in helping a man along. We have been here since we were married, and have never been away from the place for a holiday. In fact, we don't want to, for we seem to be happy here. I have an old truck, and, when we feel like it, we go for a run to Busselton or the beach."

Well, butter fat has maintained its price; in fact it has improved in value, as have also currants and sultanas, in spite of the pessimistic feeling that was abroad of what would happen if the recent Federal referendum failed. There is, however, a serious menace to the butter fat farmers in the importation of margarine, the product of the

cocoonut of the South Seas or of whales from the Antarctic. All other States have either instituted legislation to check its competition or are doing so now. Our Minister has seen fit to protect the margarine manufacturer by yielding to a request to permit 200 cases of edible margarine to come in in competition, whereas his action should have been to protect the farmer here and throw obstacles in the way of the margarine. Queensland, I believe, has entirely prohibited its use as a colourable imitation of butter, and so has Canada, while South Africa only permits its being sold for culinary purposes. I have here a pamphlet issued in South Australia illustrating in a rather effective way how the competition of margarine becomes an added burden. The "West Australian" of the 12th July had this to say:—

Not only is margarine a rival to butter, but in an uncoloured form it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to differentiate between the two products. There is but little difference in the fat and protein content of margarine and butter, and from that point of view they are foods of equivalent value. The vitamin content of butter is high when it is made from the milk of pasture-fed cows, but the vitamin content of margarine made from vegetable oils is almost negligible. It follows, therefore, that margarine is a useful food for adult persons, especially for muscle workers, but, because of its vitamin deficiency, inferior to butter, even for adults, and very definitely for growing children.

In Victoria, steps have already been taken to protect the public against the substitution of margarine for butter. The use of butter in the manufacture of margarine is prohibited under the Dairy Produce and Health Acts. The Health Act requires that margarine must be of a saffron shade, so that it can be readily distinguished from butter, and it must comply with standards as regards moisture content, freedom from rancidity, etc., under the Pure Foods Regulations. The sale of uncoloured margarine is prohibited in Victoria, except to certain manufacturers, who are compelled to purchase it in lumps of not less than 14lb. in weight. In 1935-36 the output of margarine in Victoria was 6,371,788lb., valued at £150,849.

Notwithstanding these provisions, uncoloured margarine manufactured in New South Wales, although it is illegal to sell it through an agent or in shops in Victoria, is finding its way into consumption. Orders are booked from individual householders by door-to-door canvassers, and such orders are supplied direct from Sydney. Victorian legislation is powerless to restrain manufacturers of uncoloured margarine in other States from selling the product in Victoria, on account of the Com-

monwealth law relating to restriction of interstate trade.

It is stated that the New South Wales Government has agreed to the suggestion of the Victorian Department of Agriculture and will take early steps to deal with the matter. If the other States fall into line, the margarine menace, which has, for a long period of time, been a bugbear to dairymen throughout Australia, will be a thing of the past. It has been stated that margarine is substituted for butter in Melbourne restaurants; but that is not the case. The great majority of restaurant proprietors scorn to descend to such tactics, and serve butter of good quality to their customers.

I think I have said enough to illustrate that in our State dairying is a growing industry requiring all the assistance it can have. In view of the required protection of group settlers, I cannot understand how the Minister was prevailed upon to take the action he did, in allowing those 200 boxes of margarine to come into competition. I see that to-day the dealers are above their quota and now one cannot get the requirements from them, but I am informed that they are quite satisfied that they will be able to get an extension and so fulfil the orders that customers are clamouring for. Margarine is a distinct menace to the butter industry, and I say the Leader of the House should take it up with the Minister for Agriculture and see what can be done at the earliest date to check the consumption of margarine. In conclusion I rejoice with the farming community in the recent copious rains and trust that the dry and anxious period will be left behind and that from now on until harvest time favourable conditions will prevail. It will be seen that these recent rains have also a strong bearing on the city's water supply when it is realised that Mundaring Weir is still 9 feet away from the overflow. If it had not been for the forethought of the Government in pushing forward the construction of the Canning Dam the metropolitan area must have experienced a very severe shortage of water this summer. There are one or two other matters with which I should have liked to deal this evening, but I realise that the Minister, rightly, I think, desires to conclude the Address-in-reply debate, this week, so I will leave my remarks at that, save to say I trust that the work of the session will prove fruitful to us all.

On motion by Hon. V. Hamersley, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.56 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 24th August, 1937.

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

QUESTION—GAS, FREMANTLE COMPANY'S POWERS.

Mr. NORTH asked the Premier: Having regard to the facts 1, that the Perth City Council can and do obtain extensions to their territory for the sale of gas by means of an Order in Council, and 2, that a number of residents in and around Swanbourne, who live beyond range of the service, desire to use gas, are the Government prepared to make this power legally available to the Fremantle Gas Co.?

The PREMIER replied: An application submitted on behalf of the Fremantle Gas & Coke Co., Ltd., is now under consideration.

QUESTION—RURAL RELIEF, FEES PAID.

Mr. BOYLE asked the Minister for Lands: What is the total amount received by the Trustees under the Rural Relief Act on account of application and other fees paid by applicants for debt adjustment under the Act?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: The total amount received on account of application and other fees paid by applicants for debt adjustment under the Farmer's Debt Adjustment and Rural Relief Fund Acts is as shown in the annual report tabled on Thursday, the 19th instant, viz., a total of £5,974 9s. 5d. for the period of 18 months, 1/1/36 to 30/6/37.