

Legislative Assembly,*Wednesday, 31st August, 1932.*

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

QUESTION—COLLIE WATER SUPPLY, CONTOUR PLAN.

Mr. **WILSON** asked the Minister for Works: Will he lay upon the Table of the House a litho. plan giving the contour of the land that will be submerged when the Collie weir is completed and the dam filled with water?

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS** replied: Yes. I shall now lay the papers on the Table.

QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVICE, NOTICES OF DISMISSAL.

Mr. **MILLINGTON** asked the Premier: How many permanent or temporary employees in public departments, including the Agricultural Bank, who have attained, or are shortly to reach, 21 years of age, have been given notice, or are to be given notice, that their services are no longer required?

The **PREMIER** replied: Railway Department—Paid off: Wages Staff 57, Salaried Staff 70. Under notice: Wages Staff 2, Salaried Staff 2. Other Departments—Paid off, or now under notice, nil.

QUESTION—TRAMWAY CARS.

Mr. **RAPHAEL** asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Are there a number of cars completed at Midland Junction workshops, except for the motors? 2, Is it a fact that a firm offered the Government credit for twelve months respecting the purchase of motors? 3, Are the department aware of the overcrowding of cars already in use? 4, Is it intended to

allow the cars at Midland Junction to remain out of use much longer?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: 1, Yes. 2, The Department are not aware of any such offer. 3, Yes, at certain periods of the day as is customary with tramway undertakings the world over. 4, The matter is now under consideration.

QUESTION—RAILWAY, YUNA EXTENSION.

Mr. **PATRICK** asked the Premier: 1, Has the Railway Advisory Board yet reported on the proposed extension of the Yuna railway? 2, Is it his intention to lay the report upon the Table of the House?

The **PREMIER** replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes.

QUESTION—WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS.

Mr. **COVERLEY** asked the Premier: 1, Has any offer been received for the purchase of the Wyndham Meat Works? 2, If so, from whom?

The **PREMIER** replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—WHEAT CARTING SUBSIDY.

Mr. **PATRICK** asked the Premier: When dealing with the question of granting a subsidy for wheat carting to settlers a long distance from railways, will the claims of Balla and Dartmoor settlers be considered?

The **PREMIER** replied: The matter will be considered.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [4.37]: There is no mention of the North-West or of the North in the Governor's Speech. I do not hear cries of "Shame," nor do I complain at the omission. On the principle that deeds are more worthy than words, I give the Government my thanks for having

directed their attention to the North to the extent they have done during the last 12 months.

Mr. Coverley: Tell us what they have done.

Mr. ANGELO: We had the privilege of visits to most parts of the North by three members of the Government—the Chief Secretary (Hon. C. F. Baxter), the Minister for Railways (Hon. J. Scaddan), and the Minister for Lands (Hon. C. G. Latham). Each prosecuted extensive inquiries as to our conditions and difficulties. I had the pleasure, in the first instance, of accompanying the Chief Secretary over portion of his trip. He called at two ports in my electorate, and met representatives of the people, ascertained our wants, sympathised with our troubles, and—

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Did nothing.

Mr. ANGELO: —gained considerable knowledge that has been valuable to him ever since. I had the pleasure of meeting the Minister for Railways at Carnarvon, where he also met representative residents. Unfortunately his departments do not concern us to any great extent. He did something for our unemployed, of whom we have not many. That was the extent of his activities. I trust, however, that before long the Minister will be invited to our district to turn on the first oil gusher at Wooramel. I also had the honour of driving the Minister for Lands through my electorate. As he comes so closely in touch, through his department, with the people of the North, particularly the wool growers, his visit was probably the most important of all. I am glad that the Minister was able to satisfy himself that what representatives of the northern constituencies, where pastoral interests predominate, told him last year was quite true. We informed the Minister on that occasion that the pastoralists had not wasted their money during good times by spending it extravagantly, but that at least 90 per cent. of their profits had been devoted to developing their stations. During the Minister's visit he saw comfortable homes throughout my district, commodious wool sheds and shearers' quarters, thousands of miles of good fencing with suitable gates, many of which he had to open himself as we drove along, some hundreds of windmills and tanks, numbers of artesian bores with drains through which the water was flowing

for miles, and pipes in all directions where water was not so plentiful. I think he was particularly struck by the number of permanent water supplies established by the settlers. They were not dams such as are to be seen in the South-West, but large sheets of water a hundred yards or so square with a depth of 15 feet or more. I am sure the Minister was quite satisfied that the pastoralists have carried out their obligations to the Government and have looked after not only their own interests but the Crown land leased to them by the State for grazing purposes. I am glad that Mr. Camm, the Surveyor General, who is also chairman of the Appraisalment Board, accompanied the Minister. In my opinion, the pastoralists have improved their stations very considerably and have been enabled to carry more stock than ever before. But those people, to a certain extent, have been penalised because of the money they have spent. Perhaps Mr. Camm will view the position in a different light when future reappraisements are undertaken, and will be sympathetically inclined towards the pastoralists who have developed their stations by the expenditure of profits they have earned.

Mr. Coverley: To what reappraisements do you refer?

Mr. Angelo: To those in my district.

Mr. Coverley: I thought that rents were fixed on the price of wool?

Mr. ANGELO: That is so, but what I refer to will come later on. I was glad, too, that Mr. McLarty, the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank, was included in the Minister for Railways' party, because when funds at the disposal of the bank are more plentiful than at present, the bank may be able to render assistance in speeding up industry, especially in the Gascoyne electorate, where efforts are being made to cultivate tropical fruits. It is the practice of members representing northern constituencies, in common with members representing other parts of the State, to say something about their districts, the conditions that obtain, and the hardships the settlers have to endure. I do not intend to adopt that course on this occasion, for the simple reason that the Government recently appointed an Advisory Committee, the members of which are inquiring into all such matters, and will probably submit recommendations to the Government as to how the interests of the

North can best be served and its industries developed, so that the unpeopled areas may be more satisfactorily settled. I am glad to see the member for Roebourne (Mr. Church) in the House. I first met him 40 years ago in Roebourne. He has already told members some of the disadvantages under which pastoralists have been labouring during recent years. But I think members knew that for themselves. Since this debate started I have heard many opinions expressed as to whether the State had reached the bottom of its troubles, whether the depression had touched zero, and whether or not we were again on the up-grade. I have heard some members say they consider the depression is over, while others have held the pessimistic view that we have not yet reached the worst. For myself I think we have touched bottom, but that the extent of our upward progress must depend on the prices of wool and wheat. I was delighted to see in yesterday's newspaper that both those important products of ours are on the up-grade. We all hope the upward tendency will continue until we reach that stage where the producers of wool and wheat can make a profit from their labours. But we must not depend altogether on the future, not be altogether satisfied to expect as good a time as we hope to have. In my view it is our duty to make every possible effort to produce as much as we can, and get as much for our production as we possibly can. Only the other day, in a city office, I was struck by a motto on the wall, "In times of depression one must run as fast as he can to stop where he is." That is what we have to do, to run as fast as we can, to work as fast as we can, and to find as good markets as we possibly can. It is on that subject I am going to base the few remarks I intend to make this afternoon. I want to give members—they already know a good deal about it—a little more information and get them a little more interested in the possibilities of Western Australia exploiting and taking advantage of what I am satisfied will be our best market in the future, namely, the expansion of our trade with the Near East. I was fortunate enough to be permitted to take a few extracts from a letter which was sent by a resident of Singapore to a business house in Perth. I cannot divulge the name of the writer, for his letter is confidential and he holds a very responsible position in Singapore, so it

would never do for his name to be known publicly. But I can assure the House he is a man whose work can be relied upon, a man who knows Australia, including Western Australia, very well, and who for many years has held a high position in Malaya. This is what he writes—

The subject of trade between Malaya and Australia has always interested me considerably and also astonished me. I have been astounded that Australian goods are not better represented in this market, and I gather as the result of extensive inquiry that bad marketing is to blame. I have expressed this view to various Australians who have called at this office, either officially or personally, to make inquiries on the same subject, and I have, I think, managed to convince them that the British exporters are considerably behind the Americans in modern marketing methods, and the Australians are pathetically behind the British. The quality of the goods is never in dispute, nor is the price, and at present, with the rate of exchange very sharply against America, this country should present a very profitable field for your exporters. . . . The market for meat and flour is a growing one, as the Asiatic is slowly but surely tending to include those articles in his diet to the exclusion of rice.

I particularly want members to note that. This gentleman says—

The market for meat and flour is a growing one, as the Asiatic is slowly but surely tending to include those articles in his diet to the exclusion of rice.

We are told every day that the natives do not eat meat and do not want flour. But here we have an undoubted authority assuring us it is not so.

Mr. Sleeman: On a point of order, is the hon. member in order in quoting a letter without placing it on the Table? It is not of much value as evidence unless placed on the Table, where we can read it and see the name of the writer.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it a letter sent to a private individual?

Mr. ANGELO: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Have you any objection to its being placed on the Table?

Mr. ANGELO: There is no name on the copy, so I will place it on the Table.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is quite in order in reading the letter without placing it on the Table.

Mr. ANGELO: It is a private letter. I am delighted that members should be taking so much interest in the subject.

Mr. Sleeman: I want to know if the evidence it contains is correct.

Mr. ANGELO: If you like, I will swear it is all right. The letter continues—

Dairy produce should supply another profitable field, as there is very little produced in this country. Fruits, particularly tinned fruits, are consumed in large quantities, and this trade is almost exclusively American. Jams come largely from Great Britain. Fancy vegetables in tins also come largely from America, and to a slight extent from Great Britain. Australia produces all these things in large quantities, she is near, she has considerable benefit in exchange over America at the present time, and yet I assure you that if I went out this morning to try to buy a few tins of Australian fruit, jams and vegetables I should have to search for an hour or more before I found them. If I wanted American or British products I could obtain them by the case in a few minutes.

Now just another small excerpt from this letter, which I will lay on the Table if necessary—

As you know, there is a very large company already existing in Singapore for the supply of such goods, but it is my private opinion, offered in confidence, that traders in Western Australia would find very little difficulty in offering fruit, vegetables, dairy products, etc., at prices which would be very attractive in comparison with those at present charged. When I wrote you last I think I suggested that the price was not the primary consideration. I still believe that to be the case, largely because the present suppliers of refrigerated goods are not altogether popular, and a considerable section of the local public would welcome an alternative source of supply.

All those who have been to Singapore realise that the firm referred to is the Singapore Cold Storage Co., Ltd. I should like to quote a few of the prices listed in their latest printed catalogue. Before doing so, I may say the freight by the State boat on meats and similar products is only one half-penny per lb. That will give some idea of the profit this company, this huge monopoly, is making in the trade that should be ours. I have brought these prices from dollars and cents. to our Australian currency, and I may say the exchange rate, which is considerably in our favour and against these prices, is not taken into consideration. For chine of beef the price is 8½d. per lb., rib roast 1s. 1d. per lb., sirloin 1s. 5d., rump steak 1s. 7½d., fillet steak 2s. 1½d., dripping 9½d., shoulder of mutton 10d., mutton chops 11d., legs 1s. 3d., loins 1s. 6d., loin chops 1s. 6d., lamb, leg 1s. 7½d., shoulder 1s. 5d. These, of course, are retail prices. Pork loin is 1s. 10½d.

per lb. and fillets 2s. For hams the price is 2s. 8d. per lb. for the whole ham, but if you want it cut into halves you pay 2s. 11d. Bacon rashers 2s. 4d., streaky rashers 1s. 10½d., sausages 1s. 5d.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Who cuts fat meat up there? There is no market for fat meat.

Mr. ANGELO: Do you mean to say these people making huge profits are not finding a market? I suggest that we should get into competition with them.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You suggest we should start a trading concern up there?

Mr. ANGELO: Nothing of the kind. I am not so foolish. To show that other industries besides the pastoral should be interested, I may say this firm charges 2s. 1d. per lb. for turkeys and 2s. 3d. per lb. for chicken. A rabbit can be bought up there for 1s. 9d.

Mr. Sleeman: Why are we not getting the trade?

Mr. ANGELO: That is what I am asking. I hope to be able to suggest a method by which we can get it.

Mr. H. W. Mann: You will be able to utilise your freezing works then.

Mr. ANGELO: From what one hears in the street, and from the opinions published in the Press, it seems that our business men think they cannot trade with the Dutch Indies unless we have reciprocity. There seems to be a lot of misconception on this point. It has got into the minds of our people that because we do not buy their sugar and because we impose a duty on their bananas, they will not trade with us.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: We buy a lot of tea from them.

Mr. ANGELO: I intend to show what we do buy. I intend to quote figures showing the value of the trade first with Malaya and then with the Dutch Indies. The trade with Malaya has always been in favour of Malaya; they have sent us more than we have sent them. That, however, does not matter much. After all, Malaya is a British dependency and it is not necessary to look for the same amount of reciprocal trade as when dealing with a foreign power. A foreign power needs a little more coaxing before it will trade with us. In 1919 we sent £246,847 worth of goods to Malaya and took £15,802 worth from them, while in 1931 the figures were £129,579 and £13,123 respectively. Consequently it will be seen that we

had the advantage of that trade. But the misconception occurs when we turn to the Dutch Indies. People imagine that we do not get anything from the Dutch Indies. Here are the figures: In 1919 we sent goods to the value of £86,250 to the Netherland East Indies and took from them goods to the value of £104,978. Six years later we sent £91,861 worth and took £555,615 worth. In 1931 we sent goods to the value of £115,049 and took £578,912 worth from them.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Mostly tea and coffee.

Mr. ANGELO: Not at all. What then becomes of the idea that they should not trade with us because we do not trade with them? For the benefit of the member for Geraldton, let me explain that the total of £578,912 worth of goods which we took from them last year included tea £83,000, kapok £11,694, fruit £9,907, and petroleum £430,447. People may comment on the large amount represented by oil, but if we deduct the value, £430,447, from the total of £578,912, there is still left £148,465 worth of other goods compared with the £115,094 worth that we sent them. The figures show clearly that the Dutch Indies have a considerable favourable trade balance as between that country and Western Australia. It is well to emphasise this matter; otherwise the general public will retain a wrong impression. It is just ten years since the State Government sent the first vessel belonging to the State Shipping Service to open up trade in that part. In 1921 the m.v. "Kangaroo" took up a delegation composed of various business men, representatives of organisations and some politicians. I think I am right in saying that the Minister for Industries was one who made that trip. A considerable amount of information was obtained and some good results have followed. One thing was definitely discovered, namely, that Western Australia was not getting the advantage of its geographical position, and that the freights operating from Western Australia to the Near East were on a level with those charged from the Eastern States. Was that fair? We have about one-third of the distance over which to transport the goods and the steamers then operating between Western Australia and Singapore were robbing us of our geographical advantage, charging the same as were the steamers running from the Eastern States. When the matter was investigated

the State Shipping Service reduced its freights and considerable advantage has occurred. Let me give an instance: The freight on flour was 50s. per ton of 2,000 lbs. and it is now 22s. 6d. per ton, a drop of over 50 per cent. Attempts have been made to induce the manager of the State Shipping Service to increase his freights. I understand that the manager of one of the big companies operating from the Eastern States to Singapore almost demanded that our freights should be raised to a level with those ruling from Melbourne and Sydney. He did not suggest that he would raise his freights by 10s. if we did the same, thus enabling us to retain our geographical advantage. No; he said, "Let us charge the same freights exactly." Yet the Eastern States are twice as far distant from the market. Notwithstanding our being nearer the market, we were to lose the advantage Nature has given us. I am very glad to know that his proposals were not counter-acted. The following figures show the exports to Malaya and Dutch Indies during two periods, the first being the three years, 1921-23, when the "Kangaroo" started operating, and the second the three years 1929-31:—

	1921-23. 1929-31.		Percent- age increase.
Hay and Chaff (tons)	1,650	2,720	65
Bran (")	490	1,100	125
Oats (")	460	1,980	330
Fresh Fruit (centals)	30,490	50,200	10
Flour ... (tons)	28,900	65,860	128
Leather ... (£)	866	3,644	263

Recently the State Shipping Service has extended its itinerary to Sumatra and Penang, which is in the heart of Malaya, but has not yet touched Burma. The following lines of imports into Malaya show the opportunities still open for trade; they also show that Australia does very little and Western Australia practically nothing:—Onions, 30,900 tons; potatoes, 9,450 tons; common soap, 7,640 tons (of this Australia supplies 1,300 tons); wines, 86,000 gallons (Australia supplies 174 gallons); carcase meat, beef £50,800, lamb £31,800, mutton £10,800. The following figures show the percentage of the total trade from the whole of Australia to those islands:—biscuits, 16 per cent.; butter, 75 per cent.; vegetables, 1.6 per cent.; sole leather, 50 per cent.; other leathers, 20 per cent.; jams and jellies, 10 per cent.; condensed milk, 40 per cent.; tallow and

edible fat, 30 per cent.; ham, 66 per cent.; fresh fruit, 45 per cent.; and dried fruit, 16 per cent. Lately, through the State Shipping Service, interest has been aroused in the following new lines that were not previously touched:—Fruit juices, timber, tiles, salt, charcoal, confectionery, hams, bacon, pork, poultry, vegetables and fodder. I am glad to hear that there is also an order for fat lambs, but unfortunately it is necessary to wait until October before the order can be supplied. Three months ago I had the privilege of travelling down in the "Centaur," whose passengers included about 60 tourists for Western Australia, residents of Malaya, Burma, Siam, Java, and other eastern countries. I did not lose much time in becoming acquainted with those people, and all the way down I talked trade with Western Australia. On arrival here I selected three or four of the most likely gentlemen and took them to our big stores, our butcher shops, our fruit shops, and even our greengrocer shops, and showed them the products of Western Australia and the prices at which those products were retailed to our people. The visitors were greatly interested, and confirmed everything I have stated about the monopoly of the Singapore cold stores. They also wanted to know why we were not supplying them. I got one of those gentlemen—a big business man in Malaya—so interested that he communicated with business friends in Malaya, and they are forming a company to deal with Western Australia. Immediately on starting, however, he was told there was no freight. I shall deal with that aspect presently. About four months ago I was very disgusted at an announcement made over the wireless. We had tuned in to Melbourne, and the announcer informed his listeners that he was glad to be able to assure them that the "Nieu Zeeland," one of the flash packet boats, had just left Melbourne a full ship, carrying Victorian and South Australian fruit and other produce for the islands north of Australia. What right have they to the trade when they are ten days or a fortnight further away than we are. It is our trade, and we want it.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Do not stop there.

Mr. ANGELO: I wish to refer to the shipment of live sheep in which my electorate is interested. I referred to the subject last year. By way of interjection

the Leader of the Opposition and the Minister for Industries both stated that we required cool storage before we could do anything in a big way. I agree with that, but would like to tell them that the trade which represented 25,000 head last year is 60,000 head this year. There has been room for expansion, and I consider there is room for a great deal more, but we must look for the trade. Burma has not yet been touched, although I understand that constitutes a bigger market than Malaya. It is our market for the asking, but we have to get the necessary shipping space in order to enter it. Java has not been touched. People have said that the Javanese will not eat mutton. Some 25 years ago I took some sheep there myself. The people were delighted with them, but could not afford to pay the 25s. or 26s. a head which was the value of the sheep at that time. It is now possible to land sheep there for 14s. or 15s. a head. It is necessary always to give new customers a sample of those things which one produces and wishes to sell. I am glad to say a syndicate of pastoralists is getting together 500 or 1,000 sheep with a view to leaving 50 or so at every port and giving the people of Java a taste of what we can produce. That is the only way to open up a market. Unfortunately, however, these people are blocked because there is no shipping space.

The Minister for Railways: Our principal trade is controlled from Sydney and Melbourne, and the people there are not going to allow their business to be interfered with.

Mr. ANGELO: I am delighted to hear the interjection. It is true we have no say in things here. One of the gentlemen who came down on the "Centaur" with me had been a shipping manager in Singapore. He assured me it was understood that when the Royal Dutch Packet Co. put the "Nieu Zeeland" and "Nieu Hollande" on the eastern coast we were to have the other two vessels whose place they were taking. As soon as that was publicly announced, influence was brought to bear and they were prevented from coming here. I have heard of other boats that it was intended to send here, but am told that on every occasion the influence in the East has put a stop to that. Shippers in the East control these freights. It is certain that Burns Philp & Co. do not want to lose any portion of their trade. We are therefore, like Cinderella, left out in the

cold to shift for ourselves. Does the Minister for Railways know that the Commonwealth are subsidising Burns Philp & Co. to the extent of £5,000 a year?

The Minister for Railways: Far from being surprised at that, I am surprised it is not £50,000 a year.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Is that in connection with the Singapore trade?

Mr. ANGELO: They give them this subsidy to run a service to Singapore on the understanding that the ships call at Darwin.

The Minister for Railways: That is only a subterfuge.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: They go to Thursday Island, I suppose, and the other islands in the Near East.

Mr. ANGELO: I received a letter from a firm in Colombo stating that 70,000 sheep a year could be absorbed there. The writers, however, said we would have to be quick about securing the trade, because the Government of Somaliland was after it. When we tried to get freight for sheep we found that the lowest quote was 25s per head. This trade is most necessary to our pastoralists. No doubt thousands of sheep will have to be slaughtered unless an outlet can be obtained for them. Every effort should therefore be made to open up all possible avenues of trade.

Mr. J. I. Mann: That particular market has been created because of the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in India.

Mr. ANGELO: Now is the time when we should get hold of the market. Our great advantage is the exchange, and we ought to lose no time in establishing our markets now. When we have it established I do not think we shall ever lose it.

The Minister for Railways: By "we" what do you mean?

Mr. ANGELO: I mean Western Australia.

The Minister for Railways: Who is Western Australia? It seems to me you want the Government to do the job.

Mr. ANGELO: Not at all.

The Minister for Railways: The Government are always expected to start these things, and then we are told we are starting State trading concerns.

Mr. ANGELO: I am surprised that the Singapore boats have never given us proper refrigerating space.

The Minister for Railways: They are all controlled by syndicates.

Mr. ANGELO: I am glad the Minister has afforded us that explanation. The "Kangaroo" has a fair amount of space, but I am afraid it is not being used to its full capacity.

The Minister for Railways: The trouble is that the cargo is so intermittent.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. I am also interested in the development of the tourist trade. Thousands of parents up there have been in the habit of taking their children to the Old Country or to Holland, and every second year or two, when they get their furlough, they have been going off to see their children. Owing to the restricted incomes the fathers now have, they are sending their children to Australia and visiting them here. I have spoken to many of these people on the boats. They say that they can get any amount of information in Singapore and other parts of Malaya concerning Victoria and New South Wales, but have heard nothing about Perth or Western Australia except what comes to them from their friends.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: The Tourist Bureau have put a lot of literature on the Western Australian boats.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes, but we must go further than that. We have to advertise in those countries from which the tourist trade is likely to come. We must make things attractive for them, and see that they receive decent service. Why is it that the Eastern States have secured all this trade? Is it because our politicians are backward, or is it that our commercial people have not the same business acumen that is evidenced by others in the Eastern States? Up till quite recently we have been able to produce only what could be consumed locally.

The Minister for Railways: Not at all.

Mr. ANGELO: That is so. When we had only 6,000,000 sheep we could sell all our fats locally.

The Minister for Railways: Who controls the pastoralists of the North-West to-day?

Mr. Pantou: Dalgety & Co.

Mr. ANGELO: No.

The Minister for Railways: They will not allow any stock to be shipped unless it goes by their boats. You know that as well as I do.

Mr. ANGELO: I do not know it.

The Minister for Railways: Is that not so?

Mr. Church: Certainly not.

The Minister for Railways: It is the same with our wool.

Mr. ANGELO: We have not wanted the trade until recently, but now it is imperative that we should get it. Our sheep have increased in number to 10,000,000, and we must find an outlet for our surplus stock. We are producing more wheat, butter, fruit and other things than we did, and must get the best market we can for those commodities. I have been discussing this trade with several business men, and have asked why it has not been developed. Nearly everybody has told me it is due to want of space and want of refrigeration facilities. What can we do about it? Some people have suggested the appointment of a trade commissioner, and others say we should withdraw the State Shipping Service. I cannot see the necessity for a trade commissioner nor for the withdrawal of this service. It is the duty of the Government to see that proper transport is provided for the State's produce. Even this session we have heard of new railways being built. These are State-owned railways, constructed in order to bring the produce of the land to the port. Why stop at the port? Are we going to allow our trade to be interfered with by vested interests? The Government should see that a good fight is put up against Eastern States domination. The Government might invite another company to join us with the promise of combined trade, or could say to another line, 'You come here and we will withdraw our ship—she is only a slow one—from the Java trade.' Some company might accept an offer of that sort. I can assure members that it was understood the two new Dutch boats were to provide the means whereby the other two that were being replaced should come to us, but vested interests blocked that move.

The Minister for Railways: What is that vested interest?

Mr. ANGELO: The other shipping companies.

The Minister for Lands: How can we interfere with them?

Mr. ANGELO: When we have produce to sell, are we going to sit down and allow this sort of thing to take place?

The Minister for Lands: You are not helping at all.

Mr. ANGELO: I think I am.

The Minister for Lands: Tell us in what way.

Mr. ANGELO: I have often heard the Minister for Lands say, "Here are 50 settlers living 50 miles from a railway. Let us build them a line so that they may market their produce." This is not a case of 50 settlers, but a case of the produce of Western Australia as a whole. Are we going to be blocked for the sake of a ship or two?

The Minister for Railways: Suppose that someone beside ourselves were to control the produce that would be carried over a line it was proposed to build, would you embark upon the construction of that line?

Mr. ANGELO: I am sure the Minister is wrong in expressing that view.

The Minister for Railways: I will tell you later. I will give you proof of my statements.

Mr. ANGELO: I know that the State steamers have taken away thousands of sheep from stations financed by Dalgety & Co. to-day.

Mr. Marshall: It is only the surplus sheep that the State steamers get.

Mr. ANGELO: This is a vitally important matter. The future of the State is dependent on our markets, and here is a market at our very doors. Here is an opportunity to get rid of our surplus products, a market that will yield us good prices. It is a chance that we should grasp with both hands. My suggestion to the Minister is, never mind a select committee, but let him ask two members from the Opposition side of the House and two members from the Ministerial side to join with two business men of Perth with a view to arriving at some suggestion. It is too important a matter for one brain to deal with.

The Minister for Lands: What about the Commissioner for the North-West?

Mr. ANGELO: I have tried to emphasise that this is not merely a North-West matter. It is a matter that affects every Western Australian industry. It is going to interest Leederville and Osborne Park. Those two, and many other districts, are going to grow vegetables for that market. The market is one that will benefit our friends of the apple-growing industry. Our farmers will be sending their products to that market, and I hope our sheep will also be sent there. Let us

all work together. The question is too big for any suggested solutions to be disregarded.

Member: What do you suggest—another State steamer?

Mr. ANGELO: I suggest that the Minister for Industry should select two of the best brains on the Opposition side of the House and two of the best brains on this side, who could co-opt two good businessmen. Let those six people meet in a round-table conference and discuss the matter. It is not a question for the North-West Commissioner. It is a question which affects the whole of Western Australia. If the Minister would promise to do what such a conference would suggest, the matter would soon be arranged. One suggestion would be that the Government of Western Australia write to the Dutch Royal Packet Company inviting them to come on this coast, promising them assistance, promising them a rebate from the tremendous harbour charges made at Fremantle. Does the Minister know that it costs a foreign ship nearly five times as much to call at Fremantle as to call at Adelaide or Melbourne? What chance is there of a new trade while that condition of affairs exists? I repeat, this is a very big question, and not a question affecting only the North-West. It affects every producing industry of Western Australia. We must not sit down and be content to let the thing go. I ask hon. members to close their eyes and visualise the map of the Eastern hemisphere. Let them cast their eyes on the atlas, and what will they find? That the Great Architect of the Universe has placed Western Australia in her position to enable her to trade with the Far East. We are weeks closer to that market than are the people now supplying it. We must take advantage of our geographical position. As in the affairs of men, so in the existence of States, there comes a tide which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. I ask the Government not to forget this question, but to secure the best brains obtainable in Western Australia for the purpose of discovering a solution. The one problem is, how can we bring our products to the near Eastern market? The market is there, as I think I have shown; and we have the products. All that we want is to get over the intervening space.

MR. F. C. L. SMITH (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [5.36]: The Brown Hill-Ivanhoe district requires better transport facilities than it has at present. True it is that a large section of the district is well catered for by the tramway company; but another section, that which could be catered for by the railway between Kalgoorlie and Boulder, is at present badly served. Here is a striking illustration of a community having a railway line but having no railway service. Trafalgar and Brown Hill still have numerous residents, people who pioneered the district as a result of facilities formerly extended by the Railway Department, facilities in the nature of passenger conveyance. However, 12 or 18 months ago the passenger service was cut out entirely; and now Trafalgar and Brown Hill residents, although they have a railway line and occasionally see goods trains passing, are without passenger trains to convey them in and out of Kalgoorlie.

The Minister for Railways: I remember when the Perth express used to run there.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Yes, at one time; but it does not do so now. I think that train ran to Boulder, whereas I am speaking of Brown Hill and Trafalgar. Perhaps the Minister will take into consideration the question of running one train per day for those people. He might also take into consideration the possibility of running a train out to the mines in the morning, and back in the afternoon. I understand that, in fact, an engine already runs out to the mines, but without any loading whatever. Surely it is possible for the Railway Department to arrange a train to take the workers out to the mines in the morning, and bring them back in the afternoon. I am merely suggesting one train in the morning, and another in the afternoon. Some 1,200 men are now working on the Chaffers mine, and on the Lake View and Star; and I understand that the majority of them have to change at the Chaffers shaft. In consequence they have a long distance to walk from the tramway terminus. A restoration of the train facilities which until recently they enjoyed, would represent a great convenience to them. In the matter of getting to and from the market, Trafalgar and Brown Hill residents are now catered for, in a small way, by a motor bus. That bus comes into Kalgoorlie on Tuesday at 9 a.m., and goes out again later in the

forenoon. Moreover, there is a fairly good bus service on Saturday. Possibly, if the cost of running a passenger train in that district would involve the Railway Department in too much loss, the Minister might consider the question of subsidising the motor bus. As the result of inquiries made of the proprietor, I am able to state that in return for a subsidy of £12 a year he is prepared to give a full service on an extra day per week. I hope the Minister will consider whether he cannot grant this small subsidy of £12 per annum in order to secure better transport facilities for the people who have pioneered settlement in the district. On a recent evening the Minister was interjecting with regard to cheap commodities to be bought on the Eastern goldfields as the result of trade with the Eastern States. I learn on reliable authority that the Railway Department appear to foster Eastern States trade with the metropolitan district. My authority states that when a consignment of goods comes from Adelaide to Perth, the State Railway Department receive a proportion of the freight. That proportion, I am informed, amounts to only one-fourth of the cost of consigning the same quantity of goods from Kalgoorlie to Perth. Such an arrangement certainly tends to help in the marketing of Eastern States products in our metropolitan area. Recently a Federal member voiced the platitudinous utterance that Australia has room for a hundred millions of people. No doubt it has; and, possibly, some day that room will be utilised. If I were asked to suggest the day on which it will be utilised, my suggestion would be the day on which the Archangel Gabriel sounds the last trumpet. We have to realise that people need more than room; that they need food, and need shelter. We cannot at this or possibly any other juncture concern ourselves with the potential population capacity of this country; we have to concern ourselves with its actual population capacity. The actual population capacity of a country is determined by the various utilities and public instrumentalities which its Government creates from time to time. The wise expenditure of loan money enters into that proposition. In the expenditure of loan money it is necessary that the productive value of the work on which the money is spent shall be realised at the earliest possible moment. I submit that the wisdom of

an Administration is indicated by the sane way in which it spends loan funds. When a works proposal is under consideration, naturally its cost must also be taken into account, and likewise the interest and sinking fund involved. But the real test, I submit, is not whether the proposition will return so much in terms of pounds, shillings and pence, but whether the proposed work will increase employment opportunities within the State, and thus increase the population capacity of the country. A typical example that would bear examination in this regard is the proposal to give a permanent water supply to Ora Banda. This is a field that has wonderfully good prospects. I understand that the Minister has recently had an officer investigating the position there. At the deputation which waited on the Premier and the Minister for Mines in Kalgoorlie—

The Minister for Mines: I was one of the deputation, and supported it.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: I hope we still have the Minister's support. I do not wish to reiterate all that Mr. Argus said about the ore that was at grass or had been blocked out in the various mines; he mentioned the various mines that had stone ready for crushing totalling 27,000 tons, and he also added that the Gimlet mine had 100,000 tons of ore worth 10s. 9d. per ton, at the old gold rate. A field that has not a permanent water supply naturally will not attract capital to it, and because Ora Banda has not a water supply it has never had a chance. At various times the mines there that were showing good prospects have gone as far as to interest the representatives of various syndicates with a view to options being taken, but when it was discovered that there was a possibility of water being obtained at the field for only four months of the year, and that the other eight months were very dry, invariably the propositions were turned down.

The Minister for Mines: That is not a fair statement.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Well, the position has been pretty bad in respect of the water supply, but it may be that the position is the other way about—four months of drought. The rainfall in the Ora Banda area is about as low as it is in any part of the State where records are kept. Ora Banda seems to be particularly unfortunate: when other districts around get rain, it often misses Ora Banda entirely. After the run-

ning of the mill for 18 months, there is still as much stone waiting to be crushed as there was when the mill started. The returns from this particular mill are higher than those of any other mill in the State. What I cannot understand—perhaps the Minister will be able to enlighten me—is that when the existing water supply was put in, consideration was not then given to the question of providing for a permanent supply in the way of constructing a pipe line from the Coolgardie main. On looking up old volumes of “Hansard” I find that the present pipe line and storage tanks and pumps cost £27,000. This is the method by which Ora Banda gets its water supply for certain parts of the year. I have it on reliable authority that the construction of a 3-inch pipe line from Coolgardie to Ora Banda would cost £16,000. Of course I recognise that had a permanent supply been put in in the first place, that in addition to the £16,000, storage would have had to be provided, and I do not know what proportion of the £27,000 storage and pumps represent. There are already eight miles of pipe line to Ora Banda from the 42-Mile, and at one period of the State’s history there was a pipe line also from Black Flag to Ora Banda carrying salt water. Thus, over £27,000 must have been spent, and so I cannot understand why a permanent supply was not provided in the first place. When speaking the other night I referred to the great possibilities of the gold mining industry, and I stressed the reasonableness of assisting the industry to expand, particularly by helping prospectors, and providing them with crushing facilities. We know that the State batteries have been run at a loss. Away back in 1913 the present Minister for Mines, when submitting the Budget to the House, said that the then Leader of the Opposition, when in power, had always budgeted for a credit balance, but had always shown a loss. He was not going to follow that example; he was going to present a fair statement. Of course we know that ever since then there has been pretty nearly always a debit balance. I have been wondering whether a good deal of the loss from the State batteries should not be cut out by the introduction of a system of purchasing prospectors’ ore on its assay value. Under the existing system of treating prospectors’ ore we cannot possibly expect the State batteries to pay. Those batteries, as we know, crush many parcels of 5 and 10 tons. Assuming

the batteries crushed 100,000 tons a year, and that the average parcel was of 10 tons—I would not say that each parcel would be of 10 tons, but I am assuming it—it would mean that there would be 10,000 stops at the battery in the course of the year. The stoppages would be necessary for the purpose of cleaning up, and, as we know, a clean up cannot be carried out under an hour. Thus there would be a dead loss to the batteries which I should think would represent an amount of about £20,000 in the year. Recently a request was made to the Minister for Mines that prospectors on sustenance should be allowed to take up prospecting areas and pay their fees when they were able to get a crushing out. I noticed that the Minister turned down flat this proposition. I am aware that the cost of a prospecting area is not very much, but I know also that the man on sustenance does not receive much, and it would only be right to give these men a chance of protecting their areas, because under existing conditions they are working their areas without protecting themselves by converting the areas into prospecting leases. At one time the present Minister for Mines I think used to be a little more sympathetic towards the industry than he is at the present time.

The Minister for Mines: You are due for another think.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: I am not saying that the Minister is unsympathetic now, but I think he is influenced by the fact that the mining industry—although generally speaking it is of great advantage to the State—does not directly assist the Treasury to a great extent. In 1920 the Minister for Mines, speaking on the mining industry generally and its value to the State in connection with revenue received, said—

It would of course be possible to increase the revenue under the Mining Act by increasing rents and fees, but it is recognised that every encouragement should be given to hold and work mining lands, as the indirect revenue received from this source and the employment of large numbers of men fully compensates the State for the comparatively small direct revenue obtained from them.

The Minister for Mines: What’s wrong with that?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Nothing. The mining industry is compensating the State by employing a large number of men, and this is an important fact in these days when there is so much depression throughout the

community. I noticed in the evening Press that the Federal Government intend to cut out the gold bonus. When the proposal was first mooted, the Minister for Mines joined with others in entering a protest, and rightly so. When the Bill for the gold bounty was before the Federal Parliament the Minister who introduced it, Mr. Forde, made the reservation, in the course of his remarks, that the exchange at the time was 9 per cent., and that if it increased in all probability the provisions of the Act might have to be reconsidered. That is a point that has been lost sight of by those who have protested against the 50 per cent. reduction that was subsequently made by the Federal Government.

The Minister for Mines: That was an unfortunate statement to make.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: That may be so, but the statement was made by the Federal Minister. When financial emergency matters were being discussed by the Premiers of the various States, and it had been determined that all sections of the community would be called upon to make sacrifices, the position of the gold mining industry in relation to the gold bonus was considered. Cognisance was taken of the exchange position when the matter was under review. In my opinion, that cancelled Mr. Forde's reservation, because the exchange was at 30 per cent. when the Government, in accordance with the decision that there should be a general sacrifice, reduced the gold bonus by 50 per cent. I contend that having taken that action, the Federal Government can have no further grounds for an additional reduction of the gold bonus, simply because exchange is high. The position regarding exchange had already been considered and the bonus reduced accordingly, so that Mr. Lyons can hardly have any argument along those lines at the present juncture. I presume, however, he will be able to advance some arguments in support of the Government's determination to cut out the gold bonus. He will probably point to the financial position of Australia and justify the contemplated action on grounds similar to those upon which he will endeavour to justify a reduction in the old age pension. Notwithstanding the fact that I believe Mr. Lyons can have but few convincing arguments to submit regarding the cutting out of the gold bonus, I appreciate the fact that

he will be able to advance reasons that will be just as plausible and convincing as those the Minister for Mines could present for cutting down the concessions formerly granted to prospectors.

The Minister for Mines: He should be able to succeed—if he can do so. I don't think he can.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Next I will refer to the position of men employed in the mines. The development of the mining industry and the enhanced price of gold have been constantly referred to by hon. members. The men who are working in the mines do not seem to have derived any benefit as a result of the 70 per cent. increase in the price of gold. During the war period when a substantial premium was available on gold that was produced, the miners were the poorest paid workers in the Commonwealth. It was then contended that as the industry was in so depressed a condition that operations were unpayable, it was impossible for the mining companies to pay any increase in wages. Now that the price of gold has increased 70 per cent., the wages paid to the miners do not seem to enter into the question at all. I know that miners are in receipt of slightly better wages than are, generally speaking, prevalent in other parts of the State, but—

Mr. Marshall: They deserve the margin.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: They certainly do. I have often heard people arguing regarding the necessity for a readjustment of the value of labour. When one goes down a mine and observes the hazards the miners must run and also becomes acquainted with the incidence of diseases attached to their occupation, one feels that if in any occupation there should be a readjustment of values, it is in that associated with gold mining, where men delve in the earth thousands of feet underground. I trust that as the men have had no special benefit arising from the increase in the price of gold, they will not be disadvantaged by any legislation that the Government may introduce, particularly with regard to the Miners' Phthisis Act, which, generally speaking, is working pretty well at present. I understand the Government intend to amend that Act, but I trust that, if amended, it will be in the direction of securing advantages to the men who are afflicted with the terrible diseases incidental to the occupation they follow.

The Minister for Mines: I will give you an undertaking now that any such legislation will not be dealt with as a party measure.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Thank you.

Mr. Marshall: The Minister's interjection does not provide any undertaking that he will not reduce the advantages enjoyed by the men.

The Minister for Mines: If there is any increase or decrease in that respect, you will have to take your share of the responsibility. I will not make shuttlecocks in this House of men who are suffering from miners' diseases.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: An endeavour has been made by tributers to secure what they understood was intended by the Mining Act. I refer to the payment of 50 per cent. of the premium received on the sale of gold produced. I take it the Act was framed to ensure that if there was any premium paid on the gold, the tributer would receive 50 per cent. of it. On the other hand, a case was tried in the court at Kalgoorlie and subsequently was taken to the Full Court. The decision was that the tributer was not entitled to 50 per cent. of the premium received as the result of the sale of gold, as the Act did not lay down that the tributer concerned was entitled to it. It is a remarkable position, and shows that in addition to the mines being able to charge a royalty on gold recovered, after certain charges have been deducted, they can also charge a royalty on 50 per cent. of the premium derived as the result of the sale of the gold. The applicable section of the Act, Section 152, paragraph (b), reads—

The owner of the treatment plant shall also account for and pay to the tributer not less than 50 per centum of any premium received by such owner on the sale of the gold obtained from the ore treated.

That seems to give the tributer a right to 50 per cent. of the premium, but apparently the law is that if the tributer makes an agreement that is not in conformity with the Act, then he is bound by the amount specified in the agreement. That is rather a peculiar position. I always understood that under English law, it was not possible for anyone to contract outside the terms of an Act. Speaking on the subject of agreements, on 13th October, 1920, the Minister for Mines—I quote from "Hansard" of that date—said—

It is true that the agreement between the tributer and the leaseholder must be submitted to the mining warden for approval; but

when an agreement has been signed by the parties to it and when there is no objection raised to its terms by either party, the warden, who may be without practical knowledge of the subject, will be apt to infer that the agreement must be satisfactory and proper. The tributers, however, say that nowadays they have no option but to accept the agreements as drawn by the mining companies, since otherwise they would get no tributies.

That is also the position to-day.

The Minister for Mines: What is wrong with that statement?

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Nothing at all. While the mining warden may not have a practical knowledge of the subject, I claim that he should at least have a practical knowledge of the law so as to be able to see that the agreement brought forward conforms to the law and does not mean contracting outside the provisions of the Mining Act.

The Minister for Mines: That is all right, but with all due respect to you, the warden knows the law and you do not. The particular part of the Act referred to has nothing to do with a tribute agreement.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Has it not?

The Minister for Mines: No, nothing at all.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Then there is a great deal of confusion of thought on the goldfields relating to this subject, if that is so.

The Minister for Mines: I realise that.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: I understood the interests of tributers were conserved when certain provisions were inserted in the Mining Act. Was it not as the result of deputations from tributers themselves that the Act was amended?

The Minister for Mines: That is so, but that is no part of the tribute agreement.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: No, but the tribute agreement should be in conformity with the terms of the Act.

The Minister for Mines: It is.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: What is the good of the Act if people can contract out of its provisions?

The Minister for Mines: The warden has no jurisdiction under that section because it is not part of the tribute agreement.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: If a man were to produce an agreement in which he had contracted to take 20 per cent. only of the premium, would the warden be entitled to accept it as between the parties concerned?

The Minister for Mines: The trouble is that the agreements do not come before him. The Act does not specify that it is to be part of the tribute agreement.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: There are agreements with that clause in them.

The Minister for Mines: That amounts to contracting themselves out of the Act, not out of the conditions under which tribute agreements are made.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: It is a remarkable position, and has cost the tributers on the goldfields much money in fighting for what they consider to be their rights. The case has been taken to the Privy Council.

The Minister for Mines: I am not responsible for that.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: I do not know whether to congratulate the Government on their financing over the past year, or to condemn them. I went very carefully through the various statements published in the "West Australian," which apparently were got out for the purpose of showing that the Government had lived up to the provisions of the Premiers' Plan. I cannot agree with their finding that they had done so. I assume that when the figures of probable revenue were fixed at £8,970,000, under the provisions of the Plan and with wise administration the expenditure should not have extended beyond £9,270,000, or in other words a deficit of £1,200,000. But the actual deficit was £1,558,000, or £358,000 more than the Premiers' Conference had agreed it should be. It is noticeable that the estimated revenue was only £35,000 less than was expected. So the actual deficit, taking the reduced revenue into consideration, was £1,358,000. I am inclined to agree with the interjection made by the Minister for Lands last night that probably things would have been worse had the agreed upon deficit been arrived at: that is to say, if it had been effected by an expenditure that was equivalent to that which was estimated. But I am inclined to think also that had the estimated expenditure been achieved we would have found the revenue reduced proportionately. As a matter of fact, during the year, as compared with 1929-30, there was a saving of £1,194,000 on

salaries, wages, etc. And in 1929-30 there was various special expenditure which did not recur last year. That must have assisted the Government to a great extent; such as reductions in Parliamentary allowances £11,000, centenary celebrations £15,000, repairs to buildings transferred to some other account £12,000, general elections £11,000, extinction of water supply debentures £10,000, and elimination of grants £87,000. And they were assisted also by a hospital tax amounting to about £130,000. So taking those items into consideration, I do not know that they did live up to the provisions of the Premiers' Plan. But what I should like to know is this: I see that the Premier this year proposes to reduce the deficit by £700,000. I take it that that reduction will be as from the estimated deficit of last year; that is to say, £1,200,000. In that event he will be budgeting this year for a deficit of £500,000.

The Attorney General: No, £760,000.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Even then, compared with the deficit that actually occurred last year, he will have to effect a further reduction this year of £800,000.

The Minister for Lands: Or obtain more revenue.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: Or else obtain more revenue. But we find that the reduced expenditure on the part of the Government is affecting revenue. I consider that the savings effected of £1,194,000 on salaries and wages, together with those other savings I have mentioned, have been largely responsible for a reduction in revenue of £1,715,000 as compared with 1929-30. Loan money is provided for the purpose of finding work, a sum of £15,000,000 altogether, of which £7,000,000 is to be spent this year. Of that amount this Government have got a fairly good proportion, namely £500,000, while other Governments have received vast sums for the purpose of relieving revenue by taking workers off the dole and placing them on sustenance work which will be carried out by the expenditure of loan money. I cannot see how that improves the financial position of the country, although it might show up better in the Budget. But if we save on the expenditure side of the Budget by spending increased moneys out of loan, I cannot see how it will improve the financial position, or that a Budget balanced by that means is going to be of any benefit to us at all. It appears to me this loan money is be-

ing made available for vast schemes of sustenance work and that the deficits which are to be arrived at, the reduced expenditure of the Governments out of revenue, and perhaps increased taxation, will put out of work men that are now in work, or put them on part-time, probably to the same extent as the sustenance work is putting men in work.

Mr. Kenneally: The Governments, through their conference, have declared that to be their policy.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: It certainly looks as if that were the object of the policy being pursued. I think that as the result of taxation and of reduced expenditure from revenue we shall find that the number of sustenance workers will be considerably added to during the year. This appears to me to be a plan for the purpose of extending the sustenance workers, increasing their numbers, and to create a vast army of workers who are to be hardened to lower living standards, lower wages, and ultimately used to smash the standards of wages of workers generally throughout the community. It is obvious, of course, that the reduction in the deficit can only be brought about by additional cuts and additional taxation, and that the relief from revenue expenditure will only be arrived at by the extension of sustenance work. Personally I have no wild desire to see Budgets balanced at this juncture, and I cannot quite understand why that should be the great objective now. In the past, Governments never seemed to worry much about the balancing of Budgets. If we are to obtain Budget equilibrium, it appears to me that a time of prosperity is the time to increase taxation; that when there are probable surpluses we should build up for possible deficits in the near future. A balancing of Budgets should be arranged on a plan extending over a period of say 10 years. As we usually encompass the whole trade cycle in 10 years, surpluses should be created in times of prosperity so that when Budget deficits occur we should have money in hand to meet them. The probability of difficulties being accentuated and the unlikelihood of improvement resulting from reduced expenditure and increased taxation was evidently well considered and understood at the last Premiers' Conference. A report of the conference published in the "West Australian" on the 9th July stated—

Throughout the proceedings an earnest desire was manifest that special and urgent measures should be devised to combat the tragic condition of unemployment in the most satisfactory and effective way, and that early steps should be taken to give general and effective stimulus to industry. The complete unanimity displayed at this conference makes possible a wise and courageous forward policy.

Further, the report stated—

From the outset the speeches at the conference clearly indicated that there was a consensus of opinion that the mere cutting-down of budget expenditure or raising additional revenue, imperative as these steps may be, would not of themselves constitute a solution of the problems confronting the nation. Such a policy, if carried to extremes, would accentuate our difficulties.

I submit that the Government, in budgeting for a deficit of £700,000 this year, in view of the experience of the past year, and in increasing taxation to reduce the deficit by £800,000, will, as that statement pointed out, accentuate our difficulties. It has been said by the Premier that if we could get on the London market to borrow, everything would be all right. I have no doubt that is so, but the fact of the matter is that we cannot get on the London market to borrow, and it is improbable that we shall be able to do so. If it were possible for us to get a loan on the London market, it would certainly point to a very sound improvement in our financial position. The probabilities or possibilities of that happening are well indicated in an article in the "Times" by Sir Arthur Samuel, in the course of which he stated—

Now that Australian credit is being gradually restored, it is to be hoped that she will not attempt to borrow in England for many years, and if she attempts to do so it may be found advisable in the interests of Australia herself publicly to discourage such borrowing and to discourage English investors from taking up the loan The general public, moreover, may ask Parliament to review and curtail the powers provided by the Colonial Stock Act of 1900 which, subject to certain conditions, endows dominion and colonial loans with trustee status. This particular matter has already been raised on more than one occasion quite recently in the House of Commons. Australian borrowing will certainly be welcomed when Australia can annually meet debt redemption and interest obligations out of revenue. Loans for reproductive objects which can earn their own interest and sinking fund might be acceptable, but expansions ahead of immediate necessities will be regarded as ill-advised. Borrowing for premature expansion is unjustifiable and should be discouraged. Nor will it be easy for Australia to float loans

here again unless lenders are fully informed by the issue prospectuses upon all points relating to the balancing of Australian Budgets, with explanations of the specific purposes to which the loans are to be applied and whether they will be used for reproductive objects yielding revenue to cover interest and sinking funds.

The other night I suggested that when a loan was floated overseas, the various items on the schedule should be discussed and approved, and no opportunity should be given to divert loan money to some object other than that for which it was raised. Here we have Sir Arthur Samuel stating that English investors will want to know in future for what work the money is being raised and the probability of its being of productive value so that it will be able to earn interest. Quite recently a book came into my hands called "Borrowing and Business in Australia," by Dr. Gordon Wood. Dr. Gordon Wood has for a period of 10 years made a statistical investigation into the business cycles, and has concluded that the key factor to those cycles is the fluctuation in overseas loans. We prosper or we fall on evil times according as the overseas lender extends or withholds his hand. In the course of his book Dr. Wood points out that the usual argument in favour of overseas borrowing is that national productivity will be increased by the work to a greater extent than the interest bill will be increased as a result of borrowing for the work. Dr. Wood's discoveries, which he proves by statistics, show that in 1910-14 and in 1923-27 the annual average production of export commodities per head at the pre-war price level increased by 6.6 per cent., while the external interest charge on money borrowed at the pre-war price level increased by 68 per cent., or by about 10 times as much. In the appendix—this book was written previous to the depression now affecting us—Dr. Wood points out that in the final analysis, the burden of overseas debts must be sustained by the workers in all industries. He gives figures to show that the interest on the overseas debt per worker in 1916 was £11.2. By 1927 it had increased to £25.4. The index of the felt burden per worker had increased from 1000 in 1916 to 1842 in 1927. The export price index, which is more to the point, was 1591 in 1916 and 2080 in 1927. The probability is that by 1932 the interest on the overseas debt had increased

considerably on the £25.4 in 1927, while the export price index, which in 1927 was 2080, has probably fallen below the 1591 at which it stood in 1916. That goes to show that the prospects of Australia getting on the London market for a loan are remote. The book indicates fairly clearly that trade cycles in this country—that peculiar phenomenon of trade going from prosperity to recession, from recession to depression, and from depression to revival and then on to prosperity again—is entirely due to our borrowings overseas. I think that depressions everywhere have their initial impetus more or less in governmental spending. The depression we are now experiencing is, as William Morris Hughes recently stated, man-made. There can be no question about that. It is man-made, and man can find a remedy for it. Undoubtedly there is a remedy. The depression, in my opinion, is due to a deliberate plan on the part of powerful money groups to depress price levels in order to increase the value of their fixed money claims. A couple of years ago the Rt. Hon. L. S. Amery, speaking at the annual meeting of the Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, drew attention to the huge amount of gold which England owed to America. I think it was a matter of 32 cubic feet of gold, but I do not recollect the total figure. What he said was that this debt would have to be paid in terms of goods and services. If a debt has to be paid in terms of goods and services, it should have to be paid to the extent of goods and services that the gold would buy when the loan was originally made. The Rt. Hon. Reginald McKenna, some two years ago, said that America had so much gold that she could extend or restrict credit without reference to the gold movement, and could control world's price levels. When he spoke of America having so much gold, Reginald McKenna knew that it was not America, but the people in America that had the gold, and that it was the people in America, the big powerful financial groups, who could depress price levels in order to increase the value of their fixed money claims.

The Minister for Lands: There are fewer millionaires in America to-day than has been the case for a long time.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: That does not make much difference. There is a huge amount of gold in that country.

Hon. A. McCallum: That adds to your argument.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: It is remarkable that if we are off the gold standard, and have departed from gold, there is still a market for that commodity. It is not a consumable substance. There is still a sale for it. It is going to some countries that require it. Why do they want it? They want it for the purpose of using the power that the gold gives them, and of concentrating it in certain capital cities of the world so that they may direct banks to reduce overdrafts and advances, bring about inflation, and generally depress price levels for the purpose of increasing the value of their fixed money claims. During the war every nation indulged in an inflation of its currency. In doing this they departed from the sound principles of Government. They mixed their monetary and their fiscal policies. In this country the note issue was increased from £9,000,000 to £59,000,000. The inflation was not brought about simply by an increase in the note issue. The Commonwealth Government itself did not do much spending or purchasing with the notes. The notes were paid into the credit of the Government at the Commonwealth Bank. There were, however, very large purchases during that time of the necessary commodities of war. They paid the contractors who supplied them with those necessities by cheques, which were ultimately paid into one of the Associated Banks. The result of the cheques being continually drawn on the Commonwealth Bank on behalf of the Government created an adverse balance between the banks that was always against the Commonwealth Bank; and the notes printed by the Government to establish credit for themselves, so that they could have a great command over goods and services, finally found their way into the vaults of the Associated Banks, and the gold from those banks, which was held by them by various devices, was attracted to the Treasury. Those notes became the legal tender reserves of the banks, and it was upon the legal tender reserves that advances were made, and credits, for which there was so much demand at the time, were derived. The gold backing behind the note issue, which was supposed to stand at 25 per cent. of the note issue, was not only answerable for the note issue but for the whole of the credit which had been created upon these legal tender reserves by the banks. The currency then became depreci-

ated. As was said in the House the other night, the pound note would not be worth more than 10s. or 12s. in Java. The index figures rose from 100 in 1913 to 268, and currency depreciated to a similar extent. The note would not be worth half a sovereign. Our Governments say they can do nothing. They claim that the experts disagree, that there is confusion of thought amongst those who should know, as to what is the most logical solution of a problem of this kind which arises out of currency inflation that should never have occurred. When the note issue is depreciated as a result of huge inflation, is it not a logical solution to reduce the gold content of the sovereign, or the gold basis of that currency, which each of the notes is supposed to represent, until it has a value in it equal to the value of the note? Experts disagree and Governments say they can do nothing. All that these powerful financial money groups have to do is to put up an expert here and there. One is to say we cannot have inflation, another is to say we must have a managed currency, another says we must have a sterling group, and another says we cannot solve the problem. These experts are either paid to differ, or they differ from some other motive. It is not that they do not know this is the solution. It may not be the solution of all our difficulties. It is not a solution of the depression that would ordinarily arise out of a trade cycle, but it is a solution of the difficulties so far as they arise as a result of inflation. Let one go to any of the works of the economists, wherein they write in cold blood upon these matters. In the library the other day I chanced upon a book "The Principles of Economics." I could have taken up any other work on the same subject and obtained the same result. This book was written by F. W. Taussig, a Henry Lee professor of economics at the Harvard University. He is a man of some standing, and one to whom Gordon Wood acknowledges his indebtedness concerning the compilation of the book on borrowing and business in Australia. What Taussig says has already been done in France, where they reduced the gold content of the franc, and brought about a stability in prices and security for enterprise. The result is that gold is flowing to Paris because Paris offers security for it. I heard it said in the Chamber the other night that France had so much gold. France has not an ounce of gold that belongs to it as a nation. It all belongs to people, to some who live in France, and to others who

have sent it there for security. Much of the gold came from Spain, following upon the revolution there, and other parcels were from other quarters. The security exists in France, which is the only country in the world to handle upon a sound basis the monetary problems arising out of inflation.

The Minister for Lands: It has not solved the unemployment problem, which is more acute there than almost anywhere.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: France had not more than 100,000 unemployed at the time when Great Britain had over 2,000,000.

The Minister for Lands: She has got them now.

Mr. F. C. L. SMITH: And Germany had 3,000,000. The difficulties they are in with regard to unemployment, are not due to any internal economy failure or economic plan, but result from the fact that other nations have not adopted the same methods they have, to give security in their country, and thus provide markets for their exports. Taussig says—

A difficult problem sometimes presents itself as to the way in which the return to a specie basis shall take place, whether by resuming the paper at its face value in specie or at its market value. The first course has the bracing effect of recognising a promise to pay as really a promise, and of meeting it to the letter. The second, however, may be more substantially equitable where the paper money has been depreciated for a long time.

Our paper has been depreciated for a long time.

Then the injustice caused between debtors and creditors can no longer be undone. A new generation has come on the scene, and has made its engagements on paper. To shift these into specie engagements with a transition of prices, presumably lower, is to injure present debtors as much as past creditors were injured. Hence, if paper is depreciated, say one-third, and if it has been depreciated to this extent for many years, the most equitable plan is to redeem it in gold at two-thirds its nominal value. This is done most simply by creating a new coin having two-thirds of the gold content of the former coin. The existing paper standard, and the existing range of prices and incomes, are thereby recognised once for all, but are anchored for the future to a firm specie basis.

It is my contention that if Great Britain wanted to do rough justice to creditors and debtors in the community, this is the plan that should be adopted. It is no use talking about a managed currency. There must be a unit which must bear the same ratio to the existing sovereign,

which is only a piece of gold of a certain weight and size, after all. Britain would do justice to debtors and creditors alike by anchoring her prices to a firm specie basis, getting back to gold, which is still the basis of trade and the standard of value, and reducing the gold content of the sovereign so that it would equal the value of the inflated currency on which the country is now operating.

MISS HOLMAN (Forrest) [8.15]: I have listened attentively to the present debate, and also listened carefully to the debate on unemployment last week. I have sought in vain for some recognition of our complaints from members who have spoken from the Government side of the House. Strange to say, practically everyone picked upon what he thought was the support given to the principle of secession by a couple of members on this side. Nothing else seems to matter except that certain members have said something which might be construed into being some kind of support to secession. During the last year or two there have been a couple of slogan cries. In the beginning of this Parliament, when the present Government assumed office, many people expected a great deal from the promises which had been made to the electors. We heard a lot about work for all. Then, "work for all" became a little bit stale after a week or two, when it was evident that work for all was not going to result from the elections. Secession then became the burning question. This, too, has become a little stale during the last few months. We have not read so much about it in the papers, and we do not hear so much said about it. But unemployment is a very burning question with us. That does not seem to be appreciated by those who have spoken on the other side, for they have gone back to the old cry of secession, and have tried to link up the unemployment debate and the Address-in-reply debate here with the secession question. The arguments and complaints which members on the Opposition side of the House have tried to put before the Chamber are worthy of some better note and some better recognition than have been accorded to them. Members opposite who have spoken on the Address-in-reply kept silent indeed when we were speaking about unemployment. Afterwards, many of them got up and complimented the Government on the work they

had done. This was on the one hand, but while they complimented the Government they also trounced Ministers for some of the things done by the Government. There seem to be some members who try to run before a popular cry such as secession; but the popular cry now is, according to Ministerial members who have spoken on the Address-in-reply, overlapping of Federal and State activities. While several members spoke on the subject of overlapping, the newspapers simultaneously published articles on the overlapping of Federal and State functions. The President of the Employers' Federation published an article on the overlapping of Federal and State activities. The Premier said something about this overlapping. Meantime the Federal Government have decided that they will cut out some of the overlapping by establishing a uniform basic wage and uniform conditions for the workers of the whole of Australia. So I was wondering whether this great noise about overlapping of Federal and State functions was intended to pave the way to a greater, let us say, equality of sacrifice on the part of the workers. I was wondering just what would come out of all this talk of overlapping. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) in his speech rambled all over the world; he touched on Egypt, and the Continent, and the United States and Canada. But he did not touch on Malta. I wonder what Malta has done to the hon. member just recently. On this occasion he missed Malta. He did not touch unemployment so far as his electorate is concerned, and he did not deign to answer the arguments advanced by this side. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) did notice our arguments as to unemployment, but contented himself with saying that we had not made a case, and that not one of the members on this side had said sufficient to uphold his right to complain. I desire to inform the member for Williams-Narrogin publicly that if he will inspect a few papers I have here, they will prove to him that the cases put up by me, at any rate, are sound cases, and have absolute foundation.

Mr. Doney: I shall be delighted to see the hon. member when the House rises.

Mr. Fanton: She will need an escort if you go with her.

Miss HOLMAN: In this House I am, as has been said on a previous occasion, no

lady, but simply a member. Another hon. member had the audacity to complain about Ottawa and Mr. Bruce. I am quite with that hon. member. In my opinion, everything he said about Mr. Bruce was justified. If I were able, I would say it in stronger terms than those in which the hon. member said it. As regards Mr. Bruce and the Ottawa conference, we have heard a great deal of what Australia is supposed to be getting from that conference; but we have not yet heard the price we shall have to pay for the conference. We have been told that possibly Mr. Bruce will go to the Old Country to ask for a reduction of interest from the bondholders there; but so far as authentic information about the matter is concerned, I do not think anything reliable has yet been published. I, for one, am exceedingly dubious about the benefits Australia will get from the Ottawa conference. In a recent issue of the "Daily News" we had a little warning, and I feel strongly on the matter because it affects my district most particularly. The warning referred to a possibility of the Ottawa conference putting an embargo on the products of all State-owned and State-managed industries. Let me say that had it not been for Western Australia's State-owned sawmills, there would have been no timber industry at all in this State during the past few years. The State sawmills have continued working, and have kept about 600 employees going. The State sawmills have done their best, and they are still an asset to the State. If we are going to be debarred from selling State products, the State sawmills of Western Australia are going to suffer. I am waiting anxiously to learn particulars of what we shall have to pay for the doubtful gains which we may be going to get from the Ottawa conference. I represent a large part of this State. My electorate is curiously shaped, and very long, reaching from Jarrahdale, which is about 35 miles from here, to the other side of Donnybrook; and it spreads over all kinds of country. It has, I suppose, the most varied interests of any electorate in Western Australia. I can start at Donnybrook, where apples are grown for export, and can go up to Benger, where potatoes are grown, and also tobacco. At Dwellingup, too, tobacco is grown. Timber is produced in other parts of the Forrest electorate. Forrest also has great dairying interests. Therefore I say that the interests

of the electorate are highly varied, while the electorate itself is huge. Brunswick Junction is one of the principal towns in the Forrest electorate. It is a town that is served greatly by irrigation works which are being carried out. In a few years, I expect, production in that part of the State will be so intense that we shall be wondering, far more anxiously than to-day even, where markets are to be found for the results of that intense cultivation. Nestle's Company, as has been mentioned here, have established a fine factory and a new industry near Waroona. I should like to have had that factory at Brunswick Junction. Somehow, it has missed Brunswick Junction, and is at Waroona. I am glad for Waroona, but sorry for Brunswick Junction. Brunswick Junction has two water schemes and an irrigation scheme. There has just been an increase in the water allowance to the people in the town; and there is another water scheme just outside the town, where there are only about a dozen subscribers. They pay a rate of £16 per year. They would not mind this, but sometimes there is no water. In February last, I believe, for about three weeks there was no water at all in that scheme just outside the town. The rate was formerly £12 per annum, but it has been raised to £16. That is one of our complaints. We have a few complaints, as no doubt has every electorate in the State. At Brunswick Junction there is a refreshment room, and the lady who at present leases that refreshment room pays a rent of £9 per week. She has found it impossible to get a reduction. The rent remains at £9 per week, although the train service has been considerably reduced, and everybody knows there is depression all around. The lady who conducts the refreshment room has spent a good deal of money on her plant, but she is refused any reduction of rent. I do not know how true it is, but I am told that some of the metropolitan railway refreshment rooms pay the same rent, £9 per week, or even less. I am just going over these complaints hastily, because I do not wish to take up too much of the time of the House. There is another complaint, with reference to the Act for relief of tenants. As regards this measure, country disabilities are heavy. If a person wants to secure relief under that Act, he or she has to travel to the nearest police court. Now, if a person cannot afford to pay the rent, and has no resources whatever, how is he or she to get the money to travel to, say, the Bunbury court or the Pinjarra court? I men-

tion this matter because two instances of the kind have already occurred, and we have had to find, somehow or other, the money for those people to go and ask for relief. There is another State trading concern in the Forrest electorate—a State hotel. Since they were established, the State hotels have paid a lot into the Treasury. Last year I think the net profit was about £3,000, notwithstanding a very bad year. There is one point I want to make about the State hotel in my electorate. I would like to see some of the money made by that State hotel spent in the district. Unfortunately, most of the supplies for the hotel are brought from Perth. Also unfortunately, it is impossible to obtain a donation or anything of that kind from the State hotel.

The Minister for Lands: You do, now.

MISS HOLMAN: No. Any other hotel-keeper could put his hand in his pocket and say, "Here is a donation for something or other"; but the State hotel has to send all its profits to Perth. I stand for State hotels, but I do want some of the money spent by the people of the district distributed in the district by way of purchase of supplies. At present the State hotel does not purchase locally any supplies except such as cannot possibly be brought cheaply enough from Perth. Speaking generally I wish to mention that there are a couple of things requiring attention by the Government. In looking over the reports laid on the Table of the House I noticed that of the Chief Protector of Aborigines. From that document it seems to me that the coloured girls in this State are not getting sufficient protection. I desire to point out to the Government that it would be a very good thing to afford those girls all the protection that can possibly be secured for them.

The Minister for Lands: I understand that in fact they are getting too much protection, and that that is the trouble.

Miss HOLMAN: I do not mean the same sort of protection as that. May I be permitted to read a paragraph of the Chief Protector's report—

Of the 83 coloured girls sent out to employment by the department during the past three years, no less than 30 have been returned enceinte. The fathers of eight of the children born are, like the mothers, coloured, but in 22 cases they are white men. It is hardly ever possible to recover maintenance in these cases because the men's names are very often not known to the girls, and false names are also

given. Several married men were concerned, which further complicates the position. The law does not sufficiently protect these girls, as I have frequently pointed out.

The law should protect these girls, and the Government should see to it that that protection is accorded the half-caste and coloured girls throughout the State. They have been taken away from their natural environment and, to a certain extent, they have been well educated. Some are indeed clever, and certainly some steps should be taken to provide them with adequate protection. Passing on to other matters, I am sorry that the Government have seen fit to abolish the State Psychological Department. I also desire to protest against the conditions obtaining at the Central Girls' School in James-street. It is over-crowded; the playing grounds are totally inadequate; there are too many girls attending the school. I understand a large block is being cut up at East Perth, and that block would be suitable for a central school. The Education Department owns part of the block and it should not be difficult for the Government to erect a new school there and to retain the other blocks for play-grounds. It is well known to all members that the James-street quarter of the city is not a desirable locality in which young girls should be allowed to walk about. Particularly since the depression, that part of the city has become almost completely a foreign quarter. It is impossible for young girls to walk along the streets there without having remarks addressed to them by foreigners. There are many decent foreigners, but there are many who are not in that category. That fact is recognised by the teachers at the school because any girl who desires to go home for lunch has to get a signed permit from the teacher, and has to return it after lunch. If it is not returned by 1.25 p.m., a search is made, and should the search prove unsuccessful, the girl's parents are notified of her absence. That surely proves conclusively that the locality is not a desirable one for a girls' school. With all the land that is available in the metropolitan area, it should be possible for the Government to provide a central school with decent playing grounds, in a suitable environment. No doubt the school itself is a good one, but the locality is not a fit or proper place where young girls may be educated. Moreover, the young people have to travel to various parts of the metropolitan area on sports

days, and consequently much of the time allocated for sport is taken up in travelling from the school to the grounds where the girls can play tennis, hockey, basket ball or some other game. The Minister for Education should give consideration to this matter, and should study the recommendations of the various educational commissions that have investigated such subjects as those to which I have referred. Particularly should he consider the report of the Haddow Commission, the members of which reported to the British Government. Their recommendations dealt with primary education, and also the education of adolescents. The main recommendations were that modern schools should be built—we should do that, too—and that preparation should be made to raise the school age. In this State we have always complimented ourselves upon the standard of our social work. We are lagging far behind when it comes to consideration of the school leaving age. In South-West Africa, the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, and some of the States of the U.S.A., in Ontario, Nova Scotia, Lettonia, Rumania and Turkey, the school leaving age is 16 years. In one of the United States the age is fixed at 18 years.

The Attorney General: Do you mean that the children are compelled to attend school until they are 18 years of age?

Miss HOLMAN: Yes. In California, children are compelled to remain at school until that age. In the Union of South Africa and Natal, Chili, Uruguay, Honduras, Panama, Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Esthonia, many of the Swiss Cantonnments, and Yugo-Slavia, the leaving age is 15 years, and in many of the English districts it is 15 or 16 years.

The Attorney General: Compulsory?

Miss HOLMAN: Yes. We have this to our credit at least, that there are not many countries where attendance at school is compulsory to an age below that adopted in this State, which is 14 years. We can say that our compulsory school age is equal to that of Equatorial Africa, where it is also 14 years.

Mr. Kenneally: That is throwing bouquets at the Minister.

The Attorney General: But what about my predecessors? This scandalous state of affairs has been going on for quite a long time.

Miss HOLMAN. The Minister for Education in the Labour Government was pre-

paring to raise the school leaving age to 15 years, but he had to vacate office.

The Attorney General: Is that so?

Hon. P. Collier: Did you not find that out?

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. P. Collier: Well, the information is on the files.

The Attorney General: We have been talking about it for many years.

Miss HOLMAN: Now we find it is suggested we are to sacrifice our system of infant education and raise the age at which a child must attend school so as to enable us to make the leaving age higher as well. We will, I presume, replace our valuable system of infant teaching with some hastily conceived scheme by which the school leaving age will be raised.

The Attorney General: Who said that?

Miss HOLMAN: That was the suggestion.

The Attorney General: Where did you hear that?

Miss HOLMAN: It was published in the Press.

The Attorney General: By whom?

Miss HOLMAN: The "West Australian" published it some weeks ago.

The Attorney General: But whose suggestion was it?

Miss HOLMAN: I did not say that the Minister made it.

The Attorney General: You spoke as though the Government had made the suggestion.

Mr. Kenneally: It is just as well to tackle a subject that is raised publicly.

The Attorney General: Exactly, but not convey the suggestion that the Government are responsible.

Miss HOLMAN: In the past we have noticed that what is mooted in the "West Australian" one day, almost certainly becomes the policy of the Government the next day.

Hon. P. Collier: The Government take their orders from the "West Australian."

Miss HOLMAN: If the Government desire to further the interests of our educational system, they should re-open the Training College at Claremont, re-establish the continuation classes, and build the right type of modern schools. We have the necessary standard of teachers and the equipment can be provided. When we do that, then we can raise the school leaving

age to the level adopted in other countries. During the course of the debate this week, I noticed members opposite were prone to pay compliments to the work of our school teachers. I also would like to compliment them on the hard work they have been carrying out, often under distressing conditions. When I listened to the speeches of Government members, I wondered whether there was any connection between their compliments and the fact that a conference of teachers was being held at the same time. I wondered at compliments now, bearing in mind that the Government have refused to rectify the teachers' complaints at other times. We have heard a lot about the Premiers' Plan, and we were told its object was to restore prosperity and secure many other beneficial results. I do not know that it has accomplished anything very creditable so far. Our womenfolk are suffering severely in consequence of the Plan. At Subiaco we have a very fine institution—the King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. There is but the one institution, and, therefore, its advantages cannot be available to all the women who require such attention as is procurable there. Due to the reduction in the maternity allowance through the operations of the Premiers' Plan, the hospitals and women are being penalised. For instance, the time that a woman may go to the hospital and remain there has been reduced by one day to balance the reduction made in the maternity allowance. That is a disgraceful thing, and when the financial emergency legislation is again before the House, Ministers should be made to realise that that sort of thing cannot be tolerated. The Government will feel the effects themselves in consequence of the application of the Premiers' Plan with its so-called equality of sacrifice. They will feel it through the decreased pension payments. The effect will be felt at the Old Men's Home, and the Old Women's Home, but it will be felt more by the old people who will have to live on 15s. a week where formerly they were barely able to subsist on 17s. 6d. a week. Many points have been raised during the course of the speeches we have heard during the debate, and I should like to answer many of them, but that is impossible. One point I will refer to is the statement made by one member sitting on the Government side of the House who said that girls should not be employed to the exclusion

of men who desired work. The remedy for that is to give girls equal pay for equal work. There are many girls who are supporting their families and who have no hope whatever of living on the wages paid to them. The member for Leederville (Mr. Pantou) gave particulars of one home where, because the young girl was earning a small wage, her father and brothers could not secure sustenance. There is a remedy for that. The employers should provide equal pay for equal work, thereby giving the girls an equal chance with the men. If that were done, all would be dealt with according to their merits. The Governor's Speech is not long and I cannot be accused of originality if I say there is nothing much in it. Others have made that statement, but what there is mainly concerns the South-West. There are paragraphs dealing with irrigation, forests, the dairying industry and agriculture, but there is not much regarding legislation to be placed before us during the session. The hospitals in my electorate are a great asset to the community, and the Minister for Health has helped us considerably. We desire still more help. The hospital at Dwellingup serves the surrounding country and about half a dozen mills. The provision of an X-ray plant is essential. There are many accidents, and it would save the cost of the patients being sent all the way to Perth at great expense, and with considerable pain to themselves. We wish to have an X-ray plant at the Dwellingup hospital. It will cost only £375 for a Watson-Caldwell one-unit outfit, and we think the Minister might treat us as well in this case as he has done in some other cases, and give us the outfit. We have done a great deal to help ourselves in regard to the hospitals in the timber districts. We have the Jarrahdale hospital, which at present is being kept going with the help of the Minister. Then we have the Mornington hospital and the Dwellingup hospital, both of them fine institutions. Each succeeding Minister for Health has said that hospitals in the timber districts are conducted well and to the best advantage. We have tried to help ourselves. We have carried out local appeals. The people are very good, but in these times of depression they cannot help as much as they did in times gone by, so we wish for more assistance from the Government. We would have procured the X-ray outfit for Dwellingup

ourselves had the depression not hit us so hard, or if the people had been able to carry out their sweeps and art unions as in the past. Although they are still trying to help themselves as much as possible, they have not been able to get this X-ray plant which they so much desire. There is, I believe, an X-ray plant at Pinjarra, but I think Dwellingup is more entitled to one than is Pinjarra, for at Dwellingup, unfortunately, we have great possibilities of accident. The hospital at Mornington has been hit by the depression, and the Minister has helped us to keep it going.

The Minister for Health: Surely there is no need to mention hospitals in your district.

Miss HOLMAN: I do not say that, but I do say that if the Minister will give us this X-ray plant, we will not ask him for anything else for at least one or two months after.

Hon. P. Collier: You cannot refuse that, Mr. Minister. Have a heart!

Miss HOLMAN: It is interesting to note in the daily Press and to hear from members references to Communists. I suppose I have been brought up in politics, for I have been in politics with my father and my friends ever since I was a little girl.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not a long time.

Miss HOLMAN: It is too long to talk about. I suppose I am a freak in my sex, because everybody knows my age, and I do not care. But it is amusing to look back and remember that some years ago the I.W.W. was the horrible bogey in this country. Then we had red-ragism, and the Socialists, and the socialistic tiger and then the Soviet, and now we have the Communists. There is always somebody or something of the sort to point to. I understand there is now a possibility of the setting up of a reserve police force to deal with these terrible Communists. But I say the people of this State, when unemployed and hungry and suffering unjust conditions, should not be characterised as Communists merely because they kick and refuse to be treated as dogs.

Mr. Marshall: They are not nearly as well entered for as are many dogs in this city.

The Minister for Railways: Are you speaking from experience?

Miss HOLMAN: During the course of the debate we have had some references made to land settlement. Land settlement has already been introduced and carried out

in some of the timber districts. We have around Whittaker's Mill some of the swamp land made available to settlers, several of whom have done very well on their blocks, while others still require assistance. At Dwellingup one family is growing tobacco, and were paid 2s. per lb. for their crop last year. Around the timber mill at Argyle some settlement is established, and there is settlement at Jarrahdale. It is a very good idea to have these small plots made available, for the men at the mills can put in their spare time attending to their little plots. It means a stake in the country for them. But the assistance given to them is not worth very much. For instance, that family growing tobacco at Dwellingup are six in number. They require food, clothes, manure for their cultivation, everything necessary to carry on with, while as a matter of fact they cannot feed themselves on the £1 per week they are receiving. Again at Holyoake a man with a small holding asked for assistance, and the reply he got was that the Agricultural Bank could take no new clients. In another instance a man who had several beehives applied for assistance, and the reply was that because of the income he would get from his bees his request could not be granted. All those people want is to be able to carry on their work. Men and women in the timber districts are not loafers. They want to work and to look after themselves. They have not left their districts, as the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) says his constituents have done. In my electorate are hundreds of sustenance workers. The timber industry has been hit harder than any other industry, but the people in it, instead of coming to town, have stayed in their own district and tried to work out their own salvation. Certainly we have made complaints, and in many instances we have waited a long while for the replies, which quite frequently are not at all satisfactory. I am informed that the Minister for Industry has given a reply to our last deputation, but as I have not seen that reply I cannot comment upon it.

The Minister for Industry: Good strategy on my part.

Miss HOLMAN: No doubt it is. The Minister is well able to put strategy over his deputationists.

The Minister for Industry: But I cannot stand flattery.

Miss HOLMAN: The Minister has not much cause to be afraid, for on my previous experience I have no reason to flatter

him on his replies. The timber industry is in a very parlous condition at present. We have hundreds and hundreds of timber workers who are not able to work. Last night the member for Nelson said that if the royalty were to be removed from the timber, and if the Forests Department were to invite Millars to take the forests and do as they liked with them, Millars would immediately open up all their mills. Of Millars' mills in my electorate, only Mornington is working, and that is only part-staffed. Nanga Brook closed on the 10th February, since when it has worked for only seven weeks. The State mills have been working all the time—not full time, but at least all the time—and I commend them for it. But Millars' mills have not been working. The member for Nelson blamed the royalty for that. But my experience suggests that the royalty has nothing to do with it. The Jarrahdale mill closed at Christmas, 1930. The people there blamed the royalty charged by the Forests Department for the closing of the mill. We held a public meeting at which a number of Millars' officers were present. During the course of the meeting I asked those officers was it on account of the royalty that the mill had been closed. They said it was not. I asked them whether, if we could get the royalty removed, they would re-open the Jarrahdale mill, but they would not say that they would re-open it. So far as I know, the royalty has nothing to do with Millars keeping their mills closed, and I am sure that if the whole of the royalty were removed to-morrow, Millars would not re-open their mills. In the past Millars had the best concessions that could be given them by the department. In that respect I have only to quote the Jarrahdale concession, which Millars had for 50 years at a rental of only £50 per annum. Yet they did not put a stick of timber on that land, did nothing to repair the ravages and make up the money they were sending out of the country to their overseas shareholders. The member for Nelson last night criticised the Forests Department and the reforestation work being done by the department. I should like to know what he has to say about this reproductive work going on in his electorate. I have here a letter which I was not going to use, but in view of the hon. member's speech last night I think I am entitled to do so. The letter

was addressed to me from Pemberton and read—

I am writing to ask if you can do anything in regard to this matter. There are a number of men working on part-time sustenance here, and although our roads are mutely asking to be made and repaired, for some weeks now the men have been engaged working on the new golf links.

The member for Nelson criticised the reforestation work and said the money should be spent on reproductive work—on this, that and the other; one would have thought he was going to remake the world—but in his own district the reproductive work being done is to make new golf links.

Hon. P. Collier: Following the example of Canberra.

Miss HOLMAN: The letter continued—

I saw by the "West" that all unemployed were to be engaged on reproductive work, but I do not think that the golf links can be classed under that heading.

The Minister for Railways: They lose a golf ball now and again and golf balls have to be reproduced.

Hon. P. Collier: And now and again they smash sticks which would have to be reproduced.

Miss HOLMAN: I am not criticising the work. All I wish to say is that when the member for Nelson criticises reforestation work, he should first look in his own backyard. In reforestation work there is scope for the employment of a considerable number of men. The reason why this work presents such scope is that between the establishment of timber export about 1844 and the initiation of a policy for the protection and regeneration of the forests, such a long period elapsed. The first policy in the way of regeneration and protection was not adopted until about 1920, and to make up the leeway became an urgent problem. I do not agree with everything being done by the Forests Department; I do not agree with every part of their policy, but I do say that reforestation is very important work. Although 20 years ago our forests were supposed to be inexhaustible, they are by no means inexhaustible today. Only a very small area of virgin forest is left. We have only about 3,000,000 acres of State forest left, and something must be done to provide for the timber requirements of future generations. The Collier Government did much to ensure a continuity of timber supplies. The present

Government are just carrying on that work. I dare say some of the work is being done very hastily. The Forests Department officials are helping the Government considerably to absorb numbers of the unemployed that the Government are advertising daily as being placed in employment. No doubt the plans, in many instances, are very hastily drawn. The Government have rushed into plans for the employment of the workless as quickly as they rushed into the group settlement mess, and in some respects they are making just as big a mess of it.

Hon. P. Collier: A hard thing to say.

Miss HOLMAN: The output of the timber industry must be regulated. The output depends on the volume of timber in the forest, on the number of young trees growing, on the number of standing trees and on other aspects. The contention that the royalties are crippling the industry is not borne out by facts. Timber is the raw material used in development and maintenance work, and in all countries the development work has stopped and the maintenance work is being barely coped with. The member for Nelson insinuated that we were the only country feeling the pinch, and he ascribed the reason to the heavy royalties being charged by the Forests Department. The timber trade throughout the world is feeling the pinch, just as is every other industry. I should like to read an extract from "The Monthly Summary of the League of Nations" for April, 1932, page 127—

A delegation of the Economic Committee, composed of M. Schuller (Austria), Chairman, M. Dolezal (Poland), and M. Posse (Germany) proceeded, from April 25th to 27th to a consultation of experts on timber trade and industry with a view to determining the cause of the crisis in this branch of economic activity and finding remedies. The International Institute of Agriculture was represented by its President, M. de Michelis, and experts from the following countries took part in the consultation:—Austria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Roumania, Sweden, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, and Yugoslavia.

The experts described the situation as regards the timber trade and industry in their countries. The depression in the timber trade being due to a thorough lack of balance between production and consumption, they expressed their conviction that, in present circumstances, exporting countries should consider agreements in regard to the quantities to be exported.

The experts of the northern countries decided to open up negotiations forthwith. A

general meeting of all the exporting and importing countries concerned has been summoned to meet at Vienna on June 9th. The object of this meeting is to fix distribution and import quotas. The agenda also includes a fresh proposal for the creation of an international timber trade office to regulate trade between exporting and importing countries.

The Chairman of the Economic Committee said that he would draw the Council's attention to the international importance of this action in the present circumstances.

If the member for Nelson needs any further convincing regarding the usefulness of the work of the Forests Department, he should go to the department and inform himself of the work. He would find that good work is being done for future generations. The children of the timber people have as much right to expect continuity in their work as have any other people. It would be a very short-sighted policy to take out the best that remains in our forests and replace nothing. In the past the land was alienated without any sort of inspection. It was held as a sort of speculation until timber reached such a price that it could be profitably sold. I do not agree with all that the Forests Department are doing; I do not agree with the way in which some of the work is being carried out, but in the ranks of the forestry supervisors are many old timber workers who should know what to do, and who surely cannot be accused of just staying there and wasting the money of the country. We hope that when normal times return the demand for timber will be greater, and that when the countries that have been using our flooring and other timber settle down a little, they will begin to use our timber again. The Eastern States were largely buyers of our scantling and small timber. The depression hit them: the building trade has gone down, and we now have no market in the Eastern States. Still, we hope for better times, and when they return we do not want to have to cut out the remainder of our virgin forests and then have to look to other countries for supplies for our own needs. Sometimes when I travel through the farming areas and see a big farm denuded of every stick of timber, I wonder how the farmers are going to fare in future when they want wood. I do not think it is right or proper to clear out the whole of the timber, regardless of future needs. Indiscriminate and uncontrolled cutting has been the curse of the timber industry in the past.

The Forests Department must control the industry. I have spoken in support of land settlement around the timber mills. I have had actual experience that the Forests Department and Lands Department will inquire into the land around mills. We have already had a surveyor from the Lands Department around the Hoffman Mill to determine what land is available. The people say they would like areas of 160 acres on which to undertake dairying. There are no patches of that extent, but there are small patches of five or ten acres where people might be able to carry on while receiving other assistance. The worker in Whittaker's Mill whom I quoted has 25 acres—five acres of good swamp land and 20 acres of hill land. It is supposed to be worth about 17s. 6d. per acre. He will have about three acres cleared for cropping this year and when it is fenced the value of the land will be £5 an acre. But men of that kind cannot get on without assistance. I know the Forests Department have given blocks and allowed people to settle on them, but we cannot expect them to make available blocks carrying good timber that may be required in the near future. I should like to mention that out of all the mills in my electorate only the Mornington, Holyoake, No. 4 State, Waraming and the Railway mills are working. All the rest are closed down, but the people who were formerly employed have not come to Perth.

Hon. A. McCallum: Are all you have named Government mills?

Miss HOLMAN: Holyoake, No. 4 State, Waraming and Railway mill at Dwellingup are Government mills. They are working five days a week, though they were down to four, and part of the time, to three days, but they have been working throughout. What the State can do in that way, private owners should also be able to do. Private owners have not given sufficient consideration to the country that has given them so much money, and I should like to see them compelled by the Government to carry on work of some kind in their mills. I was very pleased indeed to hear the member for Nelson announce that the State Sawmills would not be put up for tender.

Hon. A. McCallum: Where did he get that information?

Miss HOLMAN: I do not know, but he said it with a semblance of authority.

Hon. A. McCallum: He said he got it at a meeting.

Miss HOLMAN: Perhaps at a caucus meeting.

Mr. Kenneally: Surely they do not hold caucus meetings!

The Minister for Railways: Perhaps at a meeting of the party.

Miss HOLMAN: I wish to refer to sleeper cutters and the disabilities under which they have suffered for a long time. In the Arbitration Court recently the president said there had been a case in the local court under the Masters and Servants Act in which sleeper cutters had sued the purchasers of their sleepers for wages. After judgment had been given in the case, there was an appeal under the provisions of the Justices Act to the Supreme Court, but the appeal was not allowed. It is very unjust that sleeper cutters should be unable to sue for their wages, or allowed to come under the Masters and Servants Act. I propose to do my best to remedy this anomaly at some future date. The burning question of unemployment, that was so well ventilated last week, is still a burning question with most of us. I have been interested to hear from Ministers by way of interjection, that the standard of living for our suffering people in this State is higher than it is in any other part of the Commonwealth. I have been reading the report laid on the Table of the House dealing with gaols. I see that the per capita cost of maintaining prisoners in this State, taking all gaols into account, from 1928 to 1929 was £86, from 1929 to 1930 it was £81 1s. 5d., and from 1930 to 1931 it was £67 14s. 7d. Taking only Fremantle and Rottnest from 1928 to 1929 it was £90 19s. 6d., between 1929 and 1930 it was £84 7s. 10d., and between 1930 and 1931 it was £72 10s. 6d. Many of our people have only 7s. a week allowed to them, but it costs 26s. per week to maintain a prisoner in gaol.

Hon. A. McCallum: And he has his rent free.

Miss HOLMAN: Yes, rent, water, rates, etc., free.

Mr. Parker: And attendance.

Miss HOLMAN: At Fremantle and Rottnest the weekly cost of a prisoner is about 27s. 9d. People who have not got into gaol, and are supposed to be good and reputable citizens and good workers, are entitled to

get at least the standard of living enjoyed by a prisoner at Fremantle.

Hon. A. McCallum: We have a high standard down there.

Miss HOLMAN: Yes, but it is quite a different standard when it comes to allowances for persons out of work. Children over 14 are not allowed anything. I know of a man with a large family. He was working at the Nanga Brook mill. I could not get anything for his sons, any work or any sustenance. I was told that as the father was receiving the basic wage, the department could do nothing for his family. Sometimes an allowance is made for one person over the age of 14, but the majority of units of families who are over 14 receive nothing.

Mr. Kenneally: They cease to need anything to eat when they reach the age of 14.

Miss HOLMAN: Either they cease to eat anything, or they have to share the little that is available for other members of the family. Before people can get sustenance they have to be destitute. If they have a few pounds in the bank they have to wait until it is all gone, and then have to go on waiting until the department are satisfied that they are indeed destitute. This delay may run into several weeks, especially in the case of country people. If a person has sons or grown-up daughters he cannot get anything. I know of one family in which there was a grown-up daughter trained as a nurse. She could not get work, but, because certain members of the family were earning a few shillings a week, she was denied any assistance herself. If a single man takes on work he has to go completely off sustenance, and has to wait a long time, when his work is done, before he can get back to it again. It is not a matter of declaring how much he earned while he was at work and then automatically going back to sustenance. He has to be taken right off it, and go through the whole business of getting on to it again. I know there is often only one policeman in a country district, and it takes a long time before applications in town are approved. This is not the fault of the officer. He has to visit outlying centres on horseback and this is all extra work for him. I blame the system. There should be less centralisation. There should be a better way of giving sustenance when it is required rather than that people should be kept waiting about for an indefinite period,

depending on their neighbours who very often are living on sustenance themselves. The Agricultural Bank is giving assistance to the extent of £1 a week, but that is not enough. People who have taken up blocks of land should be encouraged to remain upon them, to grow their own vegetables, and otherwise help themselves. They should not be forced to come to town and go on to sustenance. If the department would give them a sustenance allowance and allow them to work their blocks, many would be satisfied. A pound a week is not enough to keep a family. If there are six in a family they cannot possibly live upon it. We want relief to be applied generally in the South-West. We do not want discrimination between the amounts the road boards are paying. We want the people to have a chance of earning this £1 a week extra so that they may have an opportunity to buy some clothing. At Nannup, Jarrahwood, Jardee and other areas further south, there are many people who have been thrown out of the timber industry, and who stand in need of this £1 a week extra so that they may buy clothing. In many cases we want roads more than we want reforestation. In certain districts for a full family the maximum allowance is 35s. a week, no matter how large the family is. I do not want the roads to be made at the expense of the people receiving relief. I would sooner have people on reforestation work receiving the £1 extra a week. All should have an equal chance of getting it. I hope some of the things we have referred to during this debate will receive consideration at the hands of the Government. We do not want to be unreasonable. The timber workers are not loafers. All they want is work. Most of them have refrained from coming to Perth, but they want a fair share of the work that is available in the country. We want proper treatment for them. The Speech is not satisfactory so far as we are concerned, and does not hold out any hope of solving the unemployment difficulty. I do not know that it makes much reference to the matter. We are not putting forward these suggestions in any spirit of criticism, except where criticism is deserved. We want the Government to take notice of our suggestions and try to remedy the evils that have occurred. If we did not desire them to be remedied we should certainly not refer to them.

MR. PIESSE (Katanning) [9.26]: When one has read the Speech of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, one cannot but come to the conclusion that the document has been robbed of much of its usual interest because of the fact that it deals mostly with the past year's doings, with which most members are already acquainted. When one reviews the past year, and especially its beginning, one cannot say that the Government were expected to delve into the future and promise new beneficial legislation, or the removal of those difficulties in which Western Australia has been involved, particularly during the past two years. Such an expectation would have been utterly unreasonable, in view of the disastrous fall in the prices of our primary products—a position of affairs which no one could have anticipated a few years ago. I have no desire to detain the House at this hour, but it is incumbent upon me to say how much I appreciate what has been accomplished during the past year, bearing in mind that we were evolving from the most serious trouble Western Australia has ever known. The financial portion of the Speech, though it discloses a serious aspect in so large a deficit, must be considered in the light of the unexpected calls made upon the Government by the unemployment difficulty and the unforeseen rise in exchange. Therefore I regard the position as, on the whole, not too bad. It is expected that the deficits which have accumulated during recent years will soon cease. We are promised, and it is expected, that the Government will exercise every possible economy, so that next year's Budget may show a greatly improved position. One cannot overlook the fact that the State's commitments and responsibilities are mounting up. Although, in the circumstances, we do not complain of going behind to a reasonable extent, it must not be forgotten that interest and deficits have accumulated from year to year; nor must it be overlooked that our population is not increasing, and that therefore our per capita indebtedness is mounting up correspondingly. Whether the State can afford this, remains for the future to prove. We as a Parliament are bound to keep the expenditure within reasonable limits. Surely we should profit from this experience of accumulations of debt contracted in good times, and surely we should not again be called upon to face such a financial position as that of to-day, having to provide large interest commitments in vacuo. We have much to thank the Loan

Council for. Indeed, it is a pity that such an institution was not established earlier in our political history. I shall not say much more about the Premiers' Plan, except to express the hope that Western Australia will not suffer as the result of being committed to the Financial Agreement. I trust we may expect to receive reasonable consideration and fair treatment from the other States and from the Federal Government. Unquestionably the Plan is to be given credit for the improvement in our stocks. It is indeed gratifying to know that during the last few weeks such a material increase has occurred in the prices of Australian stocks. This must be regarded as a great relief, and as pointing to a general recovery in other directions. It is also pleasing to know that our Premier has succeeded in arranging for increased assistance, by way of disabilities grant, to the extent of £200,000. In view of all the difficulties that faced us in 1930, difficulties from which we have not yet escaped altogether, it is pleasing to know that our exports have been so largely supplemented by primary production—production under very grave difficulties. It is not to be forgotten that during the year 1930 it was extremely difficult for the primary producer to arrange finance for the putting-in of his crop. Although the last harvest showed some decrease on the record of 53,000,000 bushels for the previous year, our total exports for last year amounted to £18,000,000, showing an excess of £8,000,000 over imports. That fact speaks well for the activities of the primary producers. In view of the special difficulties encountered, such production constitutes a high tribute to the primary producers. Exchange has materially helped them, and I am glad to know that it is to be maintained at 25 per cent. Without this, our primary producers would be receiving about 8d. per bushel less for their wheat, and about 2d. per lb. less for their wool. It is also most pleasing to know that in primary production this State has shown substantial increases in various directions. I may mention the increases in dairying and fruit growing, which helped us materially during the trying period of the past 12 months. Again, it is gratifying to know that the goldmining industry shows considerably increased development. The agriculturists welcome this, because as agriculturists they know what they owe to the goldmining industry, and especially what they owed to it in the early days of agricul-

tural development. We can only hope that with Government assistance and encouragement the goldmining industry will continue to expand, and that it will afford greater employment than it has afforded for many years past. Land development has been slow, and this is greatly to be regretted. A revival must be anticipated if the State is to make headway in the production of wealth from our lands. I am afraid that, during the debate on the Supply Bill, and so far in the debate on the Address-in-reply, a somewhat morbid view has been taken of the future of the agricultural industry. Although we realise that the position is serious, and that many of our primary producers are passing through a most trying period—their assets dwindling and their equities in their properties receding—still there are good grounds for hope. I do not overlook the fact that many primary producers have had to call upon reserves to meet the most trying position they have ever experienced, but in my opinion there is every hope of early improvement. Prices have increased slightly over those of the past year. This fact, in conjunction with the exchange, is encouraging, although the wheat price of to-day is not payable, even with exchange added owing to high costs of production. It is hoped, however, that with every possible economy, and with Government assistance towards reduction of producing costs, the wheat farmers will be able to see daylight. Further, it is hoped that the same opportunity of recovery will be afforded to the wool industry. We know that to-day there is much suffering among those engaged in the wool industry, especially the small growers with few sidelines to supplement their incomes. I am indeed glad that during the past few weeks a special committee appointed by the Federal Government has been going into the whole question of the wool industry. This is an industry which has received but scant consideration from Parliaments in the past. It is to-day the only primary industry of any note that has not received from the Federal Government due consideration by way of bonus. I hope that such consideration will be granted by the Commonwealth as a result of the special committee's investigations of the unfortunate position of the industry. Some assistance should result, so as to put the industry on a sound footing. If it is

necessary to grant a bonus, I see no reason why the wool industry should not receive similar consideration to that received by the wheat industry and so long enjoyed by the sugar industry, quite apart from other industries that are not natural to Australia—for instance, the cotton industry. As regards the farmer's difficulties, great disappointment has been expressed in the farming districts over the delay in calling Parliament together. A little while ago the position was so serious that many of our wheat growers and many of our woolgrowers who were feeling the acuteness of their financial difficulties, had hoped that the Government would call Parliament together at an early date, so that those difficulties could be fully discussed. I am glad to say, however, that the position is now somewhat easier than it was four or six months ago. I can only hope that after the Address-in-reply has been disposed of, and the Government are ready to deal with new legislation, the farmer's special difficulties will not be forgotten. During the past few months I have had an opportunity of investigating the Government assistance granted in other States whose farmers have difficulties similar to those experienced by our agriculturists. I can only hope that further assistance will be given here in the direction of extending the Act relating to farmers' debts, so as to bring it more into line with the measure which has proved so highly beneficial to South Australian farmers. Last session I spoke at some length on that aspect, and I have no desire to re-traverse the same ground. The South Australian farmer encountered difficulties earlier than did our farmer. He experienced a drought extending over five or six years, and following upon the drought came last year's low prices. Thus South Australian farmers were placed in a position almost identical with that in which many Western Australian farmers have found themselves. We are, naturally, grateful for the protection given in the past by our Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act; but in my opinion it will be necessary to extend this legislation in order to meet the special circumstances of the farmer who, having been able to obtain a stay order, has been carried on, under the existing Act, by the Director of Debt Adjustments. That official has carried out his work extremely well, and has afforded great assistance to farmers in

difficulties. But the relief has been of a merely temporary character. It seems to me unfortunate that so many of our farmers, while able to meet current commitments as a result of the passage of the legislation I have referred to, find themselves unable to pay anything off their debts that have accumulated during the past few years. If we are to get the best results from our primary industries, they must be placed on the firmest and surest foundation possible. While the accumulated debts—particularly those incurred in 1930, when the farmers could meet but a fraction of their liabilities—remain unpaid, it will be necessary for the State to find additional money to afford the men on the land further relief, and also to provide means by which the farmers will be able to secure the benefit of alleviating legislation. That was done in South Australia, where last year 4,267 farmers applied to be placed under the provisions of the Farmers' Relief Act. The applications granted totalled 3,459 and the total area concerned in those applications was 1,600,000 acres. The South Australian Act comprises two parts, the first of which makes provision for farmers being financed on certificates by banks, merchants and others. Under that part of the Act, £152,000 was granted. Under Part II. of the Act—under which the financing is done by the Government on lines somewhat similar to those of our own Agricultural Bank—£402,000 was advanced, making a total amount of £554,000 advanced for the assistance of farmers. Repayments under Part I. of the Act represented £134,000 and under Part II., £348,000, or a total of £482,000. It is estimated that there will be a further £25,000 to be received from certificate holders and others. The disposal of proceeds and the sale of crops resulted in a return of £1,104,187, leaving a balance of over £500,000 to be distributed to creditors other than those who provided for putting in and taking off the crops. That sum was available for distribution amongst preferential creditors and for the payment of interest due to banks and others. Those figures are illuminating, and encourage us to impress upon the Government the necessity for extending the operations of the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act or to introduce legislation similar to that of South Australia.

The Minister for Lands: But in Western Australia we did better than was accomplished in South Australia. Our farmers

were more free, our yield was higher, and our total yield was greater.

Mr. PIESSE: I will not deny that good results have been obtained under the operations of the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act in Western Australia, but the Minister must admit that the industry is in a serious position. When we consider that so many of the Agricultural Bank clients have not been able to meet more than current liabilities, the seriousness of the position must be appreciated. It is admitted by every representative of an agricultural district that something must be done soon to rehabilitate the industry and to place farmers in a position to meet not only current liabilities but accumulated debts within a reasonable time.

Mr. Doney: You do not suggest that the position here is not better than in South Australia?

Mr. PIESSE: The figures I have quoted speak for themselves.

Mr. Doney: I am surprised to hear you say that.

Mr. PIESSE: They afford encouragement for the Government to recondition, at the earliest possible opportunity, many of the accounts of Agricultural Bank clients. I do not know the percentage of farmers who are not in a position to make arrangements for meeting outstanding interest liabilities, or to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement with creditors apart from the Agricultural Bank, but I am told it is high. Unless something is done soon, we shall have a repetition of the conditions that obtained under the Industries Assistance Board, conditions that should not have been allowed to continue indefinitely. When times were prosperous, many of the accounts could have been finalised satisfactorily. But there is still outstanding about £1,500,000, respecting debts mostly contracted 10 or 12 years ago. Such a result does not speak well for the business methods of the Agricultural Bank. Those accounts should not have been permitted to remain in such an unsatisfactory state for so long. Early consideration should be given to the position and I hope we shall hear from the Government before the end of the session as to the position of the Agricultural Bank itself. Notwithstanding the splendid work performed by those responsible for the management of the bank, particularly the managing trustee and his deputy, some action should be taken along those lines. Mr. McLarty is held in the highest esteem for the wonderful work he

has carried out. His has been a life's work, carried out in the best interests of the country, of the farmers, and of the bank. Nevertheless, we cannot overlook the fact that the affairs of the bank, especially with regard to outstanding liabilities, is far from satisfactory. Conditions have certainly altered, and greater responsibility has been forced upon Mr. McLarty and his officers than was ever intended. There was the fiasco with regard to the losses on group settlement. There was the soldier settlement scheme and also the 3,500 farms scheme. Each scheme was experimental, and the responsibility for success must largely rest upon Mr. McLarty and his co-trustees, and officers. The recommendations of the Royal Commission regarding the Agricultural Bank should be considered as soon as possible, and if a proper investigation is made I am sure it will be possible to place the institution on a better basis. We know that many of the accounts are causing the bank authorities anxiety, and, in consequence, eviction notices have been served upon some farmers. I do not say the authorities have not been justified in that course, for I have every confidence in the management, but the time has arrived when we should have regard to the special circumstances surrounding agricultural settlement in this State. As the Government saw fit to protect people against the foreclosure by private mortgagees, they should be consistent and not allow the tenants of the Agricultural Bank to be evicted unless for very good reason. I hope that even in the worst cases, forced evictions will not be necessary. We have to take action nowadays that we would not have dreamed of formerly, but in view of special happenings I trust that we shall not get down to the position when it will be said that the bank, with the knowledge of the Government, had put people off their holdings. I trust the Premier will assure us that the Government will make a full inquiry into each case before evictions are permitted. Otherwise we may have to move in this House to secure the necessary investigation. Much has been properly said regarding the appalling position respecting unemployment. Every member must regret the unfortunate situation, and I am sure all recognise the special difficulties confronting the Government in finding work or sustenance for the unemployed.

We remember what came about in 1930. Before we knew where we were, the people were thrown out of employment and many public servants were retrenched, including hundreds from the Railway Department. In private employment everybody did all that was possible to meet the situation. We have occasion to be proud of the efforts put forward by the business people in every industry to keep employment going, but in the altered conditions it was impossible to keep everybody employed. Members on both sides of the House must realise the special difficulties. I am sure no member of Parliament has gone one day without having that trouble on his mind and without putting forward his best endeavours to discover a way in which to help the Government improve the position. I was very sorry to hear so much criticism of the department dealing with unemployment, for nobody knows better than do members of Parliament the special difficulties confronting those who are endeavouring to find employment for the thousands out of work. I am sorry that trouble should have arisen in regard to the clearing work near Mount Barker. It was unfortunate that in the early stages of that work, which we had all regarded as reproductive work, unforeseen difficulties should have cropped up. It seems that all the difficulties that could be found were put forward by those who were not particularly anxious for work, and who seemed to have no incentive to help the Government in their unfortunate position. I can only hope the Government will give close consideration to sending into the district only those men who are suitable for that class of work. I will admit that, possibly, sufficient precaution was not taken in attending to the details of receiving the men upon arrival, and providing for their comfort in the extremely wet weather that prevailed. To have to erect wet tents on wet ground in very wet weather no doubt would dampen the ardour of the men when they got there. Undoubtedly there were difficulties put in the way of the men starting work, and I can only hope those difficulties will be guarded against in future and that we shall not have a repetition of what happened at Mount Barker during last week. It is idle for the men at present on sustenance work to look for anything like full wages. It is a question of funds, and if the money will not go far enough to employ the men full time, the Government can only do the

next best thing. I was informed to-day that of the 150 men on the work at present, all except six or seven had been able to make in two days their pay of 25s. 3d. Only very few of them have failed to do so. No officer in charge of Government work would expect men to work for nothing. It was absurd that the men should have left the job without any effort to prove what they could do, even if they succeeded in making only a few shillings per day for a start. I am sure there was no intention on the part of those in charge of the men that those men should work and not be able to make a reasonable wage. I hope there will not be any further trouble there, and that the Government will be fully successful in the work they have embarked upon. The Government would be well advised to appoint a board of competent persons with a thorough knowledge of the value of clearing. The Government's activities in the direction of clearing new lands are likely to be extended, for it seems to me to be the only reproductive work that can be carried out by sustenance workers. Notwithstanding the good work put in by the unemployment board, I think that board should be assisted by some local persons who would be competent to judge of the value of the work being carried out. I will not detain the House any longer, for I shall have an opportunity later to deal with other matters I had intended to touch upon to-night. I hope the result of the deliberations of this House during the present session will help forward the prosperity of every person in the State. I trust that with the prospect of a good harvest and of improved prices for our primary products in the world's markets, the Government, at the end of the present financial year, will be able to put forward a much more satisfactory Budget, and that our people will be happier and more contented, and that the State will get back to a full measure of prosperity.

MR. BARNARD (Sussex) [10.8]: In the first place I should like to congratulate the Government on the way in which they have carried out the work of the country during their term of office.

Mr. Sleeman: You are easily pleased.

Mr. BARNARD: It is just as well, perhaps. I think good work has been done. Quite a lot has been said about unemployment, and certainly we all deplore the extent to which unemployment has grown in this State. No member on the Opposition side

could be more sympathetic with the unemployed than are members on this side, and certainly no Government would wish to see an army of unemployed in the State. Although during this debate members of the Opposition have shown a great deal of sympathy with the unemployed, they have uttered no words of sympathy for the men on the land who are not working part-time, but are working full-time and getting practically nothing for their labours.

Hon. P. Collier: I mentioned that.

Mr. BARNARD: Those people are worse off than are the men who are working part-time and are being paid for it.

Hon. P. Collier: I dealt very fully with that.

Mr. BARNARD: A majority of the speakers opposite have referred only to the unemployed, particularly in the metropolitan area. I think the Government have done remarkably well to keep the unemployed as they have done. That is manifested by the way in which the unemployed themselves have behaved in the country.

Mr. Kenneally: Sixty miles away and on 25s. 2d. a week!

Mr. Coverley: They are put in the bush, where they cannot demonstrate.

Mr. BARNARD: I dare say that between now and March next there will be a few more demonstrations, but they are only to be expected.

Mr. Panton: Why March next?

Hon. P. Collier: That will be the swan song of the member for Sussex.

Mr. BARNARD: It seems to me that many members give their swan songs on the Address-in-reply immediately preceding a general election.

Mr. Panton: Why bring that up?

Mr. BARNARD: The hon. member brought it up last night. Most of the speeches are made for "Hansard" and not for the good of the country generally.

Mr. Coverley: Then why go on?

Hon. P. Collier: You had better sit down. Nobody reads "Hansard."

Mr. BARNARD: I have heard members opposite say they would speak even if there was no one but "Hansard" to hear them, because their speeches would be recorded. Members opposite are no respecters of costs when it comes to printing their speeches. One matter to which I wish to refer is the Royal Commission on dairy farming in the

South-West, which I was instrumental in getting appointed.

Hon. P. Collier: Quite accidentally. You remember how angry the Premier was when he came into the House and found that the motion had been carried.

Mr. BARNARD: The leader of the Opposition, when speaking the other evening, asked the Premier what he was going to do about the report of the Royal Commission. I hope the Government will take more notice of it than the Collier Government took of a report supplied by a Royal Commission appointed by them.

The Minister for Works: There was a long debate on it.

Mr. BARNARD: Members of the previous commission say that if the Government had taken notice of their recommendations, millions of pounds would have been saved to the country.

Hon. P. Collier: Who said that?

Mr. BARNARD: Members of the commission.

Hon. P. Collier: But who?

Mr. BARNARD: I agree with them.

Hon. P. Collier: Tell us who they were.

Mr. BARNARD: The hon. member appointed them.

Hon. P. Collier: But who said that?

Mr. BARNARD: Members of the commission.

Hon. P. Collier: Who were the members of the commission?

Mr. BARNARD: The hon. member knows them. No notice was taken of their report, but the Government went on spending and wasting millions of pounds. There is no denying that fact. Later on a board were appointed to re-value the properties, and write down the valuations.

Hon. P. Collier: You were wise after the event.

Mr. BARNARD: Everyone was wise then because the money had been wasted. Everyone in my part of the country could see that the money was being wasted.

Hon. P. Collier: Did you say so in the House?

Mr. BARNARD: Yes. The values were written down and it has been shown many times that much money was wasted. However, that is past. The latest Royal Commission was charged to inquire what could be done to put the group settlers on a proper basis. The report has not been dis-

cussed to any extent during this debate. Dissatisfaction has been created by the report in different areas visited by the commission. I have a statement covering 18 or 20 pages of criticism from Pemberton. It contains not one word in favour of anything the commission recommended. Numbers of settlers in my district say that if the recommendations were given effect to, they would be able to carry on satisfactorily. Others again differ. Consequently it is hard to determine who are right. However, the settlers are in a very difficult position and must be helped. Men are being evicted from their holdings because they are unable to pay their interest. It is impossible at present for quite a number of settlers to pay interest on the valuations placed on their properties. When the valuations were made, butter fat was bringing 1s. 6d. or 1s. 8d. per lb. and pigs were worth from 6d. to 8d. per lb. To-day butter fat is bringing only about 1s., sometimes 11d., and pigs are worth practically nothing. When the valuations were made it was considered that if a man had 15 cows he would be able to pay his interest, but not on fewer than 15 cows. To-day a man with 10 or 12 cows is expected to pay his interest and maintain his wife and family. That is quite impossible. I am satisfied that if the prices ruling a few years ago were obtainable to-day, practically 50 per cent. of the settlers would be able to pay quite a lot, if not the whole of their interest. Low prices are ruining the settlers. I hope the Agricultural Bank authorities will not be too free in issuing their eviction notices, but will give the settlers a certain amount of consideration. It has been admitted that some of the settlers will never make farmers; it is said that other employment should be found for them. Unfortunately other employment is not to be found at present.

Mr. Panton: What is the use of evicting them; they will only have to be put on sustenance?

Mr. BARNARD: I was surprised at the statement of the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) that two of the commissioners, Messrs. Forrest and Brockman, had had no experience of dairying. I do not know much about Mr. Forrest's knowledge of dairying, but I know that he has spent most of his life on the land and has earned his living from the land.

Mr. Withers: From sheep.

Mr. BARNARD: But I know that Mr. Brockman has been engaged in dairying for the whole of his life and that he is at present milking over 100 cows. If he does not know anything about dairying, I am sure the member for Bunbury cannot teach him. On the other hand, Mr. Brockman could give him some useful advice. I hope we shall have an opportunity later of debating this matter, and that some good will come out of it. When a settler receives an eviction notice, he should be told why he is being evicted. If there are reasons other than the non-payment of interest, he should be given an opportunity to state his side of the question before the local manager of the bank, or the chief inspector who has recently been appointed.

Mr. Wansbrough: He knows a lot about it!

Mr. BARNARD: The Royal Commission recommended that a commissioner should be appointed. The bank has appointed a chief inspector, and I take it he will fill that position.

Hon. P. Collier: Who appointed him?

Mr. BARNARD: I do not know.

Hon. P. Collier: Was it the bank?

Mr. BARNARD: Perhaps it was.

Hon. P. Collier: I think you are ill-informed.

Mr. BARNARD: I have not been informed at all.

Hon. P. Collier: The Government have appointed him, and not the bank officials.

Mr. BARNARD: In the early days of group settlement the principal item was the clearing of the land. To-day the settlers have big areas put down in pasture, but are unable to top-dress those areas, or to carry the number of stock they should be carrying. Unless they receive further assistance, either in the matter of top-dressing, or in other respects, they cannot carry sufficient cattle to enable them to pay their interest bills. Many people in such circumstances will leave their holdings. The member for Nelson stated that in a year or two none of the settlers would be left. I am satisfied that many will remain and do well, long after the member for Nelson and I cease to be here. We have to think of the present day. If something is not done quickly and if consideration is not given to the settlers, they are going to experience a worse time than some of the unemployed in Perth. There is one way in which the Government could spend money

with advantage. I refer to Cave House which was partly demolished by fire. That building should be re-erected, when it would produce revenue for the Government and be the means of employing a certain amount of labour.

Mr. Sleeman: Why do not the Government use the insurance money?

Hon. P. Collier: As soon as they finish Yanehep that work will be done.

Mr. BARNARD: Quite a lot of money has been spent there, while Cave House has been neglected. I hope if the Government do decide to rebuild that establishment they will cut out the clause which compels a contractor to employ sustenance labourers. Although it is desirable that work should be given to sustenance people, the clause operates very harshly in other directions. A contractor is not allowed to employ his own son, although the lad may be out of work. In my district there is a man who has a son, and a nephew he has kept from boyhood. Because of this clause he is not allowed to employ either of those young fellows on the small contract he has secured.

Mr. Kenneally: There will be room for you over here yet.

Mr. BARNARD: I do not think the hon. member would care to have me. A lot has been said by two members about the timber industry. I am sorry the member for Nelson is not here to-night, for we might have had a little cross fire and have had things livened up. A certain amount of reforestation is going on in my electorate. Timber is being cut down on some good land, which should be used for something besides the growing of pines. I agree that some timber should be protected, but the use of that commodity seems to be going out. Most of the modern buildings are being erected without timber, except when it is used for scaffold poles.

Miss Holman: Do you ever see the floors of buildings?

Mr. BARNARD: Some of them are of cement.

Miss Holman: Have you seen the parquet floors, say, of the Economic, and have you seen any furniture in the shops?

Mr. BARNARD: I am referring to modern buildings. Sometimes in the heart of a forest one will see cement structures instead of wooden ones. Where timber is plentiful it should be used for all bridges, culverts and drains. Reference has been made to

schools. In my district, which is a wet one, many of the school buildings do not include shelter sheds. Between 30 and 40 children at lunch time or at play time have no place to go for shelter. Something should be done to make good that deficiency. Local residents have offered to build shelters if they are supplied with the timber, but owing to lack of funds apparently even that cannot be done. No doubt money is short, and we have to put up with many disabilities. I hope that later on money will be available for these necessary works. I trust that effect will be given to the report of the Royal Commission on group settlement, and that the same consideration will be given to those who are on the land as is extended to the unemployed. Reference has been made to the importance of the goldmining industry to Western Australia, to the number of persons employed in it, and to the need for developing it in every possible way. I know that at one time gold practically saved Western Australia, and helped to save other portions of the Commonwealth. Now it is to receive a certain amount of consideration. I think we should not neglect what will eventually prove to be absolutely the backbone of Western Australia, and that is the farming industry.

On motion by Mr. Coverley, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.31 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 1st September, 1932.

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

QUESTION—HARBOURS, DREDGING.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Works: 1. What was the average annual cost over the past ten financial years of