

tricts, I am directed to inform you that the carriage of go-carts on country trains is a different matter from their conveyance in the metropolitan area, where stations are equipped with platforms and staff is available to assist guards in the handling of the prams to and from the vans. Moreover, suburban brakevan compartments invariably have space to spare, and their accommodation presents no difficulty.

2. In the country areas, however, platforms and staff are not at all points available, and the handling of prams in brakevans taxed to capacity with perishable or other goods often presents quite a problem. The position would doubtless be aggravated on many lines, and probably involve the department in additional expense were free carriage to be agreed to, and in the circumstances the Commissioner regrets that he cannot see his way to alter the existing practice. At the same time, he desires me to point out that the rate on prams is very low, and it can hardly be contended that the freight imposes an undue burden on country residents.

Hon. V. Hamersley: We have not a country-minded Government.

Hon. A. THOMSON: That shows the attitude adopted. Here is the case of a woman who pushed a pram along two miles of rough road. Women in the metropolitan area have not to push their prams very far, and they are accorded the privilege of free carriage. The woman in the country, who should receive more consideration than she gets, may still push her pram two miles over rough country, and then pay freight on the train in and out. I regret that the Railway Department have adopted that attitude, but they have the authority to say what shall be. I have hurried over these matters, because I do not want to spoil the evening for hon. members, but I would say in conclusion that it is my intention at a later stage to introduce a Bill to amend the Transport Act in a manner similar to that which I previously suggested, and I will deal with that matter more fully when I submit the Bill.

On motion by Hon. T. Moore, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 7.54 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 18th August, 1937.*

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

### QUESTION—HOSPITAL TAX, EXPENDITURE.

Mr. BOYLE asked the Minister for Health: 1, What was the amount realised under the Hospital Tax Act for the year ended the 30th June, 1937? 2, Of such amounts, how much was spent in the same period on hospital buildings in (a) the metropolitan area; (b) in country district? 3, How much of the money raised by the tax in the same period was spent on maintenance of hospitals in (a) the metropolitan area; (b) in country districts?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, £234,599 3s. 5d. 2 (a), £3,171 0s. 4d.; (b) £17,034 16s. 9d.; total £20,205 17s. 1d. 3 (a) £110,514 1s. 2d.; (b) £85,326 18s. 8d.; total £195,840 19s. 10d.

### QUESTION—RURAL RELIEF.

Mr. BOYLE asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What total amounts have been made available for the adjustment of farmer's debts under the Rural Relief Act, 1935, by (a) the Commonwealth Government. (b) the State Government? 2, What was the number of applications received under the Rural Relief Act, 1935? 3, How many applications were adjusted? 4, How many are awaiting adjustment? 5, Up to what date of application by farmers have applications been adjusted? 6, Is it the intention of the Government to give effect to the district debt adjustment provisions of Section 9 of the Rural Relief Act? 7, What was the cost to the 30th June, 1937, of the administration of the Rural Relief Act?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Advanced—(a) by Commonwealth Gov-

ernment: at 30/6/1937, £464,000; first instalment 1937-38, £83,000; total £547,000; (b) no cash advances, but in relation to the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act the Agricultural Bank has agreed to write off £705,234, the State Sawmills. Taxation Department, and Water Supply Department £10,175, a total of £715,409. 2, Applications received total 2,961. 3, Applications adjusted:—Adjusted and paid, 1,602; tentatively passed by Trustees, but pending creditors' meetings, 337; total, 1,939. 4, Awaiting adjustment, 1,359. 5, Applications received during November-December, 1936, now being dealt with. 6, Effect has been given to this section by the appointment of Agricultural Bank Inspectors as district officers. 7, £11,470 (1/1/36-30/6/37).

### QUESTION—WHEAT BELT, NORTH GOOMARIN AREA.

#### *Linking-up of Holdings.*

Mr. BOYLE asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is it proposed to strengthen the holdings of settlers on poor land in the wheat belt by the addition of adjoining abandoned blocks? 2, If so, when will this policy be given effect to in regard to North Goomarin settlers who have already applied for such linking-up? 3, Is he aware that nearly two years have elapsed since these settlers made their first applications? 4, If a linking up is effected, will the total debts on such blocks be written down to the productive capacity of the blocks?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes, in approved cases. 2, Policy is being given effect to at present. Preliminary action already taken by leasing additional holdings to settlers. 3, No. 4, Yes.

### QUESTION—WATER AND SEWERAGE RATES.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Water Supplies: What water and sewerage rates were struck in the metropolitan area for the years 1932-1933, 1933-1934, 1934-1935, 1935-1936?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1932-1936: Water, 1s. 7d.; sewerage, 10d.

### QUESTION—HOSPITALS FOR THE INSANE, FRUIT SUPPLIES.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister: 1, Is fruit a portion of the food regularly supplied to patients of the different hospitals for the insane? 2, What quantities have been so provided during the past year? 3, Of the aggregate, what quantity (a) has been purchased; (b) produced on the home farms; (c) what varieties of fruit have been provided?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, Fruit is supplied with reasonable regularity subject to the fluctuations of the market. 2, Quantities supplied during the past year total 65,095 lbs. 3, The above quantity was made up of—(a) 14,640 lbs. purchased; (b) 47,695 lbs. produced by the farms of the Mental Hospitals Department and 2,760 lbs. supplied by Pardellup Prison Farm; (c) the above quantities include plums, tomatoes, pears, apples, figs, oranges.

### TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to announce that I have appointed Mr. Withers, Mr. Hegney and Mr. Sampson to be temporary Chairmen of Committees for the session.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the Minister for Agriculture (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) on the ground of ill-health.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### *Sixth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [4.37]: I should like to join with other members in congratulating the Premier on his safe return from the Coronation celebrations and also upon his apparently greatly improved health. I am sure that whatever political differences may exist between the Premier and other members, we all have a very high appreciation of the characteristics he displays in this House. We have found him to be one of the most fair-minded men it is possible to deal with, and in these circumstances it affords us great pleasure to offer

him our congratulations. I, too, wish to express my regret at the accident that befell the Minister for Agriculture. It is unfortunate that he met with that accident and was not able to attend a conference that was to commence shortly after that occurrence. I trust it will not be long before the Minister returns to the State well able to resume his duties in connection with the Agricultural and Education Departments. In the course of the last 12 months, I suppose there has been much done in my district for which I and the district can be thankful. I have been obliged by various Government departments from time to time in the provision of necessary items, and for that which my electorate has received I think I may safely say I am grateful. At the same time there are other matters that I think I have a right to believe ought to have been provided, and indeed might have been provided, had the opportunity for their provision been embraced by those in authority. At the outset I intend making reference to the condition, particularly with regard to the furniture, of certain country schools. I am aware that in referring to this subject I am not speaking of schools in the electorate of Katanning only. Similar conditions are to be found in schools in many other parts of the State. It appears to me that so limited is the amount of money made available for expenditure by the Education Department in the country districts, that a large number of the schools are furnished in a manner that is not only totally inadequate, but, in all probability, very unhealthy and unsatisfactory for the children who are obliged to attend. On perusing the Press during the past few weeks, I have noted that £500 could be expended on the improvement of the grounds of a school at Bayswater, yet I find that with regard to a school in my district, at which about 12 children are in attendance, the provision of one desk, with a seat along it to which no back is attached, is all that was made by the department for the use of those children. That £500, while it might have been expended on work that was required, could more justifiably have been spent in the country districts for the purpose of remedying the conditions that exist in a very large percentage of the schools. I say "in a large percentage of the schools" because in doing so I am not merely giving expression to my own views. I have a letter from the Education Depart-

ment under yesterday's date in which it is stated—

The department is doing its best to effect improvements in the type of seats in country schools. Last year an amount of money was provided which enabled us to furnish some schools with dual desks, but there are many schools yet to be provided for. In these, unfortunately, the long desks must still be in use until additional funds are made available.

It is apparent that not only those who reside within easy reach of the metropolitan area and the larger centres are those who contribute towards the revenue of the State. People in the outback areas, to a greater or lesser degree in accordance with their means, are contributors to that taxation, and are entitled, as a right and not as a favour, to similar treatment to that meted out to their more fortunately-placed brethren in the metropolitan and larger centres. I hope that during the coming year a very definite effort will be made through the Treasury to enable the Education Department to provide what I claim as a right, namely, that these country schools shall receive assistance in the direction I have indicated, bringing them, according to their size, relatively up to the standard of comfort and conditions that exist in schools in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Cross: There is room for improvement there, too.

Mr. WATTS: I have not a great deal to say regarding railway matters but there is one point I want to touch upon. Those of us who have read the "Sunday Times" in recent months, will have noticed that there have been some complaints from residents in the Great Southern districts regarding the unsatisfactory accommodation provided for second-class passengers on the trains that run from Albany to Perth. One correspondent wrote very strongly three or four months ago and complained that there was practically no accommodation for second-class passengers if there was anything like a large number who desired to be transported. It has to be remembered that the train journey from Albany to Perth is made almost entirely during the night, and the people who travel by those trains are, in consequence, compelled either to book a sleeper at additional cost, or else to sit up throughout the night. Quite a number of those who desire to travel by the train are not in such a position that enables them to afford the extra expenditure required to secure a sleeper, and if the compartments

are at all crowded, as they have been on many occasions, the passengers are compelled to sit up in a cramped fashion from some hour during the night until 11 o'clock the following morning. I would like to suggest that in regard to trains that are purely passenger trains, consideration should be given to making every passenger have a sleeper; that is to say, providing every passenger with a sleeper whether it be in the first or the second-class sections, and the charge for the sleeper to be included in the fare. I do not suggest that the fare should be any greater than it is now. Persons who travel by such trains running through the night are, in my opinion, entitled to have a sleeper, provided they are travelling a sufficient distance to warrant it. The position would then be that each passenger would have a modicum of comfort if travelling through the long night hours. I suggest this, not so much by way of criticism as by way of assistance to the railways of this State; because, unless and until some action is taken to render that trip from Albany a more comfortable trip, there is going to be taken every available opportunity to travel by some other means. If the journey by train can be made a little more attractive, the number of persons who wish to travel on that line I am referring to, and also on other lines, would be very much greater in the long run. We heard yesterday a good deal from the member for Kanowna (Mr. Nulsen) in connection with the port of Esperance. With all he said I am in entire agreement. The port of Esperance is undoubtedly entitled, so far as is humanly possible, to receive the benefits that should belong to it, and so too is the port of Albany. Without desiring for a moment to enter into a consideration of whether one place is better or worse than another, I say definitely that those people who are to be found in the hinterland of Albany are entitled to see Albany put into such a position that they may use it as a port for their own benefit and also for the benefit of Albany itself. There is no need for me to dilate on the conditions conferred by Nature upon Albany as a port, for we all know that they are there; but unfortunately they lack development. It would be interesting to ascertain what amount of money has been spent on the port of Albany during recent years, say, for the last decade. I think we

should find that, in common parlance, the amount was merely negligible. The time is not far distant when the people of the Albany zone will be saying in no uncertain voice that they require the port of Albany to be attended to. A considerable number, in fact the greater proportion, of those people are to be found in the Katanning electorate, and they say that they want bulk handling facilities provided at Albany. I agree with them that so long as they do not have those facilities at Albany, so long will those of them who are wheat-growers—taking the figures quoted by the Royal Commission on bulk handling—be suffering a loss to the extent of 2½d. to 2¼d. per bushel on their output. There is not much justification for the continuance of that loss. It may be that before bulk handling facilities are provided at Albany there should be a certain amount of reclamation at the foreshore. That reclamation could be carried out at a very reasonable price. I suggested just now that it would be found that the expenditure on Albany in recent years has been negligible. It is high time that that was rectified. Its rectification should first take the form of providing reclamation in order to furnish a site for the bulk handling facilities. There is no doubt in my mind that the time is drawing very near when the manufacture of superphosphate at Albany will have to be commenced. It is very desirable that the reclamation I referred to should take place, in order that the superphosphate company which may ultimately be induced to establish works there should be able to find a suitable place for the purpose. Possibly it would astonish some members of this House to be told that the use of superphosphate in the Albany zone has increased by 6,000 tons during the last three seasons, and that the consumption, so far as can be ascertained by consulting the railway freight figures, is now approximately 22,000 tons per annum. And it is still rapidly increasing. It has increased from 16,000 tons in the year 1934-35 to 22,000 tons for the season just past, and that increase is still progressing. The adoption of top-dressing, which has been found to be of inestimable value for pastures, is rapidly increasing, which of course, means an increase in the consumption of superphosphate. As a result of that top-dressing—which is not by any means practised by all the farmers—the advantage of using super

is becoming more and more widely known, and there is no doubt that the practice of top-dressing will continue to increase. It is impossible for members representing districts forming a large part of the Albany zone to make any remarks on the Address-in-reply without pressing very strongly for consideration to be given to those necessary works at Albany, so that the people of the district we represent will in due course have the facilities which I contend, and they contend, they are undoubtedly entitled to as inhabitants of the Albany zone. Among the charges that are placed upon the motoring public is to be found the annual driver's license, which no doubt provides a convenient addition to the revenue. One considering the position of motorists so far as taxation is concerned must be impressed by the fact that they are pretty hardly dealt with. There is a tax of  $7\frac{1}{4}$ d. on the price of every gallon of petrol that the motorist buys, and while I admit that he receives a benefit of portion of that in the improvement of the roads over which he drives, yet the balance of that tax brings in no benefit except the benefit of the reflection that it goes into Federal revenue. He is also obliged to pay his annual license for the use of the roads. With that I have no complaint. But he also contributes indirectly to other forms of Government revenue.

The Minister for Works: The license fee is not Government revenue.

Mr. WATTS: I did not say it was.

The Minister for Works: You said, "Other forms of Government revenue."

Mr. WATTS: I was wrong. I meant forms of taxation. He is also obliged to pay Customs duty and, in addition, the sales tax. There may be other charges that he is compelled to pay. And now we find that he is being asked to pay increased insurance rates on his vehicle. And on top of it all there is the annual charge of a fee of 5s. for the renewal of his license. This is totally unnecessary, for if a man be competent to drive a car in 1936, and if he commits no offence against the laws during the next ten years, it seems to me that he will be quite competent to drive a car in 1946. I throw out for the consideration of the Government the suggestion that for all new licenses obtained by motorists in the first instance a greater sum than 5s. be charged, and that renewal of licenses

should not be enforced. Once a license is issued, the person securing that license should be entitled to use it.

The Minister for Works: Motorists have more taxes to pay to the Federal Government. You are not complaining about that.

Mr. WATTS: I cannot, unfortunately. The other day the Minister for Works was kind enough to inform me that an amount of £20 had been spent on the courthouse at Katanning, and that he had in contemplation the making of provision on the draft Loan Estimates for alterations to that place. I do not like to miss any opportunity of explaining to the Minister, who has not inspected the place himself, why he should not fail to go further than those draft Estimates in this matter. The courthouse at Katanning consists of three rooms. Had the Minister been there three or four weeks ago he would have found that there was absolutely no place where a witness or an inquisitive visitor could sit in the court; because the greatest part of the space behind the bar was taken up with the weights and measures paraphernalia of the department concerned, not to mention the whole estate of a deceased person whose estate was in charge of the Curator. In consequence there was nowhere those people could go. The police office is a room of 13ft. by 12ft., in which a sergeant and three police officers are supposed to be able to transact the business to their own satisfaction and the satisfaction of those with whom they have to deal. I suggest that it is impossible for them to do so. There are times when the officer in charge of a station is compelled to undertake what are more or less private discussions with those who come to see him. For this purpose there is no place available down there. The clerk of courts—who has also such a wide variety of duties to attend to that he is more like a lord high everything-else, as depicted in "The Mikado"—is relegated to a room 16ft. by 16ft., out of which there has now been taken a large space at a cost of £20 to provide a counter for the public. There is no convenience for the magistrate, who has no other place in which to retire to consider his judgment or to deal with Chamber matters. He is compelled to accept this space partitioned-off from the public room where people come to buy stamps and have births, deaths and marriages registered and to require forty

other things which this officer—thank goodness a most efficient person—has to attend to. I have mentioned these matters because I do not think the Minister has seen them for himself. This is the best opportunity I have of advising him of the position, which, by the way, I have not exaggerated. I trust that very soon some effort will be made to enlarge and modernise the premises for the more efficient carrying on of Government business. In the course of his speech the member for Roebourne (Mr. Rodoreda) expressed the opinion that the basic wage should be greatly increased. I think he said a shilling or two would be of no use, that the increase ought to be in pounds. I do not say I should be opposed to anyone receiving an increase of pounds in pay if it would do him any good. I suggest that an increase such as is suggested would probably react to the detriment of those who got it. A pound is only worth what it will buy. If 10s. will buy to-day what a pound will buy to-morrow, a man might just as well have the 10s. to-day as the pound to-morrow. I am not looking for anything in the nature of a reduction in the standard of living, nor for any change that would be detrimental to any section of the community. I ask those who talk glibly about increasing the basic wage by a pound a week, what will be the effect upon the general community. The worker is employed and paid his wages by the manufacturer or merchant, or someone who is in a position to pass on all increased charges. The employer will pass these charges on in the future as he has done in the past. The cost of the article the worker is compelled to buy—it is the product of his own labour or that of some other worker—is going to increase as the wages increase. The greater the increased cost to the manufacturer or merchant the greater will be the increased price, because there will be a profit on the increased cost, and the greater the cost the greater the profit. An increase of that nature would merely bring us back in a short time to where we were, so that the 10s. of to-day would buy as much as the pound of to-morrow, and the pound of to-morrow would be worth no more than the 10s. is worth to us to-day. What we should endeavour to do is to keep down the cost of living, so that the 10s. of to-day would be worth 11s. to-morrow, and not that the pound of to-morrow should be worth the 10s. of to-day. The agricultural section is also entitled to consideration. The members of that section would naturally have to

pay the increased cost to which I have referred, and the increased profit upon the increased cost. They would be compelled, with others to whom I have referred, to pay an increased price for the goods they buy. Out of what fund would they pay that increased price? The only fund from which they could pay would be represented by the money they obtained from the bulk of the produce they had to sell. For a long time to come the bulk of their produce will have to be exported overseas, and the price which can be obtained in the markets that are available overseas is the price that the producer must accept for his products. He will, therefore, receive no more, whatever charges he will have to incur at this end. The increased charges created in the manner I have indicated will be passed on by the merchant and manufacturer, so that the agriculturist will have to pay more for what he requires, and his last stage will be worse than his first, bad enough as it is to-day. If we could direct our attention more towards increasing the amount that the pound will buy to-day, than to increasing the number of pounds we receive so that those pounds will in future buy less than they do to-day, we shall be more successfully discharging our duty to the country.

The Minister for Works: The worker does not get the increase from the Arbitration Court until the cost has been passed on to him.

Mr. WATTS: Let us try to work it out the other way, so that nothing will be added directly to the cost of living and so that the basic wage may remain in statu quo. If the worker can buy the same goods for less money, if only 5 per cent. less, he will be 5 per cent. better off. If you give him 5 per cent. more money and increase the cost of living by 5 per cent., the worker is no better off.

Mr. Stubbs: It would be like the dog chasing its tail.

Mr. WATTS: Yes. Reference was made to me on the last day of last session when members were considering an amendment to a motion for consideration of the Council's amendments to the Dairy Products Marketing Bill. It was only after the session was over I realised what that observation was. The remark to which I refer was made by the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael). What he said was that when there was a chance of affording relief to necessitous and sustenance workers, my vote

was always given against doing it. I regret the hon. member is not in his seat, for I am going to say one or two things which may be useful to him. The hon. member is not lacking in the element of kind-heartedness, and I do not suppose he wishes to do other than a reasonably fair thing by those who are somewhat down and out. I believe that his accusation on that occasion was probably made without due consideration, a practice which I have noticed he is not always able to guard against. As I believe that his remark was made in the heat of the moment I will not make the observations which it occurred to me to make shortly after I read what he said. It is, however, high time that members opposite got out of their heads the idea that those on this side of the House are opposed to fair treatment being given to sustenance and relief workers, and other persons similarly situated. I make this plain declaration that full-time employment for those men is very necessary. The Government have an increased revenue, considerably more revenue than they have had in previous years, and considerably more than the previous Government had, and there are fewer of those persons for the Government to deal with. That being so, surely much more could be done to provide more full-time employment for those people than has been done. The electorate of Victoria Park, I understand, contains a considerable number of industrial and relief workers. Probably the hon. member is better able to put up a case for those folk than I would be able to do. Both before and since I entered this Chamber I have had just as evident a desire for the improvement of their lot as has the member for Victoria Park. The substance of the charge is that I voted against legislation that was introduced for the benefit of those people. Would to God an opportunity had been afforded to me to vote for legislation that would benefit them. I ask you, Sir, to point it out to me. I have gone carefully through the legislation that has been submitted to Parliament during the last two sessions, and can find nothing which by any stretch of the imagination was likely to improve the lot of sustenance and relief workers. The so-called industrial legislation that we have had would in no circumstances contain anything that would have benefited those people. The House will, therefore, realise it was impossible for me or any other member on this side of the House to vote against something which did not exist. That

is the actual position. There was only one occasion I think when we could have dealt with the question of improving the conditions of relief workers in a discussion in this House. That was on the 1st September last year when the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) moved an amendment to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply. That amendment was to the effect that in view of the sum authorised to be raised from the financial emergency tax the unemployed relief worker might be put on full-time. The member for Victoria Park was to be found amongst those who voted against this amendment, while members on this side of the House were amongst those who voted in the affirmative. There is very little left, therefore, of the case put up by the hon. member. As I have said the charge was made on the last day of the session. I have decided to take this opportunity to reply to it, not only in my own interests, but in the interest of those who do not politically follow the Government, but who object very strongly to its being said that they have no heart and no mind to think for the industrial worker, the unemployed person, who through no fault of his own, for the most part, has fallen upon hard times.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What about the member for Kalgoorlie?

Mr. WATTS: I am not going to worry about him. Why has no such legislation been brought down for us to vote for or against? We claim to be a democratic people, to be governed by the Parliament of the country. We claim that the benefits of legislation are given to the people by the Legislature of the State. For seven years unemployment has been one of the principal items of worry to us. During all that period no legislation has been placed before Parliament to enable us to deal with the terms and conditions that should be meted out to those who require relief work.

Mr. Fox: Did not someone say that the work should not be made too attractive?

Mr. WATTS: This Legislature has never had the opportunity to declare whether more work should be given to these people or not, that it should be more profitable to them or not. There has been an entire absence of any opportunity to discuss these matters in the House, except by motions, which are, to a certain extent, a waste of time. I believe members on this side of the House will agree with me when I say I will support

to the limit any measure that the Government are prepared to bring down for the improvement of the lot of these particular people.

The Minister for Works: Do you remember your side of the House, when another Government were in power, talking about unemployment?

Mr. WATTS: I was not in Parliament at that time. So far as I see, the onus is not on the private member, but upon the Government, for if a private member brought down a Bill to alter the expenditure on unemployment relief, you, Mr. Speaker, know better than I where he would get. I contend that the Government have not discharged the onus upon them inasmuch as they have not given the Legislature an opportunity to say whether the proposals put up and the methods used by the Government for the amelioration of unemployment are satisfactory or not. Until the Government do that, I contend it is useless for members on the other side of the Chamber to criticise members on this side for the attitude they might adopt, or members opposite think we might adopt, in regard to the question of unemployment. In conclusion I desire to make reference to the position that appears to be arising under a ukase that has gone forth lately, to the effect that no Government contracts or Government business shall be given to firms unless they undertake to employ nothing but labour comprising members of some industrial union.

Mr. Hegney: That is to ensure fair competition.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That's a new one!

Mr. WATTS: It may be as the member for Middle Swan (Mr. Hegney) says. So far as I am concerned, such a ukase brings the Government of this country to a much lower level than I ever had expected it would be brought. Simply by an administrative act the Government almost deprive some persons of the right to earn their living. There are in Western Australia manufacturing with which, I believe, the Government have dealt, but with which they will no longer deal unless the ukase is obeyed. Let us imagine for one moment what would happen to a concern such as that which makes woollens at Albany, supposing the concern was unable to carry out the terms of the ukase. Immediately, I take it, the Government would proceed to buy in the Eastern States the stuff they now buy from

the Albany woollen mills. Down falls at once all the clamour we have heard about patronising local industry. Down falls at once the apparent desire to employ our own workers in the manufacture of the goods we need. I do not know whether the ukase will affect the business to which I have referred, but there is a possibility of that. And there is the same possibility with regard to other concerns as well. In my mind there is no doubt that if this ukase is allowed to go without challenge, it may in time be applied to some matter where it will be equally or even more objectionable. Unless we are careful, the democratic principles of which we talk so much may be entirely lost to us. A brake should be put upon any Ministry which adopts such an attitude.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.19]: One of the speakers in this discussion has said that the debate on the Address-in-reply is of very little value and that steps should be taken to abolish it. In my opinion, it would be a sorry day for the private member if the facility which is now given to make a speech on the Address-in-reply were taken away. It has been said that a private member can bring before the House by way of motion or Bill whatever he desires to speak upon. I do not agree with that, for there are some questions upon which we desire to speak but upon which a private member would find it highly difficult to introduce a Bill and thus obtain an opportunity to address himself to the subject. The Address-in-reply may be likened closely to a number of things which are provided for us, and which we are not obliged to use unless we wish to do so. If a member feels that he has nothing to say on the Address-in-reply, all he has to do is to sit still. So far as he is concerned, the motion can go through without a speech. However, it is a good thing to know that the opportunity is there. Although a private member has not the chance of doing a great deal in Parliament, whether he be on the Government or on the Opposition side, still there are times when private members feel that they would like to give expressions of opinion on big questions, whether their ideas amount to much or not. It may be that even from the humblest of us words of wisdom may at some time or other fall. Small beginnings may have great endings. The Speech of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor had one or



two bright spots. There was a mention of the commencement to build the Canning Bridge. There was also mention of a preliminary survey made with a view to the replacement of the existing Fremantle traffic bridge. Those decisions, although long delayed, are highly appreciated. I congratulate the Government upon having at last made up their minds to build those two structures. Very few people, I believe, will disagree with that attitude. Although, as I said, there are one or two bright spots in the Speech, a perusal of the proposed legislation set out does not give one cause for enthusiasm. I acknowledge that quite a lot of useful and desirable legislation is proposed, but I am inclined to agree with the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) that, after all, the legislation to an extent deals only with externals. I want to see that desirable legislation enacted, but I believe that to-day we are confronted with problems of such magnitude that it would take us our full time to consider them alone. Indeed, our time would have been well spent if at the end of a session we could say that we had found a solution to one of these great problems. The three greatest problems awaiting solution are youth employment, full-time employment for adult workers, and housing for the people. Several speakers have already mentioned the subjects of nutrition and physical fitness, but I consider that the three subjects which I have mentioned are conditions precedent to doing anything for nutrition and physical fitness. We must give the people sufficient money to buy their food before we can talk to them about developing physical fitness. They must be adequately fed with food of the right kind first of all, and that means increased purchasing power. When we have given the people that increased purchasing power and have properly housed them, we can talk to them about developing their bodies so that they will become fine types of men and women. In my view, youth employment is the foremost problem of the day. During the recess I took the trouble to make a survey of my district. I was not able to visit every house in it, but I did visit several hundreds, making inquiry on the doorstep from the parents as to the number of unemployed young people they had in their homes. I ascertained that there were about three young men between the ages of 18 and 25 out of work to every young woman. The

proportion was about three to one. I found, too, that in the majority of cases these young men and young women of 22 or 23 had not done any work since they left school. I tabulated the results, and they may be of value later. On going through them I found that very few indeed of these young people—I have their names here—had held a job which lasted more than three months. Some of them had had no work at all. I was speaking to one young fellow, 23 years of age, who had not had a day's work. All he had done was to go fishing. He made a few shillings from the fish he was able to catch on occasion, but he had never had a job. Again large numbers of these young people were sacked at the age of 19. That is to say, they found employment in various factories for a few months only. Some of them started work at 17 or 18, but they were invariably sacked at 19. So the problem seems to be that for a certain section of our young people, those who came on the labour market just at the onset of the depression, there has been no opportunity whatever. The jobs simply have not been available. As conditions improved a little, other young people who had gone through their schooling came on the labour market, with the result that large numbers lost their opportunities for a job and, so far as I can see, unless something is done will never be anything more than casual labourers getting an odd hour here and there. These are the men and women who are to govern this country in the future. I was greatly interested in May of this year to read a speech delivered by Mr. Stanley Baldwin, then Prime Minister of Great Britain. The speech was delivered on the eve of his retirement, and it was given to a huge gathering of Empire youth in the Albert Hall. Baldwin told those young people that they were the governors of the future, and that they would be charged with the responsibility of safeguarding democracy. There is a good chance for democracy if its safety is to be dependent upon young men and young women who have never had a job in their lives and have scarcely had a sixpence in their pockets! Mr. Baldwin spoke to them about the brotherhood of man. He said that the brotherhood was often denied and derided, but that we would find no rest until we acknowledged it as the ultimate wisdom. Fancy talking to young men

and young women 22, 23 and 24 years of age, who have never had a job, about the brotherhood of man, while they see other people riding about in luxury! If he had spoken about the martyrdom of youth, he would have been nearer the mark.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That 10,000 did have jobs.

Mr. TONKIN: I am speaking about youth generally. Is the hon. member against doing something for unemployed youth?

Mr. Marshall: If it interferes with the idle rich, she certainly will be.

Mr. TONKIN: No sane-minded man or woman would disagree with the statement that this is the problem of the age. People are apt to take a superficial view if they do not move amongst the unemployed young men and women. If they do move amongst them, they will find out that the prospects of unemployed youth for the future are nil. Their moral fibre is being sapped. We have evidence on every hand of the increase in delinquency among young people, and here is the reason. They are idle; all ambition has been deadened because they have gone day after day looking for the job that was not there, and at last they have given up the search. Their outlook for the future is gone, and yet they are the people who, within the next few years, will be the governors of the countries in which they live. If we look closely into the matter, we will find that where families have one or two, or sometimes three, young men and women out of work, the father, who possibly is on part-time employment, is obliged to maintain them, with the consequent great lowering of the standard of living of that family. That means that we are storing up a heap of trouble for ourselves in the future, not only in regard to the moral aspect of the question but also from the health standpoint, because these people who are being under-nourished will be more susceptible to disease, and we will find our hospital bill mounting and our loss through illness increasing. The question is not one that can be dealt with adequately by a State, and there were indications not long ago that the Commonwealth Government intended to do something. Several conferences were held. At the conclusion it was decided by the Federal Government that they would pass the matter on to the States to deal with, and they considered that Western Australia could deal adequately with the problem on a vote of £14,000! I would point out that the local authority of Melbourne voted £30,000 for rounding off street corners

in the city, but the Commonwealth Government believes that this problem can be dealt with in the State of Western Australia with a vote of £14,000 as a national contribution. That amount would not meet the problem in my electorate, let alone in the State. When I have finished this survey, I shall probably find that there are over 300 young men and women between 18 and 25 out of work who have never had a job for more than three months. It would take more than £14,000 to provide for them, to give them an opportunity for the future. Yet we find that the whole State has to try and set up some organisation to do something with a grant of £14,000. I hope this will be made a very live question at the forthcoming Federal elections.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What did your Government do with the £25,000 obtained from the public?

Mr. TONKIN: I hope this question will be a live one at the forthcoming Federal elections, and I hope, too, that we will hear members on both sides of the House clamouring for something to be done. It is not a question, "Do we desire to do it?" It is a question whether we can afford to leave it alone. I say definitely that we cannot.

Mr. Marshall: It is a moral obligation.

Mr. Hughes: The pity is that it will be only an election cry: it will fade away after the election.

Mr. TONKIN: It might be an election cry on the part of the hon. member.

Mr. Marshall: He is an authority on those questions.

Mr. TONKIN: I shall have another opportunity of dealing further with this subject, and the hon. member for East Perth will find out that I shall still be raising my voice on this question a long time after the next Federal election, whether I am in Parliament or out of it. We come now to the question of full-time employment of the men on Government relief works. I cannot understand why we have not put all relief workers on full-time employment. The Lieut.-Governor's Speech set out that there are now less than half the number of men dependent upon the Government for relief and sustenance than was the case four years ago. We are certainly getting more money from the financial emergency tax now than four years ago. If we have only less than half the number of men to provide for, and more money to spend,

it should not be a difficult matter to put these men on full-time employment.

The Premier: More than half of the men are employed with loan money.

Mr. TONKIN: What difference does that make? We have less than half to provide for now. The Speech says that there are 6,700 men dependent on the Government; four years ago there were 14,000. There were 14,000 four years ago and less than 7,000 now; whether they be employed with loan money or from revenue makes no difference to me. Thus, as there are less than half to be provided for now, even if we doubled their pay we would be no worse off than before. If we put them on full-time we should still have a good deal of money left. I hope this matter will be speedily attended to.

Mr. Hughes: I think you voted against full-time work last session.

Mr. TONKIN: I did not. Nutrition is being talked about a good deal. "Nourish the people properly," it is said. "Improve their physique." We have a basic wage which sets down the amount necessary to maintain a man and his wife and two children provided he is employed full-time. What happens to the standard of living of that man who has more than two children and is only employed part-time? They must be on the borderline of starvation.

Mr. Hughes: What about the C class men getting 28s. a week to keep a wife and two children?

Mr. TONKIN: Their condition is worse.

Mr. Hughes: There are hundreds of them.

Mr. TONKIN: We shall have to put these men on full-time employment, in order to bring their standard of living up to that which is considered reasonable for the man on the basic wage. If we want to be satisfied that we are reasonable men we cannot any longer tolerate a condition of things which ordains that 7,000 men and their wives and families must continue to exist on a standard of living which is a long way below that considered reasonable. The member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) last night, in a quick review of unemployment generally, mentioned that it appeared that during the depression it mattered little whether a country had access to raw materials or not; whether it was a highly industrialised country or not; whether it had a dense population or a sparse population. These things seemed to matter very little but

each country had considerable unemployment. That, of course, is true. I interjected with a question as to whether that was the position in Russia. The hon. member answered and inferred that there was no unemployment in Russia because the men were paid so little there. No doubt the hon. member gave that answer on the spur of the moment. If he had had an opportunity of thinking it out, he would not have said anything so foolish. If the hon. member's statement is correct, all we need to do in order to abolish unemployment is progressively to reduce wages.

Mr. Hughes: That is not your policy, is it?

Mr. McDonald: Do you advocate the Soviet system in Australia?

Mr. TONKIN: I will deal with the subject in my own way, and in my own time, and I hope that I will satisfy the hon. member. He gave his answer on the spur of the moment; but if what he said was true, if there is no unemployment in Russia because of low wages, then all we need to do is progressively to reduce wages here, and thus increase employment. As a matter of fact, we know that the opposite is the case. Experience has shown conclusively that as the purchasing power of the masses is increased, so the outlook for employment is improved. That is why in those countries where they embark on extensive programmes of loan works, put large bodies of men on Government work and so increase the spending power in those countries, employment gathers momentum quickly. But there is another answer to the hon. member. We know that wages are not lower in Russia; that is, comparatively lower.

Mr. McDonald: I know they are.

Mr. TONKIN: I will prove that they are not. Luckily, the International Labour Organisation has made considerable inquiries into these matters and reports are tabled regularly.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Show us the value of the rouble compared with—

Mr. TONKIN: I am not talking about the value of the rouble. I will give figures from Germany, Japan and Russia, and prove that the reason why there is no unemployment in Russia is not because there is a low standard of living but because there is a different system. First of all, I will tell the hon. member that in 1936 production in Russia was 300

per cent. higher than the 1929 level. No other country in the world approached anything like that in 1936 and in some countries—France for example—they are very little better off now than in 1929.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You have to find out what the standard was in 1929. The standard in Russia was very low.

Mr. TONKIN: The hon. member will admit that they are continuing to improve?

Hon. C. G. Latham: I do not say they are not improving.

Mr. TONKIN: We will take the member up on his own argument. If the standard of living in Russia in 1929 was very low, the honourable member will admit that there was a large number of unemployed in Russia at the time. The standard of living in Russia to-day is considerably higher than it was in 1929.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The women have to work, even on the roads.

Mr. TONKIN: There is no unemployment to-day. Therefore it cannot be argued that the reason why there is no unemployment is the low standard of living because, as the standard of living improved, so unemployment diminished.

Mr. McDonald: Did not 2,000,000 people die of starvation?

Mr. TONKIN: I have heard of thousands of people dying of starvation in other countries. The report of the Director of the International Labour Organisation deals with the great improvement in agriculture and production generally, and then continues—

More important, however, than the actual development of agriculture and industry are the changes which it is effecting in the life of the people. As two members of the staff of the International Labour Office who recently visited this country have put it, "The present phase of Soviet development may be characterised as an effort to find a workable synthesis of individual interests and collectivist principles. What strikes one in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to-day is the way in which collective ownership and collective methods of action are combined with a new emphasis upon personal incentives and personal welfare and ways of living. This effort colours all aspects of Soviet life."

The abolition of rationing has introduced a new price-system, but it is a system of prices fixed by authority, not by the unrestricted play of economic forces. It has also introduced the problem of wages in their relation to cost of living and the problems which derive from differentiation between the rewards which individuals obtain from their labour and from

the ways in which they use or misuse their money.

The tendency towards methods of payment by result in order to stimulate production has been greatly accentuated recently.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Yes, payment by results.

Mr. TONKIN: Does that suit the honourable member?

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is the policy in Russia, and you are advocating it.

Mr. TONKIN: The report continues—

Already in 1934, in large-scale industry, 69.6 per cent. of the work was done on a piece-rate basis. Moreover, in addition to the financial inducement, the Stakhanov movement has given a great impetus to efficiency and economy of production. The enthusiasm with which the notion has been taken up that the worker should be constantly endeavouring to improve his output by thinking out or applying more expeditious and labour-saving methods of work is but one example of the patriotic fervour which lends so much dynamic force to the industrial expansion of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The maintenance of this spirit is all the easier on account of the youth of the great majority of the workers and of the concrete results in the way of better living standards which are now beginning to become evident.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Your own people say that Russia is still a hundred years behind the Old Country.

Mr. TONKIN: Who are our own people to whom the honourable member refers?

Hon. C. G. Latham: Labour people. I will quote some of them, if you like.

Mr. TONKIN: I hope the Leader of the Opposition is not questioning the source of this information.

Hon. C. G. Latham: No, I have read it.

Mr. TONKIN: Then it seems evident that there has been an improvement in the standard of living of the people.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Due to their having to do piecework.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not agree with that. I say it is due to the employment of the people. They are all at work, and there is an outlook for the youth of the country, something that does not exist here.

Mr. Sampson: Do you advocate similar conditions?

Mr. TONKIN: I advocate silence on the part of the honourable member.

Mr. Sampson: That would make things easier for you.

Mr. TONKIN: Let me quote further from the report—

That the standard of living is rising all round is attested by numerous witnesses.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It needs to rise.

Mr. TONKIN: The statement proceeds—

Without suggesting that Soviet standards can already be compared to those of Western Europe or the United States, it may be said that the avowed goal of the whole effort to achieve adequate standards for the masses is no longer considered either as unattainable or even extremely remote.

That satisfies me. We know that 20 years ago the masses of the people in Russia had no outlook and no future. Now we are told that their goal to achieve adequate living standards is regarded, not as unobtainable, but as quite within sight.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Russia is even going in for private ownership.

Mr. TONKIN: It does not say that the condition of the Russian people, even though it has improved, is as low as it was in Western European countries one hundred years ago, as the Leader of the Opposition would have us believe. It admits that their standard is not as high as ours, but it says definitely that the Russian people are catching up quickly.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It does not say anything of the sort.

Mr. TONKIN: If they once catch up, it will not be long before they leave us behind.

Mr. Marshall: We are retrogressing.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Due to the present Government.

Mr. TONKIN: In conclusion of this aspect, the report says—

The issue to be emphasised is not so much what conditions are to-day, but how they compare with the past, and what they are becoming. It is by that test that the Soviet experiment in collectivist economy should be appraised and finally judged.

We must all agree with that. That is the only reasonable basis upon which we can sum up the efficacy or otherwise of the Russian experiment. What I have said shows conclusively, I think, that the reason why there are no unemployed in Russia to-day is not because of low wages enabling the Government to employ everybody, but because a different system of economy has been adopted there. Although considerable improvement is manifest throughout the world,—in some countries greater than in others, though there has

been hardly any improvement in France, for instance—this fact stands out clearly, that unemployment has not been reduced to the extent that industrial production has increased; nor has there been any improvement to speak of in international trade. This suggests that the improvement that is apparent is due rather to the policies of Governments to provide employment for men on loan works than to any definite improvement in conditions of employment generally. I am led to the conclusion that from now on we shall be faced with the necessity for providing employment for a large body of men who will never again be absorbed in industry. The sooner we realise that fact, the better it will be. Having realised it, we shall have to consider whether those men will be employed by Governments on part-time or full-time work. We cannot for any length of time continue the practice of having a large body of men permanently employed by the Government on a standard which is lower than what is considered reasonable. Therefore, if we are charged with the responsibility of providing work for several thousand men year after year, those men will have to be employed full-time and at full rates. I urge the Government to give immediate attention to this matter, to delay no further, and to put the men into full-time employment. I believe that all workers, with the exception of part-time men on Government works, have been restored to the pre-depression level of work and pay. Only yesterday the bank officials proved their claim in the Arbitration Court. They were subject to a reduction of 10 per cent. in their wages, and the 10 per cent. was fully restored to them yesterday. In support of their case, they claimed that they were the only ones still bearing the special burden imposed upon them as a result of the depression. Thus, bank officials have had their pay restored, but relief workers on part-time employment, by virtue of not getting in a full year's work, are to that extent being burdened with a reduction of wages. I hope immediate steps will be taken to remedy this position. The third question with which I wish to deal is that of housing. It is true that there is considerable activity in the building industry. A large number of houses are being erected in various parts of the State. Although they are generally of a fine type, they are houses that

meet the needs of only a certain section of the community. I submit that the requirements of the basic wage worker—the ordinary labourer—are not being met by the building programmes at present in operation. I took the trouble to ascertain statistics of houses available for renting in my district. In 1935, in the North-Fremantle district, 27 houses were declared unfit for habitation. In 18 instances the orders were complied with, and the houses were renovated to the satisfaction of the local authority; the remaining nine houses were demolished. In 1936, the number of houses declared unfit for habitation was 72. In 54 cases the orders were complied with, and the houses fixed up. In four instances nothing has yet been done, and 14 houses were demolished. In 1937 20 houses were declared unfit for habitation, and in one instance the order was complied with, while in 15 the matter is pending, and four houses were demolished. The net result is that in the last three years in North Fremantle, 119 houses were declared unfit for habitation, 73 were renovated, 19 orders were dealt with, and 27 houses were demolished. During that time only one house of a value of less than £500 was erected in the district, which means that in the last three years there has been a net decrease of 26 houses available for renting. We find a similar position at Mosman Park, though I should not say that because it is not quite similar to the position at North Fremantle. In 1935 no house was declared unfit for habitation at Mosman Park. In 1936 19 houses were declared unfit, 18 were renovated, and one was demolished. In 1937 six houses were declared unfit, and two orders were lifted, leaving four houses still unfit for habitation. So there has been a net decrease there, and I am informed by the secretary of the local board that the number of houses erected in the district during the last three years at a cost of under £500, was 18 up to June last. Thus in those two districts, Mosman Park and North Fremantle, in the last three years, there has been a decrease in the number of houses available of a value up to £500. There is a well known precept that a person who is contemplating the purchase of a house should not buy one of a greater value than the amount of his wages or salary covering a period of two years; that is to say, if a man is on a wage or salary of £300 a year he should not contemplate buying a house costing more than £600. If a man is on the

basic wage he should not buy a house costing more than £350, otherwise he will find himself in difficulties from the commencement. Therefore the type of house necessary to provide accommodation for a worker is essentially a house costing less than £500, and very few of such houses are being built to-day. People who propose to invest their money in houses for the purpose of letting them do not build them costing less than £500: usually they build houses of a value of £700 or £800, and those houses are subsequently let for 25s. a week. So we see that scarcely anybody is providing the type of house that is required. A person able to build a house costing £700 or £800 can in most instances arrange finance for himself, either through a building society or a speculating builder; but the person on the basic wage or on part time who wants a house, has no opportunity of doing that. It is impossible for him to finance the building of a house, and it means that he cannot get one. We find this position occurring, and fewer and fewer houses are being built suitable for the people who require them. As houses are demolished we find families being forced to occupy a residence that is already housing a family, and so we have two or more families living under the one roof, which is a very undesirable state of affairs. It is quite patent that private enterprise will not take up this question, and will not build houses of a value of £350 or £400. Therefore the Government must do so. I think it is recognised throughout the world that this is a problem in all countries. Some years ago the Commonwealth Housing Act was passed with a great flourish, the object being to provide houses of the type to which I have referred. Unfortunately, however, scarcely anything has been done under that Act. I suggest that the Government should get busy immediately, take up the question with the Federal Government, and endeavour to obtain money under the provisions of that Housing Act for the purpose of providing the houses that are necessary in this State. The Workers' Homes Board should have it made clear to them that houses are essential, and that large numbers of them must be built and built quickly.

The Minister for Health: The local authorities will have to alter their Act with regard to brick areas.

Mr. TONKIN: There will not be that trouble in North Fremantle.

Mr. Hegney: Or in Middle Swan either.

Mr. TONKIN: We will be all right in that regard, but the difficulty I see is in respect of the man on casual work. The employment of a wharf labourer, for instance, is casual; he cannot say from day to day for how long he will be employed. If such a man applies to the Workers' Homes Board for a home, the board will consider that application side by side with another from a person who may be in a permanent position, and in receipt of perhaps a good salary. The board will decide in favour of the person occupying the permanent position and the wharf labourer must go without. In my opinion that is wrong. The man in a good position can make his own arrangements; he should not be assisted to the exclusion of those who are less fortunately situated—those on the basic wage or on part time work. If a man on Government relief work applies for a home he will be told that he has no security of employment, or that his wage average is less than the basic wage and that therefore he will not be able to meet the payments. He will be told also that he is a bad risk and the board are sorry that they cannot assist him to get a house. That kind of thing does not satisfy me. The persons I have described must be given houses. They are entitled to have a roof over their heads. There have been instances, I suppose, where people have moved from homes owing some rent, but now landlords have taken steps to deal with that position, and when a person comes along to rent a house he is asked to show his previous rent book. It is very clear that the workers are paying to landlords rents which are higher than they would have to pay if they occupied workers' homes costing about £350 or £400. A decent house can be built for £350.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: What rent would he have to pay?

Mr. TONKIN: The total covering repayment of principal, interest, and rates to the local authorities would be 13s. 4d. a week. The Workers' Homes Board assured me that they could build quite a decent weatherboard house, and that 13s. 4d. would cover interest, principal and rates.

Mr. Fox: And in 16 years the house would be paid off.

Mr. TONKIN: I know of few instances where houses can be rented in North Fremantle—and cheaper rents cannot be found anywhere—for 13s. 4d. per week. In most cases rents are considerably higher than that, the figure being generally 16s. to

17s. 6d. a week for a four-roomed house, and a house not in very good condition either. If the Workers' Homes Board can provide homes to cost the persons for whom they are built 13s. 4d. a week, they should hurry up and build hundreds of them, because they are very necessary. Now we can test the Commonwealth Government out. They have their Housing Act, and they have plenty of money, and so we should endeavour to get some of it and put it into the housing scheme that I suggest. I should like to see the Workers' Homes Board take up the question properly and build these houses right away. I am not saying that we should not provide a worker on £300 or £350 a year with a home under the workers' homes scheme, but if the provision of homes for those people means the exclusion of others less fortunately situated from the right to have a home, the system should be altered. Again I say it is not a question whether or not we particularly like to do it; it becomes a question whether it is essential. In the district I represent each year there are fewer houses of this type available, and it does not need much imagination to conjure up what the position will be in a year or two if steps are not taken very soon to provide these homes. At the present time we find two or three families living under the one roof, and I shudder to think what would happen if an epidemic broke out in a thickly populated locality. We can remedy that position by building homes of the type I have suggested, and by doing so we give individuals some incentive to lead better lives, and change the outlook of those people who have never had the opportunity of knowing what their own home was. It will also be possible for those people to rear their families in a better atmosphere. That will be all to the good. It will remedy not only the bad position that exists at present, but will be of great benefit to the race, since it will improve the outlook of the people, and make it better for the children who have to spend their time at home.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Come over to this side, and we will make a start.

Mr. TONKIN: I am afraid the hon. member would not.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Yes we would.

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

Mr. TONKIN: From the social aspect alone, the necessity for an extensive housing

scheme must be apparent. Again, it represents a big source of potential economic activity, and that is an additional reason why the Government should embark upon the scheme. I have endeavoured to indicate to the House the three problems that should be dealt with forthwith. First, there is youth employment and then the problem of full-time employment for the adult worker. The third problem relates to housing. I have endeavoured to explain why these matters are so urgent, and to give reasons why immediate action should be taken. The fact that there are workless and homeless people, as undoubtedly there are, is not due to any niggardliness on the part of Nature, but entirely to man-made conditions and relationships. As the present unsatisfactory conditions are due to those causes, then it should not be beyond mankind to devise remedies for these particular ills. I hope that all members will endeavour to study this question fairly and look for a solution of the problem. I cannot do better than commend to them the literature that is issued from time to time by the International Labour Organisation of Geneva. I may be optimistic, but I believe that from the efforts of that body a tremendous amount of good will ultimately flow. If I had the time and inclination at the moment, I could indicate to members much good that has been accomplished as the result of its efforts despite the opposition—and I do not like having to say it—that emanated from the British Empire. One point rises to my mind. Last session an attempt was made to adopt the Convention for a reduction of the hours of work for officers and men on ships in port. Great Britain was one of the greatest opponents to the adoption of that Convention, even though the United States of America, France, and I am pleased to say, Australia, supported the proposal. The International Labour Organisation is doing marvellous work and its literature is well worth reading. If my speech does nothing else but bring that phase under the notice of members, I am satisfied that much good will accrue.

**MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER** (Subiaco) [7.35]: Unlike my colleagues who have adopted a contrary attitude, I do protest against speeches at this stage of the session. Parliament has been in recess for practically eight months, and I think it is time we got on with some legislative work.

Mr. Hegney: Then let us get on with it.

**Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER**: By indulging in speeches at this stage we not only hold up the work of this House, but that of the Legislative Council as well. Interjections also tend to hold up business. It is commonly thought that during the recess members of Parliament have little or no work to do. The more conscientious amongst us realise that during the recess we have not only constant work, but a most trying time. Our efforts mostly affect individuals or organisations or perhaps have relation to municipal grievances. Nevertheless, the finalisation of our work is in Parliament, and it is for that reason that I believe time would be saved if we allowed our leaders to ask Parliament for the requirements of our several electorates and to voice our respective grievances. As I shall not have another opportunity to present the Government with some home truths, I intend to take advantage of this particular occasion. Dealing with motor traffic, I wish to refer to third-party risk insurance. I believe, with many other members of this House, that the public would welcome a measure that would provide for compulsory third-party insurance. Legislation could be introduced that would deal with the premiums to be paid in that respect. Perhaps the State and Federal Governments are so involved regarding loans from the rich insurance companies that they are afraid to voice their real opinions. In England legislation making compulsory the taking out of policies to deal with third-party risk has been in operation for some time and although there are many more motorists on the road there than there are in Western Australia, I have not heard of any being chased off because of the compulsory insurance against that particular risk. In any event, I do not think it is for Parliament to view the matter from the point of view of the poor motorist or of the rich company, but rather from that of ensuring justice for the general public. I hope the Government will introduce legislation along these lines for the consideration of members this session. As to the speed limit, the existing laws are not enforced. I have commenced to drive a car and therefore know all about it. Motor cycles and buses are speeding daily at from 40 to 60 miles an hour, and they get away with it. On the other hand,



if a person were to park his car in a prohibited area or move six inches over the white lines, he would find that the law in that respect was rigidly enforced. If a motorist leaves his car standing for a little while too long, he is bound to find a ticket in it when he returns. Disregard of the traffic laws regarding speeding means death, accident, or human misery, but disregard of the traffic laws in other respects amounts merely to petty irritation. Most decidedly the law should be enforced with regard to the speed limit and there should be installed traffic lights as in the other States. There is also necessity for further parking areas throughout the metropolitan area. The manners of Perth motorists are exceptionally bad and much worse than those of the people in the Eastern States. A little while ago in the streets of Perth white lines were put down to indicate where pedestrians were to cross the street, and motorists were supposed to stop so as to allow pedestrians the right of way. I believe the motorists did stop for a couple of days, but now we have the spectacle of hesitant mothers either pushing children ahead or dragging them back, while motorists drive gaily over the white lines. Any one who has visited Melbourne recently will remember that in between the white lines in the streets there is painted the word "Stop." Woe betide the motorist who does not stop. Even if no pedestrian is in sight, motorists are compelled to stop and re-start their cars. I wish to ask a couple of questions and I hope that, at an appropriate time, one or other of the Ministers will give me the information I seek. The first has reference to State insurance as it affects the relief worker. I would like the policy of the Government on the point clearly defined.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They have not got a policy, so you need not ask for it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Some men have received lump sums for bodily injuries, and when the money has been spent they have been refused rations. I have several such instances in mind. One concerns an "A" class man who received injuries as a result of which he was ill for a long period. Then he received over £200 in compensation. He has a wife and three children and naturally, during his long illness, debts mounted up. He paid off those debts when he re-

ceived the lump sum payment and foolishly, as some people may think, bought some furniture and clothes for his wife and children. Very soon he had no money left and then he was refused rations, notwithstanding the fact that from being an "A" class man, he will for the rest of his life be rated as "B" or "C" class. When money is paid over in a lump sum, is it paid on account of the injuries or is the payment made to relieve another Government department from the necessity to give rations? I would like that question answered. Another question relates to sustenance men. I will cite the instance of one man who has only one leg. He was receiving 7s. a week for sustenance and then he secured employment at the rate of 10s. a week. Immediately he got the job, the sustenance payment ceased because the department said he was in employment. I interviewed the department and the officer said they would return to the 7s. a week sustenance but they had to be assured that the man was not in permanent employment at a rate of 10s. a week. Another injustice operates with regard to men with large families. I have had some such cases in my electorate. For instance, there is one man who has 12 children who are all under the working age. He is a "C" class man and receives £2 9s. a week for sustenance. When £1 is taken off that amount for rent—I should say that no house owner would let his property to a family of 14 for less than £1 a week—it is difficult to understand how such a person can clothe and feed a large family on £1 9s. a week. Of course it is absolutely impossible. Another injustice is worked with respect to the man with a large family who has an income, or wage, above the basic rate. One man was receiving £4 18s. a week. He had a wife and nine children. Ultimately the work he had ceased. The job lasted for a few months only, and then he found he could not get rations. It was not possible to secure them for his wife and family until the difference between the £4 18s. a week that he received and the amount that he would have received as a sustenance worker was adjusted. In such cases the father is penalised for having children; the children are penalised for being alive, and some of us have the audacity to talk about desiring a greater Australian-born population. I do not believe in any system of birth control, and I do believe in large families. At the same time, the sys-

tem under which we are living at present is conducive not only to unscientific birth control, but encourages abortion amongst women, with the result that the mortality returns are ever growing, and if children are born, they are almost invariably "C" class. I would not mention this if I thought the Government had no chance of relieving the position. But they have a chance. They could give free milk to those under-nourished children whose parents cannot afford it, and they could also give free meals. In the kindergarten there is provided a good meal for 3d. There we have found that the children coming to school and getting free milk and the meal at 3d. have put on weight and become immensely alert; but when they go back on holiday to their homes they lose weight, and so the good is all undone. Also the Government could, if they wished, create a system of child endowment. Many members on the Government benches have spoken of this, but if they were really sincere, surely those members could force the Government to do something in this respect. Another injustice is that of sending relief workers into the country without a blanket or any other covering. Very often those men are over the age of 60, not old enough to get the old-age pension, but still plucky enough to take work in the country. However, they go out without any blankets and, in consequence, contract ailments and come back here to be a charge either on their own people or on the State. I know that the Government provide certain blankets and I think blankets ought to be issued to other workers, who should be asked to pay for them on easy terms. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) has gone into the rent question, and I am sure that every member on this side has great sympathy with what that hon. member said. In Subiaco the rent of poorer class houses ranges from 10s. to £1 per week. But during his standing-down period a man does not pay his rent, leaving that to be met when he is again employed. However, sometimes the standing-down period is so long that a man becomes callous and takes any sort of work. Only a few days ago there was a man, very ill through under-nourishment, who had been on sustenance work for a long time. He accepted work in the country. He had a wife and three children and during his long standing-down period many debts were incurred. He took the work in the country, although he was physically unfit for it, with the result that before he reached his destina-

tion he became mental and jumped out of the train. He is now in Heathcote. Members must have read recently of a man in Victoria who had been five years on sustenance and who, as a result, attempted suicide. In Victoria they have done a commonsense thing. For some time they have been giving full work on two days a week so that the sustenance worker may be in a position to pay his rent. Whatever the physical condition of relief workers, they have to accept work of an arduous character. Is it fair? Is it sound? We have instituted a system of State slaves, a system which makes a man and his wife and family depend on the State and the conditions that the State imposes. We are breeding "C" class men who must become slaves. The system aimed at by the Government is wrong: it is expensive and unworkable, and the time has arrived to put relief workers on work of a more satisfactory character. The relief worker to-day is providing an example of what we would all get if we were all under the system.

Mr. Fox: And it would do a lot of us a world of good.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Here I should like to show the Government how they could put two classes of relief workers on to full-time work without much additional cost. To put the 42s. relief worker and the 49s. relief worker on permanent work would cost the Government very little more than they are paying now. A relief worker in the metropolitan area getting 49s. works for six weeks and 2½ days; his stand-down period is three days, and his average weekly pay over the whole period is £3 9s. It is only a few shillings between that and the basic wage that he would receive if he were fully employed. The 42s. man works for five weeks and 1½ days, his stand-down period being four days. He averages over the period £3 6s. 8d. a week. Therefore he would, on full-time work, cost the Government only a few shillings more per week than he now receives. The 49s. man in country areas works six weeks and five days. His stand-down period is four days and he averages £3 14s. 2d. because of his camp allowance. To put him on full-time work would cost the Government very little more than he now receives. If we on this side were on the Government benches instead of here, I would not be detailing this plan to-night.

Hon. C. G. Latham: No, you would have no reason to do so.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Another thing the Government could very easily institute would be a system of State children's doctors. Many poor people at the present time hesitate before taking their children to a hospital, because of the expense. I know how wonderful the hospitals are, but think of the feelings of the mothers, especially when their children are being treated in the out-patients' department. Mothers coming in from outlying areas have to bring all their children with them because they cannot leave them at home. It is difficult to realise the feelings of a mother in such a position. If the father be receiving £4 or £5 a week, the children cannot be taken to a hospital without the parents making contribution to the hospital fund. Consequently, very often it is necessary for the parents to use home remedies on the children, sometimes with unfortunate results. Children's doctors are urgently necessary and although I will not say that they ought to be stationed in every town and suburb, at least we should have quite a number of them. Many members have told us of everything that is wanted in their respective electorates. I am not going to tell the Government of the whole of the requirements of Subiaco, but I will say that in that electorate we have the school at Bugot-road, which has a large lake in the playground. That sadly needs attending to, and although it will cost a considerable amount of money, something should be done to get rid of that lake, for we cannot have our children playing in water especially in wintertime. The trouble has been there for 30 years, so it is about time it was removed. Then we have in Jolimont a school which is not sewered. All the houses in the district have to be sewered, but not the school, so the unfortunate children have to put up with antiquated facilities. The member for Claremont spoke of frogs down in his electorate. We have frogs also at Jolimont, but instead of draining out the ponds, I would suggest that by their conversion we could have a very much prettier suburb there. We also have a dangerous subway leading from Hay-street into Jolimont. Buses from Perth to City Beach run under that subway, and so, too, do large trucks coming from various factories. So it will be seen that there is a likelihood of a very serious accident in that subway. I want to remind the Government that last year one of the Ministers promised that he would

give a pound for pound subsidy for free milk. That has not been carried out. The Free Milk Council is now supplying free milk in 13 schools. In Albany the people have started a free milk council, and many of the children there are getting free milk. I suggest that if the Government have not the money with which to supply free milk, they should go to the municipal councils and secure some of their three per cents. Let me read a letter I have received from a schoolmaster in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Marshall: If you read it, I will have it put on the Table of the House.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The honourable member is free to do that. Here is the letter under date the 17th June, 1937:—

Dear Madam, I have to acknowledge with thanks your letter of June 16th. Our school is situated in a poor locality. Many of our children are under-nourished, ill-clad, and parentally neglected in the matter of cleanliness. A census of the school shows that 75 needy children are not in a position to pay for milk. I would be glad of any assistance your council could render.

That came from a district not far from Parliament House, but I assure members that I could get similar letters from nine-tenths of the schools in the metropolitan area. That, I consider, is a disgrace to us. It is time we realised that money spent to make healthy children should be a nation's first obligation. River drives, parks, housing and trolley buses are all secondary considerations. We can be healthy living in tents provided we have a plentiful supply of food, but we cannot be healthy in palaces without food. We have food in plenty in Western Australia to ensure three square meals a day for everybody, and there is milk in abundance to provide at least one pint per day for each child. We have to get into a way of realising that our assets lie in the children of the State. Our job is to see that the people are fed and not to waste time over pettifogging legislation. I am not concerned at all with parties; on this subject I am a thoroughly non-party woman, and I do ask members of the Government to do their duty to the children of the State. I cannot resume my seat without referring to the mention made of conditions in Russia. At a largely attended meeting at Subiaco when the referendum on marketing was before the people, an old gentleman asked at the conclusion of the meeting whether I would please tell the audience what this had to do with Subiaco. By the same token I should like to ask the mem-

ber for North-East Fremantle what on earth Russia has to do with us.

Mr. Tonkin interjected.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I have been to Russia; the hon. member has not.

Mr. Tonkin: Let us hear something about it.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The hon. member quoted a certain year, 1933-34. I happened to be in Russia at the time and I know what I am talking about. The conditions were simply appalling; the people were starving. As for everybody being employed, that statement is an absolute untruth.

Mr. Tonkin: Would you say that what the International Labour Organisation printed was a deliberate lie?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The hon. member is probably confusing what is happening this year with what prevailed three or four years ago. I would not say that the International Labour Organisation spoke untruthly or distributed lies.

Mr. Tonkin: What I said was quoted from the report of the organisation.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: All I can say is that I was in Russia, that I saw the conditions and that they were simply appalling. There were plenty of unemployed. All the great works constructed in Russia have been built with slave labour. The people thus employed were mostly political prisoners, and they were forced to labour on the construction of huge canals and other big works. The people of Russia were starving. If their conditions have improved, I am very glad to hear it. I believe they have improved. Nevertheless, it is untrue to say that Russia is a country where unemployment does not exist. There were plenty of people in the streets when I was there, and when I asked whether they were unemployed, I was told that politically they were not fit to be employed.

Mr. Tonkin: The International Labour Organisation said the contrary.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Seeing is believing. Whenever a member quotes Russia, I feel that I would like to send him there for four or five years.

Mr. Tonkin: I am only too anxious to go if the hon. member will arrange it.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I will pay half the fare. I wish to impress upon the Government that my speech has not been made with the object of criticising. It has been made with the object of getting Ministers to do something for the people who are on the

bread line. There is no need to go to Russia in order to find instances of people being unemployed or on the bread line. We have them on the bread line here in Western Australia.

Mr. Tonkin: That is the trouble.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Men who are put on sustenance become unfit for work within a year or so because their health is undermined. I ask Ministers to do something on this matter before they leave office. If they fail to do so, it will be an election pledge by members on this side of the House and we will carry it out.

**MR. COVERLEY** (Kimberley) [8.6]: The Address-in-reply on this occasion, as on other occasions when I have had the pleasure of being present, has brought the usual criticism as to the virtue or otherwise of the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. Personally I am with the member for North-East Fremantle in realising that this debate represents a privilege extended to private members, and it is their option whether they make use of it or not. Several members have told us that they had no intention of speaking at any length and then went on occupying the valuable time of the House for about an hour. A couple of speakers also informed us that the Address-in-reply was of neither use nor ornament; in fact, that it was a waste of time. However, they proceeded to waste time for nearly an hour. I do not think I can be accused of unduly wasting the time of the House. When I get this opportunity to bring matters affecting my district before the notice of Ministers I take advantage of it because I find that it pays to mention these things on the Address-in-reply debate. The reason is that the heads of departments usually peruse the "Hansard" reports to ascertain what criticism has been levelled against them, and on several occasions when I have mentioned matters affecting my electorate, I have subsequently been questioned by departmental heads. This applies particularly to the Works Department and to the Department of Lands and Surveys, the Under Secretaries of which have asked me to explain exactly what was in my mind. Perhaps I had not advanced a good argument on the floor of the House, but I have been given an opportunity to explain to the Under Secretary exactly where a little more attention should be paid to my district. Some members have said they were

disappointed with the Speech and could find no virtues in it. As a member representing a North-West constituency, I can find some virtue in it because there is mention of a new State boat. Considerable attention has also been paid to various jetties on the North-West coast. I desire to express appreciation of these governmental activities, not only on behalf of the electors I represent but of all the residents along the North-West coast, particularly with respect to the new vessel for the coastal trade. I have noticed criticism against the purchase of this additional vessel. People who live in the southern areas have written to the Press, signing themselves "Billabong" and other things, but from their remarks I am satisfied that they have never lived any length of time in the North-West, or they would not write such things. If they had lived in isolated places like Shark Bay, Mand's Landing, Balla Balla or Wyndham, they would not offer such criticism. They are trying to lead the public to believe that there are no virtues but many losses connected with State trading concerns, especially the State Shipping Service. We who represent the North-West have frequently assisted other members in this Chamber to bring about the writing off of large debts due from agricultural pursuits in the southern areas. Some millions of pounds of the taxpayers' money have already been written off. We who represent the North-West have never complained or protested against such writings off. We realise that the agricultural industry plays a big part in the finances of the State, and the prosperity and happiness of its people. When people criticise something which affects the North, they are inviting criticism in return. If we were placed in the position of having to reply to such criticism, I do not think we would have any difficulty in bringing forward a good case and winning the argument, hands down. People miss the point concerning the State Shipping Service and the purchase of a new vessel. Not only will industry in the North and the residents in the North be better catered for, but a new vessel will undoubtedly be the means of introducing new trade from the Northern Territory. With a new boat, we may expect a monthly service between Darwin and Fremantle. The residents of Darwin are prepared to deal through Fremantle in competition with the Eastern States, and in that way

our metropolitan area would benefit. Up to the present the transport arrangements have been so poor that they cannot afford to open up this trade. With a monthly service, I feel sure we will obtain much more trade through Fremantle in the near future. I hope the additional vessel will mean an increase in the trade, so that we shall not have to put up with any more criticism concerning the losses on State shipping. I would point out that the criticism that is usually levelled at the State Shipping Service is not always according to facts. I hope I shall not have to repeat the threat that if we continue to have that sort of criticism we shall probably make an effort to point to losses with regard to other concerns within Western Australia. I wish to compliment the Government and the Medical and Health Department upon the manner in which they have dealt with health problems in the North-West. For many years people in the North-West, along the coast, had nothing approaching a decent medical and hospital service. Since the inauguration of the flying doctor scheme and financial assistance from the State Government, a wonderful lot of good has been done, and the minds of many residents in the North have been relieved. Imagine the mental strain cast upon parents who were trying to rear their children in the North! To-day that strain is non-existent. The country is well equipped with wireless stations, receiving and transmission sets, there is up to date accommodation in the hospitals, and with a flying doctor at call within a few minutes at any of these stations, a great deal has been done to relieve the mental anxiety of parents in the North, and residents generally. It is right that we should show our gratitude to the Government for the manner in which they have dealt with the medical and health services along the coast. We also appreciate the efforts of the Public Works Department in the direction of the construction of roads, bridges, etc., in the North. Transport facilities have been revolutionised there. While much remains to be done, we appreciate the efforts that have been made up to date. As the result of increased revenue from the Federal grant, we are expecting an increase in the allowances to northern district road boards. The road boards in the North have large areas to control, and it takes a lot of money

to look after the main roads alone, apart from the subsidiary roads. Most of the road boards control main roads 500 miles or more in length, and subsidiary roads of much the same length. The population is very scattered, the areas are extensive, and the revenue of the local authorities is very small. For these reasons, the Minister for Works should be a little more liberal in his grants to the road district authorities. The Lands and Surveys Department have made a belated effort to do something for the North-West, in that a survey party is at present engaged in mapping out a townsite at Yampi Sound. I am very glad the Minister saw fit to put this work in hand. I am confident that when the financial squabbles between the people concerned have come to an end, Yampi Sound will become active, and a fairly big population of employees will be put to work there. A new settlement will spring up, and I hope it will not be long before Yampi Sound begins to progress in earnest. I feel sure that when a settlement develops in the vicinity of this locality, it will be the forerunner of a good deal of mining activity. There is practically every known mineral available along the North-West coast. It is, however, so isolated and far from civilisation that prospectors cannot afford to go into the country for any length of time. If a prospector set out from Derby, he would have to travel approximately 500 miles overland, could not carry very much in the way of supplies, and could not, therefore, stay out any length of time, no matter what he found. To replenish those stores and supplies, he would have to return to Derby, probably from 300 to 500 miles by pack mule. For that reason progress has been slow, and it must continue to be slow under existing conditions. With a townsite in the vicinity of Koolan Island and Coppermine Creek, I could imagine that prospectors would be able to do greater work and stay outside longer than has ever been the case before. I hope the squabbles suggested in the Press with regard to the Yampi iron ore deposits are merely emanating from Dame Rumour. It would be nothing short of a crime were the Federal Government, or any other Government, to do anything that might hinder the development of those mineral deposits. It would be just as logical to impose conditions which would prevent the export of wool, wheat, fruit or timber as conditions pre-

venting the export of iron ore. I feel sure that the ore in question will never be worked unless the present venture goes ahead, and I hope the State Government will do everything possible to assist in that direction. I have said that the Department of Lands and Surveys were lagging behind other departments. In Kimberley and many other parts of the North-West it is impossible for any person to obtain a conditional purchase block, a homestead block, or a garden area, or in fact anything of the kind; and in most of the townships and ports it is impossible to purchase a building site. The townsite blocks surveyed many years ago have all been taken up. In places like Broome and Wyndham it is at present impossible to get a townsite block. No surveyed blocks are available, and no surveyor has come along to make additional surveys. Thus it is impossible to secure a block to build on. There are many stock routes that should be opened up. This is one way in which the Minister for Lands can assist the pastoralist and the Wyndham Meatworks. The hon. gentleman could help considerably by getting a stock route surveyed from East Kimberley to West Kimberley. As most hon. members are aware, the West Kimberley export trade from Derby to Fremantle has been slipping during the past few years. There was a time when 20,000 head of bullocks used to be shipped from Derby to the metropolitan market annually. During the last two or three seasons that number has fallen to about half. There must be an outlet for surplus cattle somewhere. In my opinion, the logical method of disposing of the surplus cattle would be through the Wyndham Meatworks. The advantage would be that the more cattle treated at Wyndham, the better for the meatworks and the greater the returns to the pastoralists, whose returns recently have not been highly profitable. Last year one firm tried to overland a thousand head of cattle from the Fitzroy Valley to the Wyndham Meatworks. The cattle got through, but with disastrous results; about 700 were landed, and about 300 were lost on the journey through having to travel over stony country which had not been surveyed. The cattle, coming off soft country, naturally became so sore-footed that they could not walk, and had to be left behind. However, the pastoral firm in question have not turned the job up. They are overlanding another thousand head this year, in the hope of finding a better route, a track more suitable to

cattle bred on soft country, and one with more water and better feed. I do not think it is asking too much of the Minister for Lands that he should recommend a survey of this route. I do not suppose the cost would be £500, and the amount would be well spent in assisting the development of an existing industry. I hope that the Minister will take a note of my suggestion, and that £400 or £500 will be made available to do the work next season. Before long many more cattle will be overlanding through that district. In my opinion, it is a function of Government to assist the industry by providing a decent stock route. I have no suggestion to make as to where the stock route should go or not go. I only hope the work will be put through as quickly as possible to meet the convenience of practically the whole district which will use the route. The Department of Agriculture likewise are lagging as regards the North. The department, while establishing experimental farms and appointing all sorts of experts to advise agriculturists, have done little or nothing to assist the industries existing in the North-West.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: You have a tropical adviser.

Mr. COVERLEY: Yes; and he is a very good man and has done excellent work, but in one area only. He has concentrated on the tropical agriculturists in the Gascoyne district. I am not concerned with one particular aspect of the North, but with the development of the whole of the North. The Agricultural Department should experiment with irrigation and grasses for fattening stock in the far North as well as in the lower North. They should also experiment with the importation of herbage to take the place of the natural herbage, which is being ruined year after year, first of all by drought and then by stupid management on the part of the pastoralists who hold the country.

Mr. Doney: What is it that prevents the expert from travelling further North?

Mr. COVERLEY: I am not in a position to give the hon. member that information, unless the reason is that the expert has too much to do, is too busy where he is stationed. One corner of the North takes up the whole of his time. At the season when he would like to be up in the far North, he is needed by the banana industry lower down. The department worry a good deal

about experts, but there is a great deal of work to be done by a lay person in trying out irrigation schemes in the Wyndham district, where there is ample water and ample pumping power. All that is needed is some firm with the energy to try out irrigation schemes. In course of time that will come. Western Australian pastoralists desire to compete in the oversea market; and eventually irrigation schemes of some description will have to be established in the neighbourhood of Wyndham, so that three or four-year-old bullocks can be pastured for six or 12 months on the irrigated area before being passed through the meatworks. I do not know whether the pastoralists are in a financial position that will enable them to do anything, or even if they have the ambition to try out anything of the sort, so I hope the Government, in the interests of the development of the North, will take the matter in hand at once. That reminds me of a report that I read recently. It was one presented to the Australian Institute of Engineers by Mr. Drake-Brockman, who is their chairman. The report was one of the soundest I have ever had the pleasure of reading in relation to the North and the North-West of the State. To-day I gave notice of a question in which I ask the Premier if he will authorise the distribution of the report in pamphlet form for the benefit of members and the heads of various departments. I have been through the report very carefully and I agree with 98 per cent. of what Mr. Drake-Brockman has written. I hope the Premier will see fit to appoint a committee to investigate the report and frame their conclusions for presentation to Ministers, so that they may form the basis of a plan for the future development of the northern parts and by that means place something concrete before the Government of to-day and future Administrations, that they will be able to follow consecutively, and perhaps avoid a repetition of the stupid extension of pastoral leases, without placing some obligation upon the lessees to do something in return. At the present time, those lessees are ruining many hundreds of thousands of acres through not making any effort to assist Nature to maintain the feed on the pastoral holdings. In my opinion, the latest extension of the leases that was granted by Parliament was the greatest politically criminal act ever known. I have no objection to the extension of the

leases but if such extensions are to be agreed to, some obligation should be cast upon the lessees to maintain the carrying capacity of the holdings.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But you supported that extension of the leases.

Mr. COVERLEY: No, I did not agree with the action that was taken.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Look at the division list.

Mr. COVERLEY: Surely the Leader of the Opposition is aware that I presented a minority report to the Minister, setting out my reasons for disagreeing. As to whether I supported the Bill when it was before the House, I may have cast my vote as he suggests, but that does not alter the fact that I knew very well that the passing of that legislation was not in the best interests of the State. I made that quite clear in my report to the Minister. The Government at that time provided an innovation regarding the rental of the pastoral leases that, in my opinion, was quite good in one respect. I refer to the policy of making the interest, or rentals payable, regulated according to the price of wool.

*[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]*

Hon. C. G. Latham: That was all right when prices were on the downgrade, but was not so good when prices were going up.

Mr. COVERLEY: I am not concerned about that.

Mr. Patrick: And the seasons affected the position, too.

Mr. COVERLEY: What I am concerned about is that the pastoralists should subdivide their country with a view to providing resting paddocks in the several areas from time to time, and so protect their properties against overstocking. Under existing conditions the country is being ruined through overstocking. Cattle are crowded round the water supplies, with the result that all the edible grasses are being eaten out, and only the rank, coarse grasses are able to prevail. I have little further to say except to express the thanks of my electors to the State Lotteries Commission for the valuable assistance rendered to the residents of the North, which enabled cooling apparatus to be provided at the various isolated hospitals and the procuring of radio facilities for the outer areas. For this assistance, I express

the sincere thanks on behalf of the people of the Far North.

MR. PATRICK (Greenough) [8.35]: I join with other members who have offered their congratulations to the Premier on his return from his visit to England, restored apparently to his old-time good health. I also agree with the member for Kanowna (Mr. Nulsen) in his assertion that it is in the interests of the State that the Premier, or some other Minister, should be sent on trips abroad. After all, the people the Premier visited are the main purchasers of the goods that Western Australia has to sell, and it is certainly advisable to see our customers now and again. Personally, I would be very pleased if I had the opportunity to take such a trip. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) stated it was time that all men now on part-time work were restored to full-time employment. I quite agree with him.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We all do.

Mr. PATRICK: I do not think he was a member of this House when Government members, who were then sitting in Opposition, had something to say in that regard. I remember that at that time the finances of the State were in a most deplorable condition. The present Premier, who is a very fair man, referred the other night to that fact and said that it had been impossible for the then Government to incur much expenditure that had been desirable because they could not raise the necessary finance. Nevertheless, at that very time, night after night, prominent Labour members implored the Government to put men on full-time employment to the extent of the financial resources available. They advanced the theory that if the men were put on full-time employment, there would be such an expansion of the spending powers of the public that automatically all those who were out of work would be placed in employment. To-day the financial position is tremendously improved and revenue has increased enormously. If that theory was good in those days, surely the present Government have a good opportunity to test out the theory to-day. There would be no harm in doing so, and I am astonished that Government supporters do not endeavour to keep their Ministers up to the mark and urge them to test out the theories they advanced when sitting in Opposition. Then, again, I remember that



when the financial emergency tax was introduced, Labour members, who were then in Opposition, supported an amendment the object of which was that all money so raised should be paid into a trust fund and used entirely for the relief of unemployment. We do not hear any such suggestion now. Apparently, although the receipts from that particular tax have increased to something like £1,000,000, there is no intention to submit that proposal again. I also agree with the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) that we cannot very well dispense with the financial emergency tax now and that it should be included in the ordinary form of income tax. It is not right that a tax of this nature should be on gross income. It should be subject to the same exemptions as that to which the ordinary income tax is subject. In this connection there is no need for the Government to lose any revenue. I pointed out a year or two ago that if the Government adopted the South Australian system of collecting income tax—that is, collecting it at its source—they would find that they would rake in thousands of pounds from men not now contributing a penny. I think the member for Murchison pointed out the same thing a year or two ago. He knew, and I think all of us know, any number of men liable to income tax who never put in a return. If we collected income tax under this system, although we might lose a little by bringing the present tax under the same exemptions as the ordinary income tax, we would certainly gain a great many thousands of pounds by the increased sum brought in from people dodging payment altogether. I want now to make a few remarks in connection with the recent referendum on marketing. Although I was a bit disappointed I was not surprised at the result. I do not know whether it is still on the Labour platform, but I remember that the referendum question did occupy a prominent place on that platform.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It is still there.

Mr. PATRICK: It may be, but in my opinion it is a most conservative weapon. That has been proved in every country where it has been adopted. In Switzerland it generally results in a Bill which is put to a referendum of the people being thrown out. In connection with the recent referendum, all parties in Queensland supported the marketing proposals and

yet they were defeated by a tremendous majority. That is a country where the main commodity is subject to the same sort of system which this referendum proposed to introduce. I suppose it only shows what might be called the selfishness of human nature. I noticed the other day that Mr. Curtin in Queensland supported the sugar agreement. Why should not he, as a great democrat, refer an important question like that to a referendum of the Australian people? I am convinced that it would inevitably be turned down by the overwhelming condemnation of the Australian people. Another instance might be given. At the last elections in the United States President Roosevelt was returned by a majority of 46 out of 48 States in the Union, an absolutely overwhelming majority. Yet rather than attempt to alter the Constitution there he preferred the scheme of trying to pack the High Court. I may say that he was going to attempt to pack the High Court in a manner which seems to be peculiar in American politics. I suppose that most hon. members know that the majority of the high appointments to the Civil Service are given to members of the political party in power. If that party goes out of power, those officials go out also. In connection with these appointments to the High Court, I should like to quote from a radical newspaper, "The American Nation," a paper which supports President Roosevelt, on those proposed appointments. The paper states—

It turns out that the appointment will be made on exactly the same basis as the naming of a local postmaster. It will be as a reward for services rendered to a political boss who has driven *Presidential measures through the Senate*. It is significant that only practical considerations have been put forward in favour of the appointment. No claims are made for him of intellectual distinctions, and his qualifications as a lawyer are admittedly limited.

I read that as a little aside, but I am afraid that this system is largely creeping into politics in Australia. There is no doubt that the appointments that have been made by the present Government have been purely political and many of them have been unsuitable appointments, the worst of their kind in the history of the State.

The Minister for Employment: You are speaking of the Federal Government.

Mr. PATRICK: No, of the local Government. At this stage I would like to offer

my congratulations to the Government for having, in spite of adverse criticism from outside organisations, retained one very good man in his position—the present Agent-General.

Mr. Fox: Some of the lumpers think otherwise.

Mr. PATRICK: To get back to the question of the referendum. I am pleased to see that a section of the Labour Party realised the justice of the claim of the producers to an Australian price in a country which has an artificial market for commodities. We have had much talk of shorter hours of labour. The member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) referred to this and to the rising costs in secondary and other industries which it would entail. Of course the main difficulty arising from this, as he pointed out, is the fact that the export industries would have to carry extra costs not only in the handling of their commodities, but in the purchase of tools of trade. No doubt the more enlightened section of the Labour movement which supported this referendum realised this when they issued the manifesto supporting it. After all, it is simple justice that if a section of the community is to be sheltered from competition, the most important and most essential section of all is entitled to Australian conditions for that portion of their product which is marketed in Australia. I suppose the Minister for Employment will bring in piffling legislation to protect a few bakers against a little local competition. Yet he opposed nation-wide legislation to protect essential industries from unlimited world-wide competition, handicapped by distance and the highest freights and handling costs in the world. Even some of our local charges which are supported by members opposite are, in my opinion, not justified. I know the Minister for Railways will probably attempt to justify the higher cost of the carriage of bulk wheat. Experience in other parts of the world where wheat and other grain is carried in bulk is that the system is a distinct advantage to the Railway Department and the grain can be carried at a lesser instead of a higher rate. In this connection I would like to quote Mr. Sillicon who is manager of the bulk-handling system of the Cape Province in South Africa. This is not conducted by a private company, but is a Government concern. In his report he stated definitely that although the railways had to provide special rolling stock to handle bulk grain, it had meant a decided monetary advantage to the

Railway Department and although not expressed in figures, it was considered that it had been quite a profitable move on the part of the railways to provide this special rolling stock in view of the very much improved despatch thus given grain movement and the quicker turnover for the railways. The Government themselves discovered that in connection with one of their departments when they provided special rolling stock for the carriage of cement in bulk. They made no bones then about building special rolling stock, and I do not know that it made any difference in the freight charged up to that particular department. There is only one alternative to the referendum that was proposed for the marketing of Australian products, and that is to put all the industries on the same basis. In the early history of the development of the British Empire, one of the ways in which it was built up was by boats carrying cargoes round the world and disposing of them to the best advantage. If they could dispose of those products at two or three times the normal price, they were making a good deal; but now the popular idea is that the less a man gets in exchange for a bag of wheat or a bale of wool, the more is he prospering the country to which he belongs. This is a dangerous doctrine, because it is driving desperate nations into war. During the depression, it was thought to be a good policy to put on embargoes and high tariffs in order to keep out goods from other countries. But it did not work out in exactly the way it was thought it would. It might have been good enough for one country if one country alone had tried it; but when one country put an embargo on imports, immediately another country, which had sent the imports into the first country, found that their trade was falling away, and consequently they put an embargo on goods coming into their own country. So it went on in a vicious circle, until the channels of international trade were absolutely blocked. We know the experience we had in Australia. Only the other day I read how the Chambers of Manufactures in the Eastern States had assured the Scullin Government that if certain embargoes were put on, the manufacturers would not only retain the men already in employment but would employ a hundred thousand more men. What actually happened? Thousands of men were put off because the manufacturers could not get customers to

buy their goods. The referendum was lost, of course, but the problem that created it still remains. The inevitable result of the present system is that the standard of living in rural areas is constantly dropping, and in time, no doubt, those rural areas will be occupied by people who are accustomed to a lower standard of living. I have pointed out that to a certain extent that has already taken place in this State. Only the other day I noticed a complaint in Victoria that the Shepparton district, which is almost purely a fruitgrowing district, was now getting entirely into the hands of Southern Europeans. Even in to-day's paper there was a strong protest about the introduction of Southern Europeans into Australia.

The Minister for Mines: How are they getting here?

Hon. C. G. Latham: By boat!

Mr. PATRICK: There is no doubt that in a healthy state of industry the whole community has to prosper together; it is no use having one section prospering while another is languishing. To show how the farmers can rise to an occasion when the price is profitable, this year there is an increase of half a million acres of land under wheat. If only the Government could give a guarantee of a few decent rains, I for one would be prepared to close down this session and go into recess.

Mr. Marshall: They are too mean to give it.

Mr. PATRICK: Yes, I think they are.

The Minister for Mines: I will guarantee to have a word with the Meteorologist, if that is of any use.

Mr. PATRICK: I would agree to go into recess because, after all, there is nothing in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech to add anything to the prosperity of the State. It is a great pity that the good opening to the session did not continue.

The Premier: We are all with you there.

Mr. PATRICK: I believe that already some of the crops have failed, and others are not looking at all promising.

The Minister for Mines: You are not blaming us for that!

Mr. PATRICK: No. If we had had a good season this year, it would have brought into circulation new money to the extent of £6,000,000 or £7,000,000. One bright spot at present in the State is the goldmining industry. That has largely assisted the solving of the problem of unemployment. The

Minister for Lands the other night interjected that a lot of the men attracted to the goldfields had come from the Eastern States. I should like here to quote a few figures I have taken out: During the last five years this State has actually lost over 2,400 people by migration out of the State. That is to say, 2,400 more people left the State than entered it during that period. Another interesting fact in this connection is that, despite the natural increase, there are to-day 2,730 fewer people in the metropolitan area than there were five years ago, in 1932. The natural increase was roughly 9,500, so the city itself has actually lost no fewer than 12,000 people during the last five years. Presumably a greater number of those have gone to the goldfields and farming districts.

The Premier: Well, that is not a bad thing.

Mr. PATRICK: No, but the Minister for Lands seemed to think that the bigger part of the increase on the goldfields had come from the Eastern States.

The Minister for Mines: You can go to any school on the goldfields, pick out children and ask them where they came from, and you will find that only one out of every five came from the Eastern States.

Mr. PATRICK: I am giving the Minister all that in, but the fact remains that 2,500 more people have left the State than have come into it during the last five years. No doubt, as the Leader of the Opposition said the other night, the price of gold has been the main factor in the opening up of the goldmining industry. This Government, just as any other Government would have done, have encouraged the industry. It has paid them to do it. In a country like South Africa, which is a greater goldmining country than is Western Australia, very heavy taxation was put on gold, and the taxation so derived was used to help carry on the farming industry. But it has been found a good policy not to put heavy taxation on gold, because when the taxation is kept down, lower grades of ore are treated. Even to-day, if the taxation was any higher than it is, the mines would be picking out gold of much higher value than satisfies them now. Some mines are mixing 2 dwt. ore with 10 or 12 dwt. ore, and making the average a payable one, and so it has paid the State handsomely to refrain from imposing heavy taxation on gold. At the same time, in spite of the assistance given by the Gov-

ernment, mines like the Big Bell mentioned by the Premier the other night would never have been opened up at all had the price of gold remained at £4 an oz. That mine could not possibly have been opened up.

The Minister for Mines: It would not have been opened up with gold at £8 an oz. without the guarantee of the railway.

Mr. PATRICK: If members peruse the monthly reports of the leading mines of Western Australia they will find that very few of them would have paid to work with gold at the standard value. I do not think the railway to the Big Bell mine made a great deal of difference.

The Minister for Mines: I tell you the mine would not have been started but for the guarantee of the railway.

Mr. PATRICK: Of course the railway would have been of advantage for carrying crude oil, by which means it could be delivered direct to the mine.

The Minister for Mines: And the heavy machinery was delivered direct to the mine.

*[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]*

Mr. PATRICK: There are mines, as the Minister knows, like the Youanmi much further distant from the railway than was the Big Bell.

The Minister for Mines: And they have been on higher values.

Mr. PATRICK: Even the Triton mine is further distant. I should like to examine the reason for the present high price of gold and the prospect of its continuing. It is of no use our complacently listening to men interested in goldmining who tell us that the price will be maintained. The annual output has risen in seven years from 20,000,000 ozs. to 35,000,000 ozs., and is likely to go higher, and in actual value, at £7 an oz., it has risen in the same period from £83,000,000 to £245,000,000. In ordinary circumstances, that is, if gold performed its ordinary function, this would mean a big rise in commodity prices. If there is an increase in the output of gold, prices automatically rise. Different countries take different measures to prevent this rise. Great Britain did not want prices to rise too steeply all at once, and it may interest members to know that although the price of gold has risen, the reserves in the Bank of England are still valued in the balance sheet at 85s. per oz. The big rise in the price of gold has been carried, not by the Bank, but by the Govern-

ment. The United States did not want to use for monetary purposes its huge amount as that would have caused prices to rise too rapidly in that country. Consequently the banks were compelled to double the minimum reserves of gold they were carrying, and the Government borrowed money to buy gold and sterilise it by locking it away. A third factor was that in Russia, where there was an enormous increase in the production of gold, it was hoarded and not put on the market. I am referring to a comparatively short period ago. All those policies to-day appear to be changing. Britain has undertaken a huge rearmament policy necessitating borrowing which has caused the prices of raw materials to rise without the other method being resorted to. The United States have also borrowed huge sums to pay deficits which for the last two years have amounted to £1,400,000,000 sterling. They have had to borrow that huge sum for their deficits as well as borrow to buy gold. To quote an English authority—

They can hardly be expected to drain their borrowing resources to suit the world's convenience. American sterilisation of gold is therefore not likely to continue indefinitely.

The Russian policy of hoarding has also been changed in order to establish foreign credits to buy machinery, and to carry out the plans of that country, gold has been thrown on the market. To quote the same authority again—

The basic factor is that the world is faced with the necessity of using its gold, and there is more gold than can be used with the present volume of trade and the present level of prices. A possible solution would be to lower the price, but this might well obstruct the world's trading revival, and it would not alter the one-way flow of gold to the United States.

Even if gold were cheaper it would automatically flow to the United States because that is the only country buying gold. The authority continues—

The true solution of the problem is a revival of international trade which would have the effect of redistributing amongst the different nations the huge reserves of gold now accumulating in America.

So we revert again to the necessity for freeing international trade which, as I have already pointed out, is equally necessary for us in connection with our primary products. That is why the United States are so anxious for Britain and other countries to co-operate to lower trade barriers. They are anxious not only to promote world prosperity, but

to do something vital for the peace of the world. These are problems that Australia as a gold-producing country cannot afford to ignore. We, in common with other countries, must undertake the reduction of trade barriers if we want to restore permanent prosperity. Now let me get back to nearer problems. The policy of the Associated Banks in this State appears to be changing. They appear to be trying to get out of rural securities, for which we cannot blame them, and put their money into city buildings. That could be overcome. I believe there is a certain amount of overbuilding taking place in Perth to-day. As I have pointed out, the population has fallen, and office accommodation is being provided that probably will not be required for many years to come. On account of the changing policy of the Associated Banks, I believe this would be a good opportunity for the Government to establish a rural credit bank, even if only as a branch of the present Agricultural Bank. At the Agricultural Bank is a manager who is a very capable man accustomed to banking, and he could establish a rural credit bank on sound lines.

The Premier: It is a pity we gave the Savings Bank away.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It was not given away, but do not bring that up

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PATRICK: This sort of thing is sometimes claimed to be Labour policy. The Minister for Employment came from South Australia which years ago was responsible for most of the political reforms that took place in Australia. One of the reforms was introduced there in my young days by a very prominent man, Sir Frederick Holder and that was the establishment of a State Bank. That was a pet scheme and Sir Frederick was not a Labour man. There is a Rural Bank in New South Wales which deals not only in rural securities but goes in for building houses and other securities of the kind.

The Minister for Employment: In South Australia the bank has full banking powers.

Mr. PATRICK: In my time it was merely a mortgage bank. If the bank here had full powers, no doubt many people would use it for ordinary banking purposes.

Mr. Withers: A Labour Government tried to introduce such a system a few years ago but received no support.

Mr. PATRICK: That was not my fault.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It was not in my time.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, it was.

Mr. PATRICK: I agree with the remarks of the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) as to the good work done in country districts by Parents and Citizens' Associations. A school in my electorate was entirely erected by the parents without its costing the department one penny. I have known of other schools being erected at half the cost of the tenders received by the Public Works Department. I agree with what another member said concerning the seating accommodation in country schools. It is an absolute disgrace. There is no reason why the Minister for Education should not try a few experiments. He might exchange some of the city accommodation with the country accommodation, and see how the city children like it. Children in the country are entitled to as good accommodation of this kind as are children in the metropolitan area. There is an agitation going on for a high school at Midland Junction and Fremantle. It would be a good thing to have them if they can be erected. The Government must not forget that in the country parents who desire their children to receive a higher education have to send them a long way to get it. The high school for the northern districts at Geraldton is not a proper high school, and even so parents living in that locality have to send their children a long distance if they wish them to get higher education. This costs a good deal of money, although the education itself is supposed to be free. The Government do not appear to realise the disabilities suffered by people in the country. A canvass is being made by the Electoral Department in the city and large towns to ascertain what electors are not on the roll who ought to be there. These are all places that are within a stone's throw of electoral registrars. I do not think any canvass is being made in the agricultural areas and outback centres. Such work could be done at a little expense. At least twice a year the police go around getting statistics. Whilst they are doing that, they could easily get the required information for the Electoral Department. The Collie miners are agitating for the nationalisation of the mines at Collie. I do not know whether I am speak-

ing for any other member of my party when I say I have a great deal of sympathy for the miners. I told the House a year or two ago I would be inclined to support the nationalisation of the mines at Collie. These mines are, after all, only a utility of the Railway Department, which is practically their only customer.

Mr. Marshall: The East Perth power station is a customer.

Mr. PATRICK: According to the report of the Royal Commission, the Railway Department have been plundered to the extent of many thousands of pounds in their coal purchases over recent years. Apparently, the business is so good that a certain company promoter is very desirous of getting control. No doubt he would make a huge float, increase the capital cost, and an increased demand would be made upon the State.

Mr. Withers: The Amalgamated Collieries made a profit of £21,000 last year.

Mr. PATRICK: The generation of electric power is costing far too much in this State. It was a blunder to erect the power house at East Perth instead of at the more economical centre, Collie.

Mr. North: Quite right.

Mr. PATRICK: Last year it cost .61d. plus .2d. for interest, or .81d. per unit to produce power at East Perth. It may surprise members to know that, according to the report of the Lake View and Star Company, current is being produced at Kalgoorlie at .66d. per unit.

The Minister for Justice: The company did not include all costs.

Mr. PATRICK: The company was comparing the price with the previous cost.

The Minister for Mines: They did not use a lb. of Collie coal to produce that current.

Mr. PATRICK: No, but they had to cart their fuel long distances. I assume that all costs have been included, as the company were comparing the savings that had been effected compared with the cost of power when it was bought through other channels. To make a just comparison they must have taken everything into consideration, the cost of the plant, depreciation, etc. I wish to refer to Dr. Herman's report on the Irwin coal basin. I am sorry the Government have not carried out the suggestions contained in that portion of the report. A local company has been floated at Geraldton with a paltry capital of £1,000 to attempt to

prove the existence of coal in portion of that basin at Eradu. All they are likely to do with such a small capital is to damn the concern, as the money is insufficient to prove the coal deposits. It would be far better if the Government attempted to prove the deposits, and kept control of them for their own department. If good coal could be found there, it would be worth many thousands of pounds in savings to the Railway Department, through coal being available on the spot.

The Minister for Mines: The Government have had a fair number of analyses made.

Mr. PATRICK: Presumably Dr. Herman had the information before him when he urged the Government further to explore the possibilities of the basin.

The Minister for Mines: A good deal of further exploration has been done since Dr. Herman was here.

Mr. PATRICK: I do not think much money has been spent there.

The Minister for Mines: A good deal has been spent, but with the same results.

Mr. PATRICK: I concur in the observations of the Leader of the Opposition with respect to our licensing laws and the manner in which they are carried out. The Government missed a great opportunity in Kalgoorlie after the riots in failing to enforce the licensing laws there. When I first stood for Parliament, and was rather unsophisticated, an elector asked me at one of my meetings if I was in favour of prohibition. As a Scotchman I gave the blunt reply "No." After the meeting the chairman said to me, "I am a prohibitionist. I am supporting you but I think you are foolish. The other night the Leader of the Opposition (then the member for Boulder) was here and was asked the same question that you were asked, and he replied 'My dear sir, that is a question which Parliament has already decided shall be referred to the vote of the people.'" The hon. gentleman did not answer the question at all. There is no reason why this matter should not be referred to the vote of the people in a democratic country like ours. That is how the question was settled in South Australia. The country districts by a big majority compelled the city people to close the hotels earlier. I think the Minister for Employment will bear me out in that. I believe in the referendum all right, and certainly this is a question which should be

referred to the people. There is no reason whatever for discrimination between various parts of the State. It may be remembered that in a little Bill brought down by the Minister for Employment last session, the hon. gentleman proposed to force the Saturday half-holiday on all parts of the State, although some of them had already by vote decided against it. If in that instance there was reason for non-discrimination throughout the State, that is all the more reason why we should have a uniform licensing system to-day. The same thing applies to the enforcement of the betting laws. If those laws cannot be carried out, they should be repealed. The present practice only tends to bring contempt on all our laws. That was the experience of the United States of America in attempting to carry out the prohibition law. The result was that all the laws of the country were brought into contempt. As regards the carrying-out of the Traffic Act, coming from Upper Swan into Perth at night one finds scores of bicycles on the road and across the road, without lights, and a positive menace to motor traffic.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And to the cyclists themselves.

Mr. PATRICK: And to themselves, of course. It would be easy to catch a few dozen of these cyclists any night the police chose to go out there. Some endeavour should be made to enforce the traffic law for the sake of the cyclists as well as the motorists. There are various local matters which I may have to bring forward when the Annual Estimates are introduced.

MR. WELSH (Pilbara) [9.23]: I desire to join with other members in expressing pleasure at the Premier's restoration to health, and I sincerely trust the hon. gentleman's health will remain restored. I also desire to express my sympathy with the Minister for Agriculture (Hon. F. J. S. Wise) in his accident and hope he will have a speedy recovery. In many quarters it is believed that there is an upward trend in conditions in Western Australia. I am sorry to say I cannot view the position from the same angle. At all events, the improvement is not very apparent to me. In my opinion, all the improvement in the mining industry has been brought about largely by the assistance given to that industry by the Government, and largely by the higher price of gold. But for the mining industry, there would be a different tale to tell concerning

the finances of Western Australia. I am glad to say that in my district mining is definitely on the up grade. At Marble Bar we have a mine which possibly will prove a great gold-producer. Certainly it is the best mine the North has ever had. The mining industry has made a great difference to the people and the trade of the North during recent years. I ask the Minister for Mines again whether he can see his way to appoint a resident acting warden in Marble Bar to transact all the mining business there. At present that office is held by the resident medical officer at Port Hedland, who visits Marble Bar fortnightly. At most centres he has quite a number of medical cases to attend. In fact, his duties as a medical officer take up most of his time. Dr. Vickers is a very busy man indeed from the medical aspect. Therefore I suggest to the Minister that, if possible, he should appoint a resident acting warden in Marble Bar. Some years ago, when mining was not nearly as prosperous as it is now, this was done, and the system acted very well. I hope the Minister will see his way clear to revert to that system. The pastoral industry in my electorate is more favourably situated in regard to rain than are the districts further south. However, the rain has been practically constant, and places outback have probably not been so well served. Generally speaking, however, conditions in the industry are much improved. There have been heavy losses of sheep and stock generally, which will take a great deal of making up. Years will be required to bring the stations back to their normal carrying capacity. However, we are fortunately situated in comparison with other parts of the State. I wish to take up again the question of wild dogs. The time has arrived when the bonus should be restored to its former level, so as to enable trappers to make a living at the business. At present it is highly difficult to get men to take it up. In one little circle I know of, the bonus for dogs has been raised to £5 per head, in order to get rid of those coming in. I hope the Government will see their way to restore the bonuses on dogs and foxes. Foxes are also getting fairly numerous. In this way the Government could assist the pastoralists of the North. Perhaps an allocation could be made from the proceeds of the land tax to allow these bonuses to be restored. The wool position, I am thankful to say, is good; and this factor will go towards making up leeway. If

prices remain firm, we may see a return of our former prosperity. The member for Kimberley (Mr. Coverley) made reference to the aerial medical service in the North. In doing so he touched a subject that suits me. The aerial medical service has proved a wonderful boon to the people of the North. It has given them a different outlook altogether. Coupled with the installation of pedal sets, the medical service has given people living off the beaten track a feeling of security, and brought them into contact with a circle of friends whom they have never met. They can sit at night talking about things of mutual interest to them. The wireless service is a wonderful boon, and I am indeed thankful that the Government have seen their way to make a grant for its upkeep. I hope that grant will be continued. One cannot speak too highly of the flying doctor and the efficient wireless staff.

The Minister for Health: Don't you think the nationalisation of the rest of the medical profession in the North is coming too?

Mr. WELSH: A large improvement in that direction has taken place lately. The people in my electorate and further North are perfectly well satisfied. I wish to mention that the wireless staff are always ready and willing to help the man outback in every way possible so as to make life there much easier. I feel sure that whatever State assistance can be given to this service will be highly appreciated and fully justified. The member for Kimberley also referred to the matter of road grants. The people in the North are very grateful to the Government for the assistance they have rendered in that direction. The expenditure of that money was urgently required in the North. I have frequently pointed out that in the Far North our roads are really roads in name only, and it would require the expenditure of a large sum of money to carry out the thorough construction of them. In fact, it would take quite a lot of money to put them in anything like a condition of repair. I am sure that whatever money the Government make available for the work, the sum represents the most they can provide with the funds available to them, and I hope that the amount of the grant will be increased later on. The money that has been made available will go far towards providing the North with roads, and I hope

that better things will be apparent in the future.

On motion by Hon. P. D. Ferguson, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.52 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 19th August, 1937.*

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

### QUESTION—MINING DISEASES AND STATE INSURANCE.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What was the amount of premiums collected by the State Insurance Office for the year ended 30th June, 1937, from the goldmining industry for insurance against liability to pay compensation for mining diseases under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act? 2, What were the total payments made under the Workers' Compensation Act for the year ended 30th June, 1937, as compensation to sufferers from mining diseases?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, £122,488 5s. 3d. 2, Actual payments, £27,341 17s. 5d. In addition, there was an amount of £25,000 paid to the Treasury in respect of payments previously made under the Miners' Phthisis Act and which could have been claimed under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act. These figures do not show the amount outstanding in regard to claims already admitted, the