

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 9th November, 1944.

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

STANDING ORDERS.

Report of Committee.

Mr. MARSHALL brought up the report of the Standing Orders Committee.

Ordered: That the report be received and printed, and its consideration made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

QUESTIONS (2).

EDUCATION.

As to Statement by Professor Wood.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Does he agree with the contention of Professor G. L. Wood—as reported in the Press—that Australian communities generally are apathetic towards education; that teachers are not given the necessary training or equipment, and that education was bound to fail and was failing in every Australian State?

(2) How does the department interpret the statement that “large classes and low standards” (in education presumably) “in our schools were the natural result of the policy of mass production which the community has adopted towards its schools?”

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. Measures are being taken to increase the training period of teachers.

(2) We do not admit the low standard. In peace years the size of classes was being progressively reduced. Staff difficulties and building restrictions in war-time have interrupted this trend.

THIRD PARTY INSURANCE.

As to Policies Issued.

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Works:

What is the number of policies for third party insurance taken out with (a) State Insurance Office, (b) other insurance offices?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) State Insurance Office, 9,900; (b) other insurance offices, 45,179. (Some policies embrace more than one vehicle owned by the same owner and therefore precise information as to the actual number of policies is not available.)

BILL—MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FUND ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—COLLIE RECREATION AND PARK LANDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS [4.35] in moving the second reading said: The Collie Recreation and Park Lands Act of 1931 created a board for the Collie recreation and park lands, and under Section 7 certain lands described in the Schedule were vested in the board for an estate in fee simple in trust for park and recreation. It was arranged that, on application in writing by the board, the Registrar of Titles would issue a title to the board for the land vested in it. Subsequently, in 1941, the Act was amended by excising certain lands from a forestry reserve and taking from the original land a part for public purposes. Before the title was issued, the attention of the Department of Lands was drawn to the fact that there was an encroachment of certain mining leases in that area. There was not the usual description in the measure in connection with lands which might be the subject of mining leases as applying to coal mining and the depth was not restricted.

Ordinarily, as members are aware, there is a restriction on the use of land to a prescribed depth. In coal-mining areas such as Collie, the depth is 40 feet. Prior to the title being issued, it was found that this description had not been given, and the measure, as introduced in 1931 and amended in 1941, gave the board the right to a clear title without that limitation. When this

was discovered prior to the issue of the title, the board was communicated with and the Mines Department was consulted. Unless this Bill be passed, difficulties might be created in connection with coal-mining leases in that area so far as the Mines Department is concerned. This Bill has been introduced to enable a title for the land vested in the board for the purpose of park lands and recreation to be limited to a depth of 40 feet. The Bill is very simple and contains nothing contentious. The board has been notified of the intention to introduce the Bill, and has raised no objection. The measure is necessary to enable the title to be issued with the prescribed limitation so that anything done in a mining lease below a depth of 40 feet will not be affected. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Thorn, debate adjourned.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE [4.39]:
I move:—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands): I do not usually speak on the third reading of a measure, and in all probability I should not have spoken on the third reading of this Bill but for the comments made by the Minister in his closing speech on the second reading. He referred to a matter that had been mentioned by me in reference to Queensland. My reference to Queensland was the same as I made to Western Australia, and based on the same ground, namely, that when compared, in corresponding relative years, the Senate elections showed a very different result from that of the position in the State Parliament. I pointed out that a Senate election is held on the manhood franchise, and that therefore it is only reasonable to assume that when any Government in power, whether Labour or otherwise, in a State has a majority in the sense of having a majority of the electors of the State behind it, one should find that reflected in the Commonwealth election returns.

The Premier: The issues are quite different.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is always a party vote. The issue was clearly explained by the Minister for Mines the other evening. He stands as Mr. Panton, and he gets in.

The Minister for Mines: I did not say that!

Hon. N. KEENAN: Of course the fact that the Government is in power is only *prima facie* evidence of its having a majority of the electors behind it; in many instances it has not. Those are cases which are found where there are large discrepancies between the electorates, as in Western Australia and in Queensland. Then, if any party is fortunate enough or clever enough to have those small electorates returning supporters of their party, it will be in power on the floor of the House, though not in power with the majority of the electors behind it. Since we are discussing Queensland, and our Minister for Justice grovels at the feet of Queensland and worships it as a place the most righteous in the world, let me remind him that the Government of Queensland repealed the Act which allowed preferential voting, and for only one purpose. There were numerous parties in Queensland opposing Labour, and it is more useful not to have preferential voting when one knows that one will have all the votes of one's party given to one's candidates whereas the other votes will be split among the various candidates. I have had no opportunity to correct the Queensland figures quoted by the Minister for Justice.

The Minister for Justice: They were correct. They do not need correcting.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is absurd to take all these methods as being democratic methods when they exist by all manner of contrivances and tricks, and are not fair and square support from the electors. The first matter I want to comment on is the absurd idea, still persevered in, of comparing our Legislative Council with the House of Lords. There is no comparison whatever. A member of the House of Lords represents himself—represents one; that is the whole number he represents. With all their faults, the members of the Upper House here represent 80,000 electors. What is the use of persevering, then, with an absurd comparison which has no basis in fact? The only explanation is that the Minister could find no other comparison in

the whole British Empire except this one, which does not for one moment lie.

I cannot but come to the conclusion that the Bill is designed deliberately to provoke a quarrel with another place. That is obvious, and that conclusion is forced on me by the fact that one particular clause of the Bill, if it remains as it is today, as now printed, will enable this House to abolish another place without the consent of the other place, and without—what is far more important—the consent of the electors. It will be unnecessary for the electors to express any opinion whatever. In those circumstances is it possible to put any other complexion on the Bill than that it is a deliberate attempt to provoke a quarrel?

Member: Another place provides a good many quarrels the other way.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I will quote an instance from history. I am reminded of the great instance in 1870, when Bismarck wanted to get the then independent kingdoms in Germany—Bavaria, Saxony and Wurtemberg—and other independent principalities in Germany to join Prussia in an attack on France. What did Bismarck do? Germany had no quarrel with France, and had no wish to fight France. But he was anxious that Germany should fight France. He induced the French Ambassador to write him a letter which he assured the Ambassador would be effective, making an absurd demand on the Germans in connection with the affair of the "Spanish Succession" of the French Bourbons to the throne of Spain as against the German Bourbons. By means of using that letter he got the German independent States into such a fury that they went to war with France, and thus all the subsequent troubles of the world were produced. The Germans never wanted to go to war, any more than our Upper House wants to quarrel with this Chamber. Now the members of another place are having something put before them to mislead them, to provoke them into a quarrel. That is the attitude of the Minister for Justice. He is trying to provoke the Upper House to quarrel with this Assembly, whilst neither House has any desire to quarrel with the other.

The Minister for Justice: Is not that characteristic of the hon. member himself?

Hon. N. KEENAN: That is a piece of pure impudence. I look upon this Bill with

contempt; and if it passes that will add to my contempt.

MR. WATTS (Katanning): In the early debates on this Bill, except for an amendment which I moved in Committee, I did not take the opportunity to say anything on it; but I cannot let the third reading pass without making an observation or two. First, I would like to say that I am most interested in the passage of legislation which will bring to an end the existing unsatisfactory methods of resolving deadlocks or disagreements, whichever word members like to use, between the two Houses. That is what this Bill purports to do, but it does it in a way which to me does not seem to be reasonable. My point of view in regard to the removal of deadlocks is that there should be a joint conference of both Houses, and if both Houses decided to pass the Bill naturally the Government would accept that decision if it were a Government measure; or, alternatively, if the joint meeting decided to reject the measure, the Government would then be at liberty to accept or reject that decision as it thought fit in accordance with its policy, and if necessary it could call for an election to determine the views of the electors.

That brings to my mind a weakness which seems to exist in this State, and I should be glad if consideration could be given to proposals for its betterment. That weakness is this: There is no means of enforcing a dissolution of both Houses in order that the views of their respective electors on a particular subject may be ascertained. In practically all constitutions of the British Commonwealth of Nations we find some such provision. It is to be found, for example, with certain limitations which it is desirable to impose, in the Australian Constitution in regard to disagreements between the Senate and the House of Representatives. It is to be found in other parts of the British Empire in various forms, but no such proposal is to be found in the Bill. Had the measure attempted to bring into being proposals of the two kinds that I have mentioned, which, of course, would have to be in combination, I should be prepared to accept it as a reasonable measure. But it does nothing of the kind; it simply appears to implement the Minister's belief, which I presume—although he must be regarded as most illogical—he holds sincerely, that there is some relationship between the House of Lords and

the Legislative Council; and because there is some such relationship in the Minister's opinion he produces a Bill which, by and large, is on all-fours with the Parliament Act of England.

The Minister for Justice: You do not want that Act.

Mr. WATTS: I have no objection to it in Great Britain. I have already told the Minister more than once that what is good for some other place may be no good for Western Australia. I have dealt with that aspect on many occasions. The Parliament Act of England may be, and probably is, excellent for Great Britain for the very good reason mentioned by the member for Nedlands, that each member of the House of Lords speaks for nobody but himself; and, as he speaks for nobody but himself, he owes no responsibility to anybody but himself.

The Minister for Justice: Before 1911 he could hold up legislation that came from the House of Commons.

Mr. WATTS: Precisely; and, because he spoke for no one else but himself, he was not justified in holding up legislation. It was for that reason that the Parliament Act of England was passed. But, as the member for Nedlands has explained, there are at least 80,000 persons to whom collectively the members of the Legislative Council are obligated, namely, the 80,000 electors of that House. I have no hesitation in saying that if the persons qualified by the present law to vote for the Legislative Council were all enrolled, the number to which the Legislative Council, as a whole, would be responsible would be much increased. In fact, that has been borne out by speeches made in another place and by facts, when there has been some determined and co-ordinated attempt in a given province to put on the roll persons who are entitled to be on it as against the persons who are on it on a non-compulsory enrolment and a non-compulsory franchise. Therefore, the member for Nedlands is conservative in saying that the Legislative Council speaks for at least 80,000 electors, whereas the House of Lords speaks for the 500 or 700 members of it, and for no more persons than those. There is, therefore, a very great difference between the House of Lords and our Legislative Assembly, and the Minister cannot get away from it.

The Minister for Justice: It is a one-Parliament House.

Mr. WATTS: What I wish to see achieved is a means to end, in a reasonable manner, deadlocks and disagreements which can take place between these two Houses, in the same manner as elsewhere, in a manner similar to that set out in the Commonwealth Constitution, under which the electors can determine such matters as are in issue on those occasions. But there is no such provision in this Bill which will in any way resolve that position. We shall have our conferences and our disagreements and Bills will be lost. We shall have the same disagreement the following session and the Bill will probably be lost again; and probably the same disagreement the following session, when the Bill will become an Act, whether this side or the other House likes it or not. That is not the way to resolve the question, which is obviously of some magnitude in the circumstances. It is only playing with the business. As the member for Nedlands said, in effect, it is inviting, with malice aforethought, the Legislative Council to reject this measure.

I am of the opinion that the Legislative Council can, and should, amend this measure to make it one which will substantially alter the relationship between the two Houses, and which will enable the deadlocks and disagreements to be settled in a reasonable manner in accordance with some of the best constitutions of the British Commonwealth of Nations; which will make it practicable for us to say that in the end the will of the electors—and I mean all the electors—of Western Australia will be considered after all other avenues have been explored of ending disagreements between the Houses, short of these conferences which, in my mind, I very much dislike, as I regard them as unprofitable and unsatisfactory in every way. That is what I hope the Legislative Council will do to this measure; but, in order that I might express my disapproval of the proposals put forward as against the ones which I consider to be requisite and which ought to have been put forward—and if they were put forward they would receive the support of those associated with me on these benches—I am obliged to say that this Bill, in my view, is most unsatisfactory.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth): This is a Bill of major importance. Any measure which affects the Government of a country is of major importance to the people. In

the case of the Commonwealth Constitution, that cannot be varied except by a vote of the people. In the case of our own Constitution, that can be varied, as we know, by a majority vote of both Houses of the State Parliament. When this Bill was brought in, my personal opinion was that it should be approached in a constructive way. There have been singularly few differences between the two Houses in this State; and, when there have been differences, they have been resolved in a way which has been to the credit of both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. They have been resolved through the medium of conferences, and that has always appeared to me to be an unsatisfactory and undemocratic way of reaching a solution of the differences between the two Chambers. So I was quite prepared to see the second reading of this Bill go through and was quite prepared to consent to a measure that would provide that after a Bill had been passed a certain number of times in this Chamber it should, with adequate safeguards, become law even though not accepted by the Legislative Council.

But it appears to me that, when we make such a fundamental alteration of law—as to which I quite agree with the member for Nedlands that the example of Great Britain is not a proper comparison—when we make such a fundamental change and seek to arrange that the will of one Chamber shall be the law of the land, then we have to accompany that by proper provision to ensure that the will of the people is not being misrepresented. As has been pointed out, the House of Lords is not an elective body. Whether we like the franchise for the Legislative Council or not, the Council is an elective body. It is elected by a section of the people, at all events, and it stands in a position which is not comparable with that of that House of Lords. The House of Lords is a body that is almost unique; it is the product of history and events and not a body which has been built in a structure that has been debated and represents the expressed agreement either of the people at large or of some constitutional body.

The Minister for Justice: Would you say that the system of Parliament in England is uni-cameral?

Mr. McDONALD: I would say it is bi-cameral. Any Parliament that consists of

two Chambers, the approbation of both of which is normally necessary for the passing of legislation, would be bi-cameral.

The Minister for Justice: But you say that the House of Lords does not represent the people.

Mr. McDONALD: I say that the House of Lords is not an effective body. Even on a restricted franchise the Legislative Council is an elective body, each member of which is chosen by a section of the people at a periodical election—by a section of the people who, whatever might be suggested, are respectable people.

The Minister for Justice: We are not disputing that.

Mr. McDONALD: One would almost think that householders or people who have £50 worth of land are somehow usurping something they are not entitled to. Whether we agree with the franchise or not, the electors of the Legislative Council are creditable citizens of the State.

The Minister for Works: They are not more respectable than the balance of the people who do not get a vote.

Mr. McDONALD: I am not drawing comparisons with regard to respectability. I am only saying that if we have an elective body like the Legislative Council, which is elected by creditable citizens, we must regard that Chamber as something different from the House of Lords, which is elected by nobody. I make that observation because here we are asked to pass a Bill which, as has been pointed out, would enable this Chamber, by three successive measures, to abolish the second elective Chamber of this Parliament. The amendment proposed by the Leader of the Opposition to eliminate that power was rejected in this House. I have said on previous occasions that I am quite prepared, subject to safeguards relating to constitutional alterations under this measure, to see the will of this Chamber supreme in the case of a difference, with this reservation only: That, before the third Bill is sent up, the people should have an opportunity of being consulted through a general election of the Legislative Assembly.

That is a very reasonable reservation in favour of some rights of the people at large, some opportunity for them to express themselves; but that has not been accepted. If it had been, I would support

this Bill as a measure which I think would be reasonably satisfactory to meet the matter of differences between the two Houses. We are not looking at this Government in particular. This Bill is impersonal; it may be the law for many years; it may apply with different Governments in power and, in the case of any Government, it is very likely to apply to a measure the merits of which could reasonably be regarded as debatable and regarding which there may be acute differences among the people themselves—the electors of the State. Both the safeguards that I consider to be fundamental in a Bill of this kind have been rejected: The first, that it should not be used to bring about further constitutional alterations; and the second, that the power should not operate until the people have had a chance to decide the issue through a general election of the Assembly. Had those safeguards been included I would have been satisfied to vote for the Bill.

Mr. J. Hegney: In every case of a difference between the two Houses the matter would have to be put before the people?

Mr. McDONALD: No. I say that before this particular power is exercised, an opportunity should be given to the people to have their say through the medium of a general election of the Assembly. As they are to be excluded—or could be excluded—under this Bill, I do not agree with it and am not prepared to support a measure that fails to take into account two fundamental guarantees that I think we should afford the people at large.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	26
Noes	15

Majority for 11

AYES.

Mr. Collier	Mr. Needham
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Cross	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Fox	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Graham	Mr. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Styants
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Telfer
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Triat
Mr. Holman	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Wise
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Owen
Mr. Doney	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Hill	Mr. Seward
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Watts
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Willmott
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Thorn
Mr. North	

(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Mann
Mr. Raphael	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Newton	Mr. Abbott

Mr. SPEAKER: I declare the question carried with the concurrence of an absolute majority of the whole number of members of the House.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST [5.12] in moving the second reading said: This is a very short Bill.

Mr. Watts: With a long history.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: It is somewhat different from the usual annual amending Bill. This consists of one principle only, namely, the abolition of Section 21, which entails the annual introduction of a measure to continue the Lotteries (Control) Act. Members will recall that the Lotteries (Control) Bill was originally introduced because there was so much controversy over the lotteries run by daily and weekly newspapers. It was considered necessary to introduce legislation to control the lotteries run in this State. There was at that time some agitation against the introduction of such legislation, by a certain section of the people who usually object to gambling of any description. But this Parliament thought fit, in face of that controversy, to pass a Bill to control lotteries, and I think that our Lotteries Commission has been well justified. The strict Government supervision and control by the State audit staff have given the public a great deal of confidence in the lotteries conducted by the Lotteries Commission as compared with those that were run by private concerns. The charitable institutions of this State have benefited considerably as a result of that legislation passed in 1932. We must all agree that those charitable institutions would have suffered financially had it not been for the introduction of that measure.

Ample justification can be given for the continuance of this legislation.

It will also be agreed that, by the introduction of the Lotteries (Control) Bill, much of the money that was at that time leaving Western Australia for other States—for Tattersall's tickets—was retained in this State. It is on record that our charitable organisations have, during the last 11 years, been assisted to the extent of £943,638 and, in addition, a good deal of money has left this State in connection with the lottery that I have referred to. From that point of view it can be argued that our State lottery should be continued. During the past 11 years there has been little or no criticism of the conduct of the Western Australian Lotteries Commission. It has paid big dividends that have been of great benefit to the various charitable institutions. As a result of the past policy of reviewing this legislation annually, charitable institutions have been deprived of over £30,000, which is the estimated cost, to date, of the Commission's inability to enter into long-term contracts in respect of premises, printing, etc. This is the only State lottery in Australia that has not stability and that has to depend for its future on the annual passing of a continuance measure by this Parliament. Those are the reasons why, on this occasion, instead of introducing the ordinary annual Bill, we propose to give the Lotteries Commission stability.

Mr. Doney: Are they the only two reasons you are giving?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: They are two sound reasons. One could give further reasons. There is the cost each year of bringing forward a Bill. Such Bills are not introduced and passed through Parliament without the expenditure of a considerable sum. That is a further reason, if the member for Williams-Narrogin thinks that two reasons are not sufficient. I might also add that there is a growing interest and appreciation of this lottery in Western Australia. That fact, of course, can be proved by the increased number of tickets that are bought on each occasion. The Lotteries Commission has altered its system to some extent. It is not very long—I think about last October—since the system was altered from running lotteries twice a week to once a week, with a first prize of £2,000. The reason for that is because the country people were not being given the same oppor-

tunities as those in the metropolitan area. Too much time was necessary for the tickets, butts, cash, etc., to be sent back to the Commission's office to run a twice-weekly draw. Incidentally, the number of tickets was increased from 50,000 to 75,000 when the lotteries were reduced from two a week to one a week. By so doing, the same result was achieved.

During the 12 months under review, the Lotteries Commission has conducted 46 consultations. Of that number, twelve consisted of 50,000 subscribers and were drawn twice weekly. Each of the other 34 lotteries consisted of 75,000 tickets. The subscriptions totalled £393,704 and the prizes paid out amounted to £208,640, or 53 per cent. of the total amount subscribed. The expenses, which included agents' commission, amounted to £55,843 6s. 7d., or 14.2 per cent. The profit for the year amounted to £129,221 3s. 5d. This sum, together with the balance brought forward from last year of £31,728 16s. 4d., and bank interest, unclaimed prizes, and unexpended grants representing a further £3,972 17s. 7d., brought the total amount available for distribution to £164,922 17s. 4d. Of this sum donations absorbed £104,009 17s. and commitments, including the reserve fund, totalled £53,002 19s. 4d., leaving an undistributed balance of £7,910 1s. The average proportion of subscriptions absorbed in expenses, excluding agents' commission, was further reduced to 4.5 per cent., compared with 4.7 per cent. which was the average for the previous year. That is an indication that the Lotteries Commissioners are paying attention to all angles of the business they control.

Dealing now with hospitals, members will be interested to know that during the year £33,000 was set aside to meet interest and sinking fund charges on moneys advanced by the Government to finance the new Perth Hospital. Payments to the Perth Hospital trust account, plus interest to date, now total £192,183. Of this sum, interest and sinking fund payments have absorbed £57,190 0s. 2d., and an amount of £100,000 has been applied in reduction of the capital cost, leaving a credit balance in the fund of £37,992 19s. 10d. Shortage of labour and materials and rising building costs, which are at present 33 per cent. above pre-war levels, have necessitated a post-

ponement until after the war of other than urgent hospital extension programmes. Consequently, the amount of £6,091 6s. 6d. made available to other hospitals during the year was considerably below the sum normally provided for this purpose. In order, however, that adequate finance should be available for the purpose of enabling these extensions to be undertaken in the immediate post-war period, a reserve fund has been created to which the sum of £26,000 was appropriated during the year. Payments to orphanages totalled £9,790 8s. 7d., which included the maintenance subsidy at the rate of 3s. per week per child, amounting to £6,690 8s. 7d.

For some time past the Lotteries Commission has been giving consideration to ways and means of securing improved accommodation for the aged women of the State whose present home lacks many of the modern facilities necessary for their comfort and convenience. Proposals are now under consideration for the ultimate establishment of up-to-date homes for both men and women and the provision of a number of small cottages for aged couples requiring institutional care. An area of land comprising some 63 acres adjoining the Canning River has been made available by the Government and the construction of the women's section and five cottages estimated to cost £110,000, will be commenced as soon as labour and materials are available. The Commission has undertaken to finance this project and already an amount of £37,000 has been set aside for the purpose. It is desired to emphasise that the provision of funds towards financing the several major undertakings already referred to has in no way limited grants to other charitable institutions, applications for assistance from which have received the same sympathetic consideration as in the past. For the benefit of members I will detail the substantial grants made during the year to various charitable institutions—

	£
School for the Blind	3,000
Hospital Social Service	2,300
Returned Soldiers' League	2,000
Kindergarten Union	1,561
St. John Ambulance Association ..	1,500
Christmas Cheer Fund	1,351
Infant Health Association	1,177
Silver Chain Nursing Association ..	1,000

The particulars I have mentioned to the House must clearly indicate to members

that the Lotteries Commission has carried out wonderful work on behalf of the charitable institutions and the hospitals of the State. It has prevented large sums of money from being sent outside the State for investment in lotteries elsewhere, and I think the justification for the Bill could rest upon that argument alone. The assistance that has been rendered to charitable institutions must justify the continuance of the Act, which has been in operation for 11 years, during which there has been little or no criticism of the conduct of the lotteries.

Mr. Seward: That may be due to the personnel of the Commissioners.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: In course of time should the personnel of the Commission be regarded as unsatisfactory, the Government of the day would very soon alter that. The personnel of the Commission will always be controlled by the Minister in charge of that phase, irrespective of who he may be. There are many other arguments that could possibly be advanced in favour of the continuance of the Act, and I know of no objection that could be reasonably advanced in opposition to it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Hill, debate adjourned.

BILL—BUSSELTON CEMETERY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th November.

MR. WILLMOTT (Sussex) [5.38]: I have examined the Bill and shall support the second reading. Although I have received no word from the Busselton Municipal Council regarding the matter, the Minister stated that the proposal met with the approval of the local residents, and I am prepared to accept that assurance. I would like the Minister to explain one statement that he made when he asserted that the first cemetery site was declared in 1921 and that the area was situated about a mile from the township of Busselton. That may be correct, because I remember that many years ago a cemetery site was declared, after the cemetery referred to in the Bill had been filled, and that was situated about one mile to the west of Busselton. That site, however, was never used. I think the statements

made by the Minister are probably correct although the area was apparently never used.

The Minister for Lands: It was for a reserve to be used if necessary.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I know it has never been used, but I think it was in the West Busselton district. I have had no word from the Busselton Municipal Council on this matter. This cemetery was filled many years ago. It is right in the township, as explained by the Minister, between the Esplanade and the reserve. I feel sure that the council and people of Busselton will approve of the measure. The Minister said that if people desired to arrange for the re-burial of their friends or relatives such applications would be granted. If many people took advantage of that privilege I am afraid that the present cemetery site would soon be filled up. The area is not a large one. Whether arrangements have been made to extend this cemetery site I do not know. There are private lands right round the present cemetery, four miles out from Busselton. The Minister might perhaps explain the situation when he replies to the debate.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—STAMP ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th November.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [5.35]: It is my intention to support the second reading of the Bill, although I do not regard it as being entirely satisfactory in the circumstances of the case. The Premier, in the course of his introductory speech, mentioned that there had been an undertaking given in the House when the compulsory third party insurance measure was put through, to the effect that only one policy would be required. It was subsequently found necessary, however, to have two policies notwithstanding that an amendment had been introduced into the measure at the time of the discussion aiming at avoiding that necessity arising. That would have effectively prevented the issuance of two policies, and

necessarily therefore effectively prevented the obligation to pay two stamp duties. If you look at the question only from the point of view of the payment of the extra 2s. 6d., and you expect, in respect of the two policies which you now have to take out, that one will carry a flat rate of 2s. 6d. on the third party insurance policy, which is compulsory, I suppose the measure can be regarded as satisfactory. It seems to me that a premium such as is charged on the third party insurance policy under the compulsory provisions of the Traffic Act does not warrant the imposition of a charge of 2s. 6d. of every such policy by way of stamp duty.

It is well known that the premiums range from as low as 15s. to 30s. in the great majority of cases. If we take £1 as the average, which is a reasonable and fair average to take, a stamp duty of 2s. 6d. on each of these would be equivalent to 12½ per cent. on the average basis, and in some instances a higher percentage than that. It strikes me as being an excessive charge on the compulsory type of policy with a premium rate as low as that. I therefore think there should be a provision in the Stamp Act providing for a special stamp duty at a more reasonable rate on these special compulsory third party insurance policies. When one looks at the premiums charged in respect to comprehensive policies one is struck by the fact that they are very considerably higher. I do not think anyone possessing a car, which is valued at as low as £100, would succeed in getting away with a premium, notwithstanding that he might have a no-claim rebate, of less than £4 a year. The stamp duty on that is by no means equivalent on the percentage basis to the premium charged particularly in the case of privately-owned vehicles in respect of a third party compulsory insurance. I have no desire to restrict the revenue that is collected from stamp duties. In many respects it is a reasonable and fair way of collecting revenue. It is to a certain extent the imposition of a fee, in some cases at any rate, for services which are distinctly rendered by the State, and therefore it has some substantial justification, quite apart from revenue producing purposes, as taxation.

I have sufficient realisation of that fact not to wish to tinker with the Stamp Duties Act in any general way. At the same time, it is always customary, and I think proper

too, to impose a tax that has some reasonable relationship to the value of the matter with which we are dealing. That will not be so if we levy a tax of 2s. 6d. at a flat rate on all types of third party compulsory insurance policies. On the contrary, it will increase the premium by a percentage which, in my view, is excessive. The Bill proposes to rebate to the holder of a comprehensive policy, who is also the holder of a duly stamped current third party compulsory insurance policy, a sum of 2s. 6d. on the stamp duty paid on the comprehensive policy. The amounts to be paid on comprehensive policies are by no means easy to work out. If one refers to the heading "Policy of insurance" in the list of stamp duties set out in the Act, one will find that it is considerably involved. It includes any policy of insurance against loss of or damage to property by fire, marine insurance, accident insurance, employers' liability and any policy not otherwise specified.

The system which has grown up as a consequence of that type of enactment has been to make the stamp duty on some comprehensive policies as high as 9s., because there is a personal accident provision in many of them that is chargeable at the rate of 3d. per cent. Thus, if the cover is £1,000, there is an impost by stamp duty of 2s. 6d. If the vehicle is worth £200 and is insured for that amount, there is a further stamp duty of 1s. in respect of that branch of insurance. As the comprehensive policy covers also burglary, there is a further 3d. per cent. on the value of the vehicle, the policy for which is charged up again with stamp duty. There is then a flat rate of 2s. 6d., and if, as in some instances, the insured person seeks additional cover in the personal accident branch or in some other way, he has to pay another 3d. per cent. which, as I have pointed out, in some instances has brought the stamp duty on a comprehensive policy to as high as 9s. On an average for a £150 car, the stamp duty is 5s. 3d. to 6s. 6d.

There is not, I think, very sound ground why there should be that type of item in the schedule to the Stamp Act. There would be far more justification for the striking of a rate in respect to comprehensive policies based on the amount of the premium paid and bearing some reasonable percentage relationship to the pre-

mium that has been paid. But there is no such provision in the Stamp Act. The Bill, although so far as it goes it is desirable, could with advantage have gone a great deal further. It could, with advantage, have adjusted these stamp duties under a separate heading in the schedule to the Stamp Act, and could have brought about some reasonable relationship between the premiums paid and the stamp duties that have to be paid for a policy exchanged for the premium. Because this has not been done, I express my lack of complete satisfaction with the Bill. Still, as it goes some of the way towards remedying the position arising out of what was apparently an unfortunate mistake, I am able to support the Bill and therefore will vote for the second reading.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison): I have no quarrel with the measure, but I want to know from the Premier whether the other aspect that was thoroughly discussed when the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Bill was being dealt with is going to receive any consideration.

The Premier: It is receiving consideration now.

Mr. MARSHALL: I want something more than the perpetual consideration being given to these things. When the Premier was moving the second reading of the Bill I said that dual policies are to continue in existence and there is to be no effort to get the State Government Insurance Office to issue one comprehensive policy, including third party insurance, and thus finish with it. Every motorcar owner is now obliged to take out dual policies—that is, if he wishes to protect himself and his property—and, under the third party law, he is compelled to take out a third party risk policy.

When the motor vehicle (third party insurance) legislation first became law, we were given an assurance by the Minister who piloted the Bill through the House that there would be no duplication of policy. After the measure became law, we were told by the insurance companies and by the State Insurance Office that the third party risk was to be included in a comprehensive policy. Some months later, however, when certain people proceeded to renew their insurance under their comprehensive policies, they found, to their amazement, that the third party risk was not included. When I dis-

covered that this was so, I rang up the State Insurance Office and was informed that the date of the proclamation of the Act—that is, the Act requiring insurance against the third party risk—was so close to the end of the financial year that it had not been possible for the department to make the necessary preparations to include the third party risk in the comprehensive policy. However, I was given an assurance that by the end of this year, when the office had had 12 months' experience, the third party risk would be included in the comprehensive policy. Now I find that effect is not being given to this assurance. That is not fair.

The life of the individual in this community is becoming almost intolerable. Regulations are being issued almost daily requiring people to fill in Form A and Form B and insure against this, that and something else until the individual is being persecuted. Surely we have officers in the State Insurance Office who are capable of overcoming this difficulty! I cannot understand why the private companies do not make an effort to include third party insurance in a comprehensive policy. I take very strong exception to the State Office giving an assurance that that would be done and failing to observe the assurance. I myself received an assurance over the telephone that it would be done. Why should people be put to the inconvenience of going to one office to take out third party insurance and then, in all probability, having to go to another office to get a comprehensive policy covering the balance of the risk? The effect will be that when the State Office may have some profitable business in prospect, it will be deprived of that business because car-owners will not be put to the trouble of dealing with two insurance companies.

The Minister for Works: The State Office might be able to evolve a comprehensive policy before the next year commences.

Mr. MARSHALL: I want the State Office to fulfil its promise, and according to this measure there is no such assurance by the Treasurer. He proposes to exempt one policy from stamp duty because the stamp duty will be paid on the other policy. If the Treasurer exempts a comprehensive policy from stamp duty, I shall take no exception; I would be pleased to see other exemptions made; but if the State Office can solve the problem and put the third party risk into a comprehensive policy,

there will be no stamp duty payable at all. I consider it unfair to force an extra charge on people, and I trust the Minister controlling the State Insurance Office will be first in with a comprehensive policy covering the third party risk. I am not personally concerned in this matter as I am not a car-owner. From the Bill as it stands I draw the inference that dual policies will be forced on the people next year. I take the opportunity of protesting here against that, while the opportunity presents itself to me.

THE PREMIER (in reply): As regards stamp duty, I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the matter is not deserving of a great deal of consideration in connection with this Bill. The issue of a policy occupies half an hour, and that period should be paid for at time rates. While 12½ per cent. for an assurance policy seems very heavy as a premium rate, that is not the way to look at the matter. The total premium may amount to no more than 15s. or 16s. in some instances, but the service to be rendered by the State Insurance Office, whether for an 11s. policy or a £1 policy, occupies almost the same time. That fact is bound up with the statement of the member for Murehison regarding not only the possibility but the probability that one insurance policy could be drafted so that people would not suffer the inconvenience of having to take out two policies. I readily admit that such an assurance was given; but at the same time it was believed that the promise would be lived up to. The member for Mt. Hawthorn was of the opinion that it could be done, and said that if given the opportunity he could evolve something which would be a practical solution of the problem. However, the present Minister for Works states that the matter is being actively investigated; and that it is hoped there will be a solution of the difficulty.

Unfortunately, the manager of the State Insurance Office is suffering from a rather severe illness, and consequently cannot give attention to this particular business. I can at least assure the House that so far as the Government is concerned, we do not rest content with saying, "It is very unfortunate and regrettable, but we cannot carry out our promise, and nothing more can be done at present." I am hoping that we shall be able to do everything on behalf of the State Insurance Office—I do not say that we can

force other insurance companies to do the same—so that a comprehensive policy covering the present policies may be prepared. But this Bill is only for the purpose of rectifying what we consider to be a manifest injustice, the payment of double stamp duty. There will be a rebate of half-a-crown to prevent the payment of stamp duty twice over. The House agrees that the promise cannot be carried out in the terms in which it was given. There is no objection, however, to the principle of the present Bill; and so there is nothing more for me to add by way of reply.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Marshall in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Second Schedule:

Mr. WATTS: I have an amendment which I regret I was not able to place on the notice paper, but I have a copy which I am pleased now to submit to the Chairman and to the Premier. The minimum stamp duty at present payable on a policy in respect of third-party motor vehicle insurance is 2s. 6d. That is a flat rate which applies to any motor vehicle, no matter what its value. When speaking to the second reading, I suggested that some differentiation might be made. I have here a schedule of the premiums as on the 12th May, 1944, for private cars, business or professional cars and goods vehicles. The premium for the private car usually garaged in the metropolitan area, District "A," that is, within a radius of 30 miles of the G.P.O., Perth, is £1 5s. and for District "B" (country) 12s. 6d. For the business or professional cars the premiums are respectively £1 15s. and 17s. 6d.; and the same rates respectively apply to goods vehicles. There are rates for other motor vehicles, but those I have mentioned comprise 80 per cent. or 90 per cent. of the motor vehicles in the respective districts. Members will observe that the premiums in the great majority of cases are less than 30s. My view is that there should be a stamp duty of 1s. 3d. where the annual premium does not exceed £1 10s.; but where the annual premium exceeds that

amount, the stamp duty should be 2s. 6d. I move an amendment—

That in line 2 after the word "insurance" the following words and figures be inserted:—

"(a) by adding the following paragraph after paragraph (f) of the said item to stand as paragraph (g):—

(g) Policy of insurance issued under and in compliance with the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act, 1943—

(i) Where the annual premium does not exceed £1 10s., 1s. 3d.;

(ii) Where the annual premium exceeds £1 10s., 2s. 6d.;

and (b)."

Point of Order.

The Premier: I am not sure whether the amendment is in order, and I would like your ruling, Mr. Chairman. The Bill does not deal with reduction of stamp duty, but with the question of making rebates under certain circumstances. Therefore the question of stamp duty does not arise.

The Chairman: I respectfully suggest that there is something in the Premier's contention. From the brief review I have been able to give to the Bill and the amendment, it appears that the Bill proposes to deal only with the question of the exemption of certain insurance policies from payment of stamp duty. The amendment goes much further. I gather from its wording that it will affect policies outside the Title or scope of the Bill. It is not permissible to introduce any matter outside the order of leave. As I consider the proposed amendment is outside the order of leave, I am under an obligation to rule it out. I do so accordingly.

Committee Resumed.

Amendment ruled out.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1944-45.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 7th November on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £2,265:

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth) [6.7]: At the outset, I want to pay tribute to one who was laid in his last resting place yesterday. I refer to the late Mr. Gerald Foley who, to my mind, will be a distinct loss to the community of Western Australia. More than anybody I have met, Mr. Foley earned for himself the title of "a dinkum Aussie." He took a particular interest in the history of Western Australia—its literature and its cultural and general development—and his loss will be felt not merely by the Labour movement of Western Australia but by the whole of the social and civic life of this State. As a comparatively new member of this Chamber, notwithstanding that I have had previous experience of the presentation of a Budget to this House, I find it rather bewildering to have approximately 115 pages of a publication of this kind put before me. In these Estimates, the ramifications of the whole of the State's efforts, from a departmental angle are put before us for review, and it is impossible and undesirable to attempt to analyse in detail the figures submitted.

I propose to draw the attention of the Government to certain matters that I believe need consideration. It might be submitted that because we are at war and, as a result, many of our normal activities have been suspended, it is rather premature to give any detailed consideration to alterations of our institutions and of customs that have been in vogue for any considerable time. On the contrary, I believe that as certain of those activities are, in a great measure, rigidly fixed at present, we can—without a great deal of heat—escape the log-rolling and other efforts that are on occasion made in an endeavour to influence members so far as arriving at a logical and definite conclusion is concerned. The first matter to which I desire to refer may perhaps be appropriately considered in view of the present state of the weather. I refer to the Licensing Act and the position of hotels particularly. I am not going to make any positive affirmations, but I advocate that a full and impartial inquiry should be made into the whole question.

I propose to make some suggestions to which I think full and proper attention should be given. In the first place, I suggest that the trading hours of licensed

premises could well be investigated. Previously the official hours were from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., at present they are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. I wonder whether there is a necessity for a closing hour at all. It may open up an avenue for thought to state that in the matter of the sale of lemonade, tea and coffee, etc., there are unrestricted hours and no real purpose is being served by enforcing a rigid closing time for hotels. However, on account of the fact that hotels now close at 6 o'clock, for the first time for many years those called upon to dispense the particular type of refreshment served in hotels—I refer to barmaids and barmen—are able to live more or less in the same way as other working people. They are able to go home for their evening meal and it is possible for them, later in the evening, to attend entertainments and meetings and follow cultural pursuits and so on.

Previously, when the closing hour was 9 p.m., that was not possible. Consequently, I visualise that there will be considerable well-merited opposition from those particular workers if it is sought again to extend the closing hour beyond 6 p.m. That is an angle to which some consideration should be given. So far as the present trading hours are concerned, from the point of view of the ordinary working man, they are anything but satisfactory. They seem to be designed to cater particularly for the lounge lizards and persons of that ilk. Those who work until five o'clock are obliged, after having toiled through the heat and burden of the day, to engage in an unseemly rush, milling around the bars like so many pigs because it is unavoidable. Those who leave work at 6 o'clock, on the other hand, have to do without that form of refreshment altogether. The matter of deciding on reasonable hours would indeed be difficult.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. GRAHAM: I think it will be generally conceded that, where there are closing hours for the consumption of liquor, the greatest amount of damage occurs immediately prior to closing. If comparatively unlimited hours were allowed for hotel trading that last minute rush would be avoided. I want it to be distinctly understood that I am merely making observations with regard to a number of points that, to my mind, are

worthy of serious consideration and investigation. I think I have said sufficient with regard to this particular point to demonstrate that, on the one hand there are certain problems created on account of the limitation of hours and the unsatisfactory nature of the present closing time, and that on the other hand there would be very strenuous opposition by the barmaids and barmen if the hours were sought to be extended. If hotels are considered as rendering a public service then possibly the rights of the community can be made paramount in arriving at a determination.

One matter in regard to this question has always been beyond my comprehension, namely, why it should be necessary for a building costing from £5,000 to £20,000 and more to be constructed in order that alcoholic liquors might be dispensed. I cannot see the direct association between liquid refreshment, and accommodation in the way of bedrooms. It would be regarded as ridiculous to suggest that before lemonade or ginger beer could be served to the public a dozen bedrooms, so many bathrooms and a dining room, etc., should be part of the general accommodation of the establishment. It is exactly the same with regard to fermented and spirituous liquors. I cannot see why these enormous structures should have to be erected in order to render that service to the community.

Mr. McLarty: They are residential premises as well.

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes. It has been suggested that it is necessary to have something in the nature of an equation with respect to the two establishments, namely, that the profits of the bar tend to keep the residential costs within a reasonable figure. If that is so, then the present charges for accommodation at hotels are entirely uneconomic. If such is the case I cannot see why additional charges should be made in the bar in order to sustain that particular aspect of the venture. Because this enormous outlay is necessary to construct hotels, something approaching a scandal has developed or is likely to occur. Licenses are restricted because great sums of money are necessary in order to erect premises. Members are aware that a block of land of an economic value of approximately a hundred pounds immediately assumes a fictitious and inflated value if a license is secured in respect to it. That demonstrates that a monopoly is created for

a fortunate individual or group of individuals so that they are to some extent allowed to proceed with their undertaking without any serious challenge. I feel that more thought or consideration should be given to the fact of breweries being able to assume the control, and indeed effect the purchase, of hotels. There is the very natural complement, namely, that many hotels become what are known as "closed" houses where one brand of liquor only is served.

Mr. Thorn: You mean, "tied" houses.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is another term, yes. I do not know that that is correct or proper. It is an aspect to which some consideration and attention might be given. Then again it is suggested that because the portion of the premises in which liquors are served is closed off with a partition in front of the door a type of conduct occurs there which would not occur if the interiors of the bars were more open to the public gaze. Therefore, some attention could be given to the question of whether hotel bars could more closely approximate milk bars and other places which dispense soft drinks in the city and the metropolitan area generally. Furthermore, there is a school of thought which holds that, owing to the fact that men have to stand to drink their beer and have nothing else to do except drink and converse, a greater quantity of liquor is consumed than would be the case if there were a general tendency to provide seating accommodation and tables for them. Beer gardens are extremely popular in Europe, and would be in a climate such as ours. Whilst there was some development in that direction prior to the outbreak of the war something could, perhaps, be done by law. It might be made compulsory for hotels to provide spacious lawns and shaded gardens for the convenience of patrons so that they could converse with one another in perfect comfort, instead of in the steamy and crowded conditions usually obtaining in our hotels.

Mr. North: There was one at Claremont before the war.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so, and there were several others as well. There is nothing really sacrosanct about the age of 21 years and attention could be given to the question of ascertaining whether or not that age is suitable for adoption in connection with our licensing laws. It might be desirable to increase the age limit to 25 or to reduce it to 18 years; I do not express an opinion either

way. There is certainly nothing arbitrary about the present age limit. I think, too, with regard to the age phase of the liquor business, greater use might be made of the identity cards that everyone has in his or her possession, which could be used for the purpose of checking up, quite irrespective of the age factor, on whether or not the patrons of hotels and other licensed premises comply with the age standard laid down. The whole question of our licensing laws and licensed premises generally has been the subject of considerable criticism, a great deal of which has been adverse, and many suggestions have been made with the object of effecting improvements. Perhaps the present, when matters in connection with licensed premises may be regarded as static, may be an appropriate time to give quiet and impartial consideration to such alterations in the liquor laws as may be deemed advisable. I would like the Government to appoint a tribunal of some description for the purpose of investigating the points I have mentioned, and certainly there are many other phases that could be brought within the ambit of the deliberations of such a body.

Many members have expressed their views regarding the all-important question of the population of Western Australia. I am afraid there has been a disposition to regard the problem from an entirely wrong angle. It has been suggested that a larger population is required for the defence of Western Australia in particular and of the Commonwealth generally. That pre-supposes that the womenfolk should be appealed to in order to fill the ranks of the Fighting Services of tomorrow. In other words, it goes forth that we, as the leaders of public opinion in this State, believe that another war is inevitable and therefore we appeal to the women to provide the necessary cannon fodder for the conflict that so certainly lies ahead. I am not so pessimistic with regard to the future. I do not believe that we should be obsessed, so apparently, with the idea that it is beyond the wit of man to devise ways and means of maintaining peace. In any event, from the psychological point of view, it is futile to ask our womenfolk that they shall pass through the valley of the shadow of death in the process of bearing children in order that their offspring may eventually become members of the Fighting Forces.

Again, it is suggested that we should increase the population in order to spread, or lessen, the burden of public indebtedness. I submit that such an appeal as that to the mothers or prospective mothers, telling them that it is their bounden duty to bring babies into the world in order that they may share the burden of the national indebtedness of this country so that it may be correspondingly less for us, is equally repellent. Again, it is suggested that additional population is required in order that this country may be developed more immediately. So far as I am concerned, I have no particular apprehension with regard to the development and opening up of the natural resources of this or any other part of the world. Our desire should be to see that a reasonable standard of living is afforded every member of the community, that each shall have an opportunity to enjoy improved standards, that a higher degree of culture should be theirs and that security should be the lot of all mankind. Whether we open up certain mineral deposits in Australia, Canada or anywhere else, this century or next century, is of comparatively small consequence. The whole of them could very well be opened up, if we were to exert ourselves to exploit those resources, years or even centuries before we could economically develop them.

While it has a bearing on the economics of Western Australia that attention should be given to various requirements in the remote parts, we have a huge task before us now in the more closely settled portions of the State, tasks and responsibilities that will keep us busy for many years to come. If we were to become too venturesome and go many hundreds of miles outback, immediately there would be a cry, justifiably so, for the provision of water supplies, roads, hospitals, schools, railways and other amenities. That would again be reflected in the attitude that would be adopted by the Commonwealth Grants Commission, and Western Australia would again be placed in a disadvantageous position and confronted possibly with added financial difficulties because of the enormous area that is covered by such a small population. While it is true that economic circumstances have a great bearing upon the size of families, nevertheless I believe there are other factors of greater importance. I say that because, as is well known, the largest families inevitably spring from those in the poorest circumstances. In the main,

those who are better off have either none or very few children. There are other factors that enter into the question of population or, more properly stated, the limitation upon population.

As I see it, the issue involved is the inconvenience and hardship to parents. Some might easily dismiss that angle by suggesting selfishness on the part of parents. With that, I do not agree. It is well known that if a young couple have children, particularly if the family is beyond the two or three-child stage, it becomes extremely difficult for the husband and wife to go out together to cultural meetings or entertainments. They must go separately so that one may look after the children. It means that if the mother desires to travel into town to transact some business or do the family shopping, she has a rather terrible time. She may have a couple of toddlers hanging on to her skirts and another in the pram. This involves a distinct hardship, but nevertheless some may be inclined to set aside the contention easily by saying, "It is their job to do it; they should not be so selfish; they should think of the future of the country." That is all very well, but when everyone else is going to the pictures, to parties, to afternoon-teas, to bridge parties or cocktail parties, to picnics, to lectures at the University or continuation classes—when the young couple see their erstwhile friends enjoying themselves in one or other of these various directions, it is indeed a hardship not to be able to enjoy the same degree of freedom. I think, therefore, it becomes a responsibility of the Government to do everything possible to provide facilities for the mothers of this country. In quite a number of directions, this has already been done. I am pleased that the Tramway Department has now agreed to try the idea of providing three hooks for prams, and I hope it will not be long before they are provided on more trams in order to do the job satisfactorily.

Mr. North: How do you explain the largeness of the families in the old days?

Mr. GRAHAM: The hon. member would probably be more competent to answer that question than I am. In those days, there was a great deal more of entertainment and enjoyment provided in the home. There were house parties, community singing, and so forth. Today we have the movies, which provide a cheap and excellent form of entertainment, and also motorcars have come

largely into use. There is no need to deal further with that aspect of the question. I feel it is the natural desire of parents generally to have children because of the enjoyment associated with the rearing of a family, but if the difficulties are made too great, then that will be a militating factor against what we seek to achieve. The name of Dr. Marie Stopes has been mentioned. Many people read her books—which are regarded as classics on the particular questions dealt with—and publications without paying serious concern to what she set out to teach. I have been approached by electors of mine in regard to the matter of prophylactics. If parents or would-be parents make up their minds not to have families because of existing circumstances, they will not have families. Therefore, to talk about abolishing the sale of prophylactics is to attack the problem in an entirely wrong way. We should make it possible, so far as lies in our power, for couples to have children with the least inconvenience, both from a financial aspect and without limitation of their normal enjoyment and activities generally.

Suggestions are being made at present that should have been made many years ago for a system of what is called home help; that is, to provide service in the homes, particularly for those cases where the mother is ill or is about to be confined. It is not many years since a measure was introduced into this Chamber, and subsequently sent to the Legislative Council, for the purpose of bringing domestic workers within the ambit of the Arbitration Court. I contend that there will always be a lack of domestic workers so long as they have not a decent wage in return for their service, so long as they have not reasonable working hours and decent working conditions. I venture to say, gone are the days when there will be a pool of female labour that can be drawn upon, and bought for a song, the girls in many instances being treated with a certain amount of contempt by their employers, not by all, but unfortunately by many. Girls today are earning £3, £4, £5 a week, and are enjoying reasonably good working hours and conditions, paid holidays, and the rest of it. Neither they nor their younger sisters are likely to seek domestic service for 10s. or 15s. a week and keep, starting at 7 a.m. and perhaps finishing at 8 p.m., 9 p.m., or

even later. I felt that these womenfolk ought to have the right idea regarding the home help scheme, and I communicated with them accordingly. One of their first duties should be to endeavour to influence certain gentlemen in another place in order that those workers might be brought within the scope of an Arbitration Court award under which reasonable conditions would be stipulated for them, and then there would not be any lack of domestic workers in homes. This should be the first duty of these womenfolk, because another place was responsible for the rejection of the measure to which I have referred.

In all these matters, it is a question of first things first. If additional workers are required in any avenue at all, it means that the conditions of service have to be made more attractive in order to draw those workers to that point of production or service as the case might be. I trust, therefore, that the Government will give consideration to bringing down a Bill once again to provide for domestic workers. I hope greater measures will be taken for domestic training in order that a full-course might be arranged and that the girls might secure certificates of competency in house-keeping and domestic work generally. When the work upon which they will embark has been raised to the status, not of a profession, as some people are prone to say, but at least of an honourable occupation carried on under decent conditions, then the shortage of labour in homes will disappear; then the burden on mothers and others suffering disabilities will also be removed; and in that way it may prove to be a contribution, as I believe it will, to the solution of the problem of getting an increase in the population of this State and of Australia generally. At any rate, I submit that this matter is worthy of consideration. I repeat what I said on a previous occasion that the Government should be setting an example, which it is not doing at present, with regard to the working conditions for its employees, and with regard to the amenities provided in the various workshops and establishments that come under its jurisdiction. So far as wages, superannuation and long-service leave are concerned, the Government has definitely set an example to all employers in the State—in saying this, I am speaking in the broad sense—but when we visit

some of the workshops and establishments and see the deplorable conditions under which the workmen are expected to do a reasonable day's work, then it is a reflection upon the employer who, in this instance, happens to be the Government. Without my itemising them I am certain that Ministers themselves, in view of the very many representations that have been made, will agree that substantial improvements could be effected with respect to the conditions under which the employees work and—almost equally important—the great defects regarding certain amenities in the way of decent lockers, mess-rooms, washing accommodation and so on for the men. There are, however, some private establishments which have done an exceedingly fine job as regards supplying those services to their employees.

I know it is being suggested that there are all sorts of Government works, particularly with respect to Government buildings, waiting to be done. There is also a desperate need for more accommodation in respect of hospitals and schools; but I fear that there is a tendency now developing along exactly the same lines as, but with a different story from, that which we have been told for too many years. Previously, when a building was suggested or any improvement of any kind at all advocated, the inevitable reply was that the money could not be found. At present it is far more expedient to say that manpower and materials are not available. I greatly fear that a tendency is developing for that particular excuse or reason to be used without full consideration to the possibilities of something being done. While this story has been told, we know that drastic action has been taken by employees, who agreed that certain improvements should be effected for them by their employers. It shows that when pressure is actually applied, something can be done.

I am aware that during recent months there has been a shortage of bricks and other building materials, and that it is difficult to get permission to undertake building activities of any dimensions. Yet a certain garage of large proportions has already been erected. In my opinion, that garage represents a priority second to certain public buildings that should be erected forthwith. Premises to house trucks and vehicles of a transport agent have recently

been built. Tremendous numbers of bricks were used for the purpose of extensions or improvements to the boiler house of a laundry, brick fences have been built, premises renovated, new shop-fronts erected, of cantilever verandahs constructed, and numerous other works of that nature undertaken.

I agree with the remarks the Public Service Commissioner made in the report furnished to us yesterday evening, that we are at present suffering with respect to the public services, and that this is due entirely to the terrible conditions under which those public servants have to work. And at this very time additional facilities and amenities are being supplied in practically every State of the Commonwealth! This suggests to me that if the will is there and a really determined effort is made, it is possible to get some things done in Western Australia. I have been assured by a responsible officer in the Government service—whose name I do not care to mention—that in respect of applications for building materials and bricks made to him for hospitals he has refused on one occasion only to make the necessary supplies available. I was assured by this public servant that with regard to what was called a maternity hospital—though in fact it existed rather for the opposite purpose—

[Mr. J. Hegney took the Chair.]

Member: What is that opposite purpose?

Mr. GRAHAM: Members should draw their own conclusions. Instead of existing for the purpose of bringing new babies into this land, the place was there to prevent them from coming, or, in other words, to provide abortion facilities. I add that it ought not to have been necessary for me to go into details on that point. As I stated previously, I have been definitely informed by that public servant, one of the highest officers in the State service—

The Premier: I don't suppose he has anything whatever to say about priorities!

Mr. GRAHAM: I know that he has; but by answering questions I may be divulging his identity. With respect to prices control, I feel that I echo the views of other members, and indeed the views of practically every person not only in Western Australia but from one end of this continent to the other, that extreme dissatisfaction exists with the so-called system of prices control pre-

vailing now. It does not require inspectors or experts to tell us that in big city shops half-a-dozen different prices are being charged. It is possible, I daresay, for every number to recount instances where for certain commodities over-charges have been made. It is not our place, of course, to be policemen in order to supervise prices; but, as far as I can gather, practically every member of the community is fully aware of breaches of price control—everybody except the officers of the department responsible! Therefore one becomes not suspicious perhaps but, rather, curious as to the bona fides of the officers charged with the responsibility of policing this important matter. Profiteers are taken to court. Then follows what may be somebody else's responsibility, but I do know that the penalties imposed are ridiculous and not in any way a deterrent from repetition of such offences. As a consequence, such offences are rampant from one end of the metropolitan area to the other. I speak of the metropolitan area because I am most conversant with that locality.

Then there is a peculiar feature with regard to this matter. It has been not merely stated but established by documentary evidence that in the case of one concern—which concern I shall not mention, because that would be unfair, seeing it is known that the same thing applies in the case of many other concerns—a customer was charged 25s. for a shirt, then he took the garment to the office of the Prices Control Commissioner and there was informed that the maximum price for it was 20s. Lo and behold! What did the Prices Branch do? It gave that purchaser who had been mulet of 5s., an authority to obtain a refund of the amount. He went back to the retail establishment and got the 5s. That establishment had probably sold in the last few weeks thousands of shirts to people from one end of the State to the other and had received an excess payment of 5s. on each shirt, and only one person checked the price and received a refund of 5s. This sort of procedure is merely inviting retail establishments to embark on wholesale overcharging, because there is so much to be gained and so little to be lost. In the case I mentioned, the loss was only 5s.

Member: But those establishments have income tax to pay.

Mr. GRAHAM: Those of us who have had anything to do with accounting and retail establishments know that it is not an exceedingly difficult matter to dispose of funds in certain ways so as to reduce profits. Every member of this Chamber is aware that that is done. I have had instances of other overcharges, supported by documentary evidence, and these cases have been sent on to the Minister for Trade and Customs; but so far no action has been taken. The practice, no doubt, is prevalent in other parts of Australia, and if there is to be a real check on prices, if prices are to be controlled, there must be proper policing and the penalties for offences of the character which I have mentioned should be made high enough to be a deterrent to such practices. The instances I have quoted have some relationship to the basic wage, because many suburban establishments charge their customers an additional half-penny or penny on their purchases. The extra charge does not mean much to the purchaser, because it is convenient for him to make his purchases at these establishments. If he were to report the shop-keeper for overcharging, as likely as not he would find himself in a difficulty in making future purchases at the convenient corner shop. That is a deterrent to lodging complaints or making charges.

If I may digress for a moment, I can quote a case where a person was charged 1s. 6d. for a 3d. article. He immediately reported the matter to the Prices Branch, but did not proceed further because of the amount of trouble to which he would have been put to prefer a charge against the retailer; and so the incident was lost sight of. That person did explain to the Prices Branch that all that was necessary was to send an office boy to the shop with change in his pocket and ask for that commodity. If the price asked was 1s. 6d., he should pay it and demand a receipt for the amount. In that way the whole case could have been proved without very much trouble. As I said, these overcharges do affect the basic wage, as the cost of living is fixed on the fluctuations in the prices of commodities; at one period they may be high and at another low, but in neither case do they fairly represent the cost of living at that particular time.

The basic wage itself could be given further consideration by Parliament. At

present, a certain formula is adopted by the State Arbitration Court for the purpose of determining not only the standard, but also the variations. I am not suggesting that it is competent for Parliament to fix a basic wage, but I do suggest that it is possible for Parliament to lay down principles, or a formula, which could be followed by the Arbitration Court. After all, we are the representatives of the people and, as such, are responsible for seeing that an adequate basic wage is paid to every worker in the community. I am aware that there is great dissatisfaction not only with the nominal basic wage, but with its variations, particularly when the basic wage is reduced by a few pence when it is transparently obvious to everyone that the cost of living has increased immeasurably. I have been asked to refer briefly to a matter which has already been ventilated. It is that aliens are receiving priority treatment over Britishers. At the outset, I would explain that I harbour no prejudice against any person no matter of what race, apart, for the moment, from those races with which we are engaged in mortal conflict. I make that reservation.

My attention has been drawn to numerous instances in the city of Perth in which, obviously, Britishers have to battle in order to secure equipment for refreshment rooms, whereas aliens can immediately obtain new furniture and equipment. They can even obtain glass-top tables, or heavy rubber-top tables, such as I have recently seen in a certain establishment. Some inquiry should be made into this matter. I realise the danger of tackling the question, as by so doing people may become unnecessarily prejudiced against persons of other races. The practice is becoming too prevalent, however, and the position will have to be faced sooner or later. Those members who represent country constituencies can tell a similar story. Instances could be quoted with respect to the wheatbelt and particularly the South-West district. My attention has been drawn to the fact that a young Australian engineer working in an engineering establishment desired to be released from his work in order to set up in business on his own account. He was desirous of constructing something which had never previously been made in Australia. Incidentally, he is a man of approximately 25 years of age and, I think, has returned from ser-

vice in the present war. It was impossible for him to secure release; but from that same establishment a refugee, who has the sanctuary of Australia, was able to obtain release and has engaged in an electrical undertaking, making and repairing all sorts of electrical appliances common to the average home. This case, and other cases that members of this House and I could mention, point to the fact that something is radically wrong with the present set-up.

Mr. Leslie: Let us make the details public!

Mr. GRAHAM: With regard to the case I have mentioned, I have the name and the circumstances could be made public. This alien electrician to whom I have referred has not set up business under his own name. He has become "Johnny, the Electrician" or a name of that sort.

Turning to education, while there is still a tremendous shortage of facilities. I would like to express appreciation of the advances that have been made, as outlined by the Premier when introducing the Estimates. I hope progress in that direction will be maintained and accelerated until the terrific leeway existing at present in the various branches of education is overtaken. I hope there will be a better conception of our responsibilities to young people who, unfortunately, are not as highly regarded as they might be in many places. I trust there will grow a conception which appreciates that the many thousands of children attending school at present will, in the course of two or three decades, become the leaders of this country in public affairs and public thought and as captains of industry; and that therefore the type of civilisation that will be attained in the next 25 years very much depends on the foundations we build today and the amount of consideration we give to school-children.

We should give greater consideration to these children and provide them with proper accommodation, ample playing fields and enlightenment in many avenues not touched at all at present. In some respects they are given a mere taste of certain cultural subjects, whereas they should be given an opportunity to develop their latent talents. This should be done instead of our producing, as it were, so many automatic machines expected to pass examinations in academic subjects, many of which are of no practical value whatsoever in later life. They should be taught the value of those

things that lie closest to us all, and an appreciation of the highest standards of human values. They should be given an opportunity to develop their own personalities in order that in the future they may become useful citizens and help to build an Australia far greater and better than the one we know.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison): I desire to make some observations on this Vote. I believe that the general discussion on the Estimates offers wide scope and great opportunity to a member to discuss many matters, but I respectfully suggest that the general debate might be considered an opportunity for dealing with major matters, such as policy or subjects that could not conveniently be cramped under the heading of departmental administration. However, each member has the right, freedom and opportunity to choose his own line of discussion, because of the liberal character of the Vote before the Chair. Before touching on some matters that have been agitating my mind and which are more of a national character, I want in a very friendly way—and I hope that what I say will be accepted in a friendly spirit—to try to appease the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe in his desire to hear Mr. Curtin on the member for Murchison. I have never allowed any member to score off me without making an effort to reply. What I am about to say I shall say in a very friendly way, hoping that the hon. member will help me to give effect to the wishes he expressed.

I know that the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe is particularly friendly with the Prime Minister, and in consequence he should experience no difficulty in assisting me. The member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe quoted Mark Twain. Mark Twain is known to all of us as a very able writer. He was a very witty man and a very cultured person. Such men are supernatural and possess gifts denied to most people. They live and act and work mainly upon impulse and are quick to size up a position. That is a gift I would love to possess myself. Possessing this gift, they are able to put a controversial subject into reverse gear and put their opponents on the defensive. Quick-witted people can always do that. They can shift the venue of the point raised and score at the other fellow's expense. If the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe quoted Mark Twain

correctly, Mark Twain was asked if he would like to hear Ingersoll on Moses. Mark Twain readily appreciated the fact that if he twisted the proposal it became a physical impossibility. So he refused the invitation to hear Ingersoll on Moses by suggesting that he would give 5s. to hear Moses on Ingersoll! That was a physical impossibility but Mark Twain scored at Ingersoll's expense. Ingersoll could have been heard on Moses. That was physically possible, and Mark Twain knew it so he smartly shifted the argument.

As a matter of fact, I do not know whether the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe can prove—I have never met any person who can—that such a person as Moses ever lived. I have never come in contact with anyone who personally knew Moses or could prove that he existed, so apparently Mark Twain was on very safe ground there. Now, I make an offer to the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe. I am not going to allow him to score off me by quoting Mark Twain. The hon. member said he would readily give £5 to hear Mr. Curtin on the member for Murchison. That is physically possible. I make the proposal to the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe that if he can arrange for a public debate between the Prime Minister and me at any convenient place and at any time—the offer lasts for all time—on the question of the fiscal policy enunciated by our Prime Minister before taking office as compared with the fiscal policy that he has endorsed and enforced since he has been in office or, alternatively, upon the private ownership of the national credit—either one or both—then it will not cost him a fiver, but I will give him a fiver as a present the night after the debate.

Mr. Thorn: Hear, hear!

Mr. MARSHALL: I would have no difficulty on these two points. Most of the time allotted to me on such a debate could be used by reading a most brilliant article written by the present Prime Minister, and speeches delivered most eloquently by him in condemnation of the fiscal policy which he now endorses.

Mr. Berry: Before he was Prime Minister.

Mr. Needham: Before there was a war.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, and since there was a war! The war commenced in 1939. I have an extract which I did not propose to read, but I kept it here in case there was an interjection relevant to it. This is

the only quotation I shall give in order to satisfy the member for Perth who has just interjected.

Mr. Needham: Was there a war with Japan in 1939?

Mr. MARSHALL: If the member for Perth will listen to the quotation he will know how effective a war is on a Government desirous of doing the right thing and one not desirous of doing the right thing. I shall read only the last few words which sum up the situation. Mr. Curtin wrote an article expounding national credit. He had this to say—

The cost of war can be met without piling up huge debts, and without interest payments sucking our national lifeblood. The Commonwealth Bank must, with a Labour Government, work out a freer and fuller life for our people.

Mr. Leslie: How the chickens come home to roost.

Mr. MARSHALL: He said that wars can be won without piling up huge debts. That is something I have argued here for many years. In all good faith I make my offer to the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe. It will be costless to him; as a matter of fact he will profit by it because he will not have to give a fiver to hear the Prime Minister on the member for Murchison but will receive a fiver and, in addition, not only will he hear the Prime Minister on the member for Murchison but the member for Murchison on the Prime Minister. The offer stands for all time and any time. I want to touch now upon those matters which agitate my mind. I hold great fears for the future. It is not nice to be pessimistic always and to look on the gloomy side of life, but we must keep in mind the fact that actions speak a great deal louder than words.

To a great degree we are under an obligation to accept the utterances of alleged statesmen. Their utterances must be accepted as a guide as to what may or may not happen to a nation, particularly in a period of war when secrecy is the order of the day. Some most conflicting statements are being uttered at the moment, or have been uttered within the last few weeks. These statements are conflicting to a greater degree than usual because they come from statesmen who occupy ministerial office in the same Government. No two seem to speak with the one voice. For

instance, only recently the Prime Minister made a statement when advocating contributions to the loan which is just about to close. He said that the removal of the Japanese aggression to islands further north, and news of the probable termination of the war in Europe could not be accepted with complacency by the Australians, but that there was a tremendous burden to be shouldered and all too few shoulders to carry it! I believe there may be a great deal of truth in that. But almost within 24 hours of those remarks the Treasurer of the Commonwealth Government, in his Budget Speech, stated that he anticipated 4 per cent. of unemployment in January next, and he provided in his Budget the necessary funds to meet the cost of that unemployment.

When we hear statements like those, we become agitated. We do not really know what is happening. This I do know: It seems as though all the other Allied Nations have no compunction about it and are exercising no delay in preparing for the return to civil life of a huge proportion of their Fighting Forces. As a matter of fact, at the present moment we are receiving into this country huge quantities of goods manufactured in England and in the United States of America, indicating quite clearly that those countries are capable of paying less attention to their respective war efforts than is expected of Australia. Great Britain is on the very doorstep, as it were, of a most formidable enemy. Notwithstanding all the high rates of shipping insurance and the alleged shortage of shipping space to bring tea and other necessary commodities to Australia from India, we find shiploads of goods manufactured in countries many miles further away than India, landed in Australia and sold at prices equivalent to the Australian-made articles. At the present moment there is fierce rivalry between certain nations and a fearful rush to establish or secure markets for the disposal of produce after the war.

If members have watched closely the reports in the daily Press, they will have noted the indications of that rivalry and the frantic efforts made by Allied Nations in order to ensure markets for their products in the post-war period. We have in this mad rush for export markets every sign of the preparations for World War

No. 3—which is exactly how this great rivalry will end up. That is exactly what caused the present war and the war that preceded it. This keen, heated, successful commercial rivalry must inevitably culminate in time in another military clash between the competing nations. What is worrying me at the moment is that we hear very little about the much vaunted new order. Not so much is being said about it at the moment, and I suppose any pronouncement along the lines pursued 12 months or two years ago would be in obvious conflict with the results we can expect if current legislation is any guide.

Many thousands of Australian workers are about to finish up looping the loop. Thousands of these brave boys did not have a permanent job before the outbreak of the present war and never knew what it was to handle a pay envelope. They graduated from that deplorable state of affairs into the Fighting Forces, where they have enjoyed a pay envelope, not very substantial though it should have been. Other Australians have found employment in munition factories where they have received fairly satisfactory pay envelopes. I fear that with the relaxing of the war effort all too many of these will again return to the dole. At this very juncture, I understand that the printing press is very busy indeed printing tickets—dole tickets for the unemployed! The payment will not be known as a State dole this time. It will have a more flowery title—unemployment insurance. A single man, after having trudged and scrambled and slipped through the jungles of New Guinea and the islands beyond and having deteriorated in health so that he can no longer stand up to the requirements of a tropical campaign, will return to Australia where he will receive 25s. a week while unemployed. Should he happen to be a married man he will be paid £2 5s. a week. There is no provision in Labour's policy nor on its political platform for a dole of that description. We stand for the basic wage—and nothing less.

Mr. Triat: And that is low enough.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is too low. Yet these men who have fought for us will get 25s. a week! Never before was Australia in a better position than she is today. Never before was she better equipped industrially than today: never before so

thoroughly mechanised so as to enable her to increase the production of real wealth as she will be at the conclusion of the present war. At this very moment Australia is capable of providing her people with a high standard of living. The member for East Perth pleaded for a higher standard of education, but prefaced his remarks by saying that the excuse always offered in that respect was the chronic shortage of money. Money represents the means of exchange in connection with the creation and distribution of goods and real wealth is what a nation can produce. The possibilities of production in Australia are almost unlimited. It is a positive insult to say to any citizen of this country, this land of great potentialities and capacity to produce real wealth, that the best we can do until he is placed in industry is to issue him with a dole. The principle involved is what I oppose. That is the provision that is being made in our social security legislation.

Twenty-five shilling a week! As a Labour man, I protest against it, because I know that this country can afford more and much more than that. What is the use of instituting committees to investigate a decline in the birth rate? What is the actual cause of the decline in the birth rate? Social and economic insecurity; no guarantee from one day to another that a prospective mother will even be fed, housed or clad decently! Will anyone say that woman in this age is less inclined for motherhood, that she has lost her natural instincts, that she is entirely devoid of Nature's demands? Of course she is not! But what she does want is a guarantee of security that she may live in comfort with her offspring. Give her that, and see whether there will be any necessity for an investigation into the decline of the birth rate. Poverty has brought out degradation, immorality and the rottenness side of human nature, and this condition has been aggravated by the war. But can we expect decent standards of life when we go to war once in every 25 years, when we send away our young men to disembowel others just to appease the passions of international gangsters? Give the people security and see how readily they will respond to Nature.

This country is capable of giving them security. I positively refuse to accept the statement so often made that this country is poor and that it cannot produce all that

is required. I know that 800,000 men, physically the fittest in Australia, plus several hundred thousand young women, also physically fit, are at the moment unemployed in the sense that they are not producing real wealth, and the country is carrying them on and paying them, on the average, a fair wage. But side by side with that wonderful effort and with the aid of a few old and infirm individuals like myself—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must not reflect upon himself.

Mr. MARSHALL: I withdraw and apologise to myself. With the aid of the older men and of the women, we can produce sufficient to feed, even though it be on a restricted basis, no fewer than 12,000,000 souls. Most of our machinery is at present being devoted to the production of destructive implements. Convert that machinery to use for the development of the country and construct from and produce with it, and what would be the limits of this country to raise real wealth? Free the credit without cost at the command of the Commonwealth Bank and what a glorious nation we would have! But no! Everywhere I look I see a move to inculcate into the people the idea that this country is poor and cannot afford much. When the war is over, we shall be told, as we were after the war of 1914-18, that we must economise; we shall have another visit from Sir Otto Niemeyer and we shall have another depression. All I can say is that if the people of Australia tolerate it, they will deserve it.

When I entered this Chamber the one great wrong of which we heard from the then anti-Labour Government was the tariff and its damnable effect upon the primary producer. I well remember the present Lieut.-Governor of the State, a very benevolent individual, a charitable soul and a gentleman, saying on one occasion that the tariff had gone mad. I say that taxation has now gone mad. I want to know from the Premier whether he was at any time consulted regarding the proposed lag in income taxation. All taxpayers within the Commonwealth are accused of being in debt to the Commonwealth Government. I put it to him that if there was a lag—and I deny that there was—at least one half of the money represented by that lag belongs to the State. I ask the Premier whether he gave the Commonwealth Government authority to collect his share of the money represented by that lag. Does the

Premier admit that there was a lag? Is he going to impose on the taxpayers of the State the 75 per cent. of the lag not collected by the Commonwealth? Does he intend to charge me with my share and make me pay? He has the authority to do it.

Some of the States might meet at the expiration of this one-collecting authority agreement and endeavour to get the proceeds of this so-called lag for themselves. Let us assume that our Premier does so. He might yet be asked to do it; there are several other States concerned in this matter. He will not be able to evade his responsibility as the Premier of this State, so far as I am concerned, if it is proved in court that no lag existed, because I will make him repay my share of the 25 per cent. collected by the Commonwealth. I deny that I ever owed the Government taxation for a full 12 months. Assume that the representatives of the several States meet and that our Premier decides that there was no lag, will he refund to me the overpayment made to the Commonwealth? If he decides that there was a lag, will he charge up the 75 per cent. which the Commonwealth claims to be exempting me from paying? Look at the invidious position we are in! I never in my life owed any taxing authority a 12 months' debt. Had the taxing authority issued an assessment to me in July for the taxation on my previous year's earnings, it would have received prompt payment. Because it was lackadaisical or incompetent to assess me earlier, I did lag behind to the extent of several months, but never did I lag behind to the extent of going a full 12 months without meeting the tax owing for the one year. This is barefaced highway robbery. The wild colonial boy was a thorough gentleman compared to those who were responsible for this robbery.

The member for East Perth spoke about the basic rate. The basic rate is quite low enough; but never was there much complaint about the rate, as such, until this highly vicious form of taxation was imposed. What I take strong exception to is the constant talk of politicians about the present prosperity of the working classes of the Commonwealth. The politicians never tire of telling us that never before did Australia experience such prosperity! Full employment for all! That may be true to a degree, but it took a war to bring it about. The war is costing Australia £917,000 every day it goes on. And we could not find that

amount of money for the purpose of employing our own unemployed for a year! What I take strong exception to is the constant reminders of prosperity. A week or two ago the Sydney "Morning Herald" reported Senator Ashley as stating that the result of full time was the payment of £1,220,000 to people earning less than £400 a year, or say £8 a week. Left there without an analysis, the figures look wonderful. Two-thirds of Australia's breadwinners getting £1,220,000 a year shared between them! But I have gone through the figures in order to examine the value of the statement. Firstly, a person on £8 a week, being married, with wife and child, would find himself taxed to the extent of about £1 per week. That cut reduces his income, immediately, to £7 per week. Measuring his income against 1939 prices, we discover that our £1 buys only 12s. 6d. worth today. That is by way of comparison.

So we see immediately that when we measure this wonderfully prosperous pay envelope, containing £8 per week, in terms of actual value, the actual value is no more than £4 7s. 6d. And that is marvellous prosperity! It is well below the basic rate for a man, wife and child. And that is not the worst feature! Even a person now earning £2 a week has to pay 13s. a year in taxation. The old age pensioner who is probably provided by a relative or a friend with free board and lodging misses paying a tax by the margin of 1s. per week. The tax just misses old age and invalid pensioners, provided they are in receipt of free board and lodging. Take a person on £2 a week and measure the value of the purchasing power of that £2 a week now as compared with 1939 prices! Then one discovers that its worth is only about 26s. And one has to pay 13s. per year taxation on that amount. That is the deplorable, the invidious position into which we are driven because the Commonwealth Government will not use its power and authority under Section 51 of the Constitution to control the central bank. We hear such men talking about the betterment of the working classes, and what those men propose to do to heighten the standard of comfort to the working classes. There is the result! In purchasing power, wages are a long way below what they were in 1939; and working men are receiving today less than they were receiving in 1939. It is

futile for politicians to contradict that statement. Another aspect! In the last Budget provision was made for the captains of industry to make deductions from their income tax for all replacements. That, I suggest, is over and above the deductions allowed under the heading of depreciation. I take no exception to that; but I ask, what deductions are allowed to the unfortunate working man for replacements?

When this war commenced, there were hundreds of thousands of people who never knew what it was to have a decent meal, who had no clothes, no furniture, no homes! And so what is to be the position? It comes now to a bare subsistence, with robbery of the balance! We allow captains of industry to make demands for the replacement of their capital goods, but the unfortunate member of the working classes cannot get any deductions allowed in respect of his home. He wants to provide furniture, to replenish his wardrobe, and to make various replacements. Will he get deduction allowances? Oh, no! Not for all the world! He is not permitted to make any deduction. And here we shall have, when the war finishes, all these unfortunate people, many of them having been through trials and tribulations and battles on foreign fields, without the possibility of having saved a shilling with which to start life afresh!

Those who were thrifty and paid deposits on homes will come back, after four or five years of service, to find themselves exactly where they left off, with not one penny more to provide for emergencies. These are the anomalies that give me no hope for the future. I take strong exception to utterances at this time about full-time employment and the large wages that the workers are receiving, because I know the extortionate demands made on their purse, first, by inflation, and, secondly, by taxation. Every member will have received a booklet entitled "Figures and Facts," which has been issued by the Commonwealth Department of Information. Faithful are the facts! True are the figures! The Commonwealth Government boasts about its imposition of taxation. It is delighted to know that it can impose taxation and that, apparently, the people respond without protest. On page

16 of the booklet, the Commonwealth Government has this to say—

Total Commonwealth, State and Local Government taxation revenue in 1938-39 was £137,000,000 out of a national income of £788,000,000—about 17 per cent. Now, in the fifth year of war, total taxation has increased to an estimated £340,000,000 for 1943-44, or 25 per cent. of the national income.

I put it to you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that this is bare-faced robbery and quite unnecessary. No sympathetic good Australian would be delighted about it. The £340,000,000 referred to can only be recovered by charging it into the price of goods; it can come from no other avenue or no other source. In fact, the only avenue through which we can get taxation is when it is put into the prices of goods and commodities. Is it any wonder, as the member for East Perth has complained, that prices are soaring sky-high, when this year goods produced in Australia must carry that burden of £340,000,000, plus other charges? When I talked about debt-free money from the Commonwealth Bank, that was called inflation; but this form of inflation is never questioned. Nor do we hear any comment upon the interest bill of £65,000,000 per annum on the national debt. The major portion of that debt is practically bank credit. Or bank debt! So long as interest is charged on that debt, it is said that that is not inflation. But if the Commonwealth Bank is asked to do the job debt-free, then it is inflation.

I do not propose to start an argument about the characteristics of the various forms of inflation, but I would point out to the member for East Perth that there is little hope of holding down the prices of goods when these annual burdens are constantly increasing, because taxation can only be collected when charged into goods. We have another form of tax, the sales tax. This was imposed to tide us over the depression period; it was to be imposed for only a year or two. It is still with us, and it has risen from £9,000,000 to £26,000,000 notwithstanding the fact that many goods upon which the tax could be levied are not procurable at present, while other goods are rationed. While I was at Wiluna, a young married woman said to me, "I understand that the Commonwealth Government is instructing an investigating committee to find out why we women do not have more children." She continued, "The Commonwealth Government has had the impudence to put

a sales tax of 25 per cent. on Johnson's baby powder, the only powder I use on my child." That is the encouragement young women get to have children! Everything we eat, drink or use is loaded with taxation. Then we find the mother is paid 5s. per week in hard cash for her child; she goes to the shop and pays it back to the Government in the price of the goods which she purchases. These are invidious and dishonest practices, and one cannot speak too strongly in condemnation of such a rotten system. I wish to protest against utterances and statements made from various platforms by people who are advocating investment in war loans. I say right here and now that if no person in the Commonwealth contributed a penny to these loans, it would not make any difference whatever to the war effort.

The Premier: It would!

Mr. MARSHALL: People are being intimidated to invest in the loans by such phrases as "The rich, red, warm blood of Australian men on foreign battlefields"; "You will save a life if you buy a war savings stamp"; "You will save a soldier if you hasten the conclusion of the war by buying a bond." It does not matter much whether one does so or not. There is a motive behind it all and probably members have discovered it by now. One of the most remarkable things is that the first loans to which Australians were invited to subscribe were called "Liberty Loans." Strange to say, loans in America, Canada and England were also called Liberty Loans. Later we changed the name to Victory Loans. Strange to relate, loans today in Canada, England and America are also called Victory Loans. Is it not marvellous how the international gangs work upon the passions of the people and stir their sympathies? The people subscribe to the loans. What for? If members have been observant, they will have realised that during the last loan a greater effort was made to increase the number of the subscribers than was made to get actual contributions.

In America, on one occasion, 177,000 people were employed as war loan organisers, not so much to secure the money as to get subscribers to the loan. I presume members can detect the motive. The more subscribers there are to the loans, the greater number of props there will be for the top-heavy institutions and the more difficult it will be to secure their reform.

Immediately an attempt is made to reform such an institution, all the people who have purchased a bond will be drawn in behind the banks. Those who wish to reform the monetary system will be accused of repudiation tactics. They will be accused of trying to prevent those subscribers from being paid in full. The amount of credit created by private banks—quite illegally and without authority—by their use of the nation's credit will, however, never be mentioned. They will protect themselves behind the screen of those millions of small subscribers—whom I call their financial props—trying to keep up a toppling, obsolete, rotten, invidious, vicious monetary system. If there is not some reform of that system, there will never be any improvement in our conditions. It is of little use talking about money for universities, schools or anything else until we get the Commonwealth Government to take back its correct prerogative from institutions which never had any right to it. Those institutions have issued cheques and created money. The cheques have taken the place of money and have fulfilled commercial obligations to the extent of 99 per cent. within Australia. But it is all illegal money. If I were to counterfeit 2s., I would suffer imprisonment in Fremantle gaol; they, on the other hand, daily counterfeit hundreds of thousands of pounds and go scot-free. There has never been any mention by these men of the interest burden.

When introducing the Budget, our own Treasurer made some reference to the financial position of Western Australia. He said that we were in the very happy position of being able to reduce our State national debt. I suggest to the Treasurer that if he wants any proof of the actual state of prosperity in Western Australia, and wants to get a true and correct alignment upon how he is paying off the State national debt, he should refuse to allow the Commonwealth Government to expend one penny in this State. If he will do that, he will readily see how prosperous we are. We had an experience in 1930. What is happening now is that, while the State Government is borrowing little or nothing and its sinking fund is growing, it can catch up temporarily because the Commonwealth Government is borrowing hundreds of millions of pounds a year and spending some of it in Western Australia, and thus making

it possible for us to collect taxation. What we are actually doing is this: We are borrowing money to pay off debts created by previous borrowers. If a halt to borrowing were called tomorrow we would have a repetition of the 1930 state of affairs; there would be another depression.

That is the position we are in, and it is of little use the Treasurer misleading the people into the belief that we are on the verge of relieving the State taxpayer of his obligations so far as the national debt is concerned. Although we are not borrowing, the Commonwealth Government is doing so. The Commonwealth Government is borrowing extensively and spending the money, thus making it possible for the State Treasurer to show some degree of prosperity. I now wish to make a few quotations, because there are certain members who will never agree that what I argue is practicable and feasible and—may I suggest—quite sane: probably that is why it is not so well understood! There is a man named Lord Keynes. I think he is one of the directors of the Bank of England and plays a very important part in advising the Imperial Government on its economic policy. Broadcasting on the 23rd March, 1943, he had this to say—

Nowadays money does not matter and if we have the men, machines and money we can do anything we choose within the limits of physical capacity.

A paper sometimes quoted by the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe is the London "Times." That paper on the 24th and 25th March, 1943, also had something to say about national credit. That is what it said—

Credits . . . issued by the banks as loans . . . are really national credit owing their value to the capacity of the country to produce goods and services . . . Book-keeping technique to facilitate the production of goods and services . . . plays much the same part in economic life as a railway ticket plays in transportation.

Now I will quote Mr. J. B. Chifley who, dealing with post-war reconstruction in the course of a broadcast, said—

You will perhaps have noticed that nowhere in this talk have I discussed questions of finance in relation to our reconstruction plans. The war has taught us that the real limits are physical, not financial. It is manpower, material and willingness to work, which set a limit to what we can do.

In view of that, why get on a platform and intimidate people and tell them that

if they buy a 6d. savings stamp they will save the life of a soldier? Can it be believed that such hypocrisy could prevail! But it does exist, daily! Governor Eccles, head of the Federal Reserve Bank Board of the United States said—

The banks can create and destroy money. Bank credit is money. It is the money we do most of our business with, not with the currency which we usually think of as money.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th Edition, under the heading of Banking and Credit says—

Banks create credit. It is a mistake to suppose that bank credit is created to any important extent by the payment of money into the banks. A loan made by a bank is a clear addition to the amount of money in the community.

Mr. R. G. Hawtrey, one of the most bitter opponents of this invidious system of banking and its results, had this to say in his book, "Trade Depression and the Way Out"—

When a bank lends it creates money out of nothing.

That is true. It creates money merely by the addition of figures in a ledger. R. G. Hawtrey was Assistant Under Secretary to the British Treasury. Keynes, whom I have already quoted, also had this to say—

There can be no doubt that all deposits are created by the banks.

That is true, because every loan they make by putting figures in a ledger puts money into circulation which ultimately finds itself reposing in a bank as a deposit. It is little use coming forward in this or any other Chamber and trying to do anything of material benefit to the welfare of the people of Australia, or to talk about permanent peace until we have first taken back from an international oligarchy the power they have assumed to use the nations' credit to create wars and dominate and control destinies the world over.

MR. OWEN (Swan): In his opening remarks, the member for Murchison stated that this section of the debate on the Estimates should be reserved for a discussion of matters of general policy and that individual items should be debated later on. I appreciate that advice but, although I am a comparatively new member, I have had sufficient experience to know that the Chairman of Committees can proceed at such a speed in matters of this kind that I am not sure of

getting an opportunity to speak later on! The figures show that the Premier has, on paper at least, again balanced the Budget and declared a small surplus.

The Premier: Do not say on paper; it is "dinkum!"

Mr. OWEN: Some credit must be given to him for this, but personally I do not think it is such a great achievement. It can be compared to the times in which we live and with the budget of the average householder. Wages are pegged so that the income of each particular household is more or less fixed. Prices are controlled by regulation, and the position is also affected by the fact that ration coupons must be surrendered before one can make many purchases. In addition, many commodities whether rationed or otherwise are in short supply. As a result there is not much opportunity to spend money. Therefore it is found, at the end of the year, that most households, in spite of the heavy taxation, finish up with a small credit balance. But this credit balance is not a real indication of the wealth of the householder because his assets in the way of house, furniture, fittings and even clothes have so deteriorated that to repair or replace them will absorb all that credit balance and probably some more besides.

How true is that in the affairs of this State where we find that in spite of several surpluses the State assets in the way of railways, buildings, equipment, plant and fittings have greatly deteriorated! A vast amount of money will be needed to put them into proper working order. Amongst those assets I might include the school buildings and equipment. They are in a shocking condition practically right through the State, but more particularly in the rural areas and the country towns. In many places the classrooms are overcrowded and the equipment is in urgent need of repair. I support the suggestion made by the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie who advocated that the Education Department should institute a repair system by means of a mobile or travelling workshop. Such a unit could be quipped as a carpenter's shop with, perhaps, some smithing facilities. The whole outfit could be mounted on a truck or trailer so that it could travel about the country, thus enabling the necessary repairs to be done on the spot. Having fixed up one school it could go on to the next. By this means

not only would the equipment be kept in better order, but the cost to the Education Department would be much less than at present.

I know that the Education Department has been advised of the condition of many schools in my electorate. The department has replied that the matter will be attended to when the Public Works Department has a man or men to do the work. The condition of the railways has been aired to a large extent recently, and I notice that the Public Service Commissioner in his report, part of which was published in the paper this morning, mentions the Government buildings in and around the city. I heartily agree with what he says. In case someone points out that great minds think alike, I would add that the matter is so patent that all must be aware of it. It is hard to pick out any individual Government building in the city that needs special attention because they are all so bad. There is, however, one in particular, namely, the Agricultural Department building.

The Premier: It is by a long way the worst!

Mr. OWEN: Rather I should say that the building which houses the main part of the Agricultural Department, because many branches of the department are so scattered around the city that it would take a day to visit them, let alone describe the quarters in which they are housed—

The Minister for Mines: There are very nice views there.

Mr. OWEN: The Minister for Mines does not work in that department. The main building is in such a picturesque setting with gardens on either side, that one can hardly credit the deplorable conditions existing within its walls. Side by side in it are the administrative offices, makeshift laboratories, and dirty, dusty storerooms. There professional officers, some of world-wide repute, endeavour to work in an atmosphere which almost stifles them, let alone the ambition which prompted them to take up that work in the first place. Of course that building has a certain historic value. I believe it was once the Assembly Chamber and as such we must respect it, but it is certainly not a fit and proper place to house a professional department whose work means so much to the development of this State. It would take too long to deal with the working conditions of each individual branch,

but I would like to mention one or two. The wheat branch is cooped—I could not say housed—in what I imagine was once the gallery. That particular position is not comfortable at any time of the year. In the winter it is very cold and bleak and, because the galvanised iron roof is so close overhead and in the direct rays of the sun, the atmosphere there in the summer-time can only be compared with that of a hot-air oven.

The entomological branch is not much better off. It is housed in what was apparently an upstairs verandah. Here can be found three or four men cooped up without a chance to do their work properly. Most of the other branches are in the same condition. Downstairs we find the veterinary branch. It is housed in what might be termed dungeons where the smell of rabbits, guinea pigs, dingo scalps and, later, probably emu beaks, only adds to the general discomfort. When a post-mortem of some animal is being carried out the stench pervades the whole atmosphere of this branch. The fumigating chamber of the wheat branch is downstairs, and when grain is being fumigated the smell of the carbon-bisulphide can be detected in all parts of the building. Each and every person is suspected of needing a hot bath and the generous use of a certain brand of soap. How can members expect officers to give of their best under such conditions? It is impossible! My criticism is not altogether directed at the present Government. This state of affairs has been going on for many years, although it is admittedly becoming worse. I have known the place for more than 20 years and the conditions have generally declined right through. Some indication might be given by the fact that in one particular room there are pin-up photos of actresses. I do not know their names because they were popular probably 30 years ago, which was before my time. These photos have been pasted on the wall, which is a good indication that no paint has been applied to those walls for 30 years at least.

In the Agricultural Department there are, as I have said, many professional officers of almost world-wide fame. I put this forward: Those officers must tend to develop an inferiority complex when confronted with the necessity to entertain visitors, often noted scientists from overseas. I myself have felt almost too ashamed to invite visitors

to the department to see the conditions that obtain. It is high time something was done to overcome such an unsatisfactory state of affairs, and I was glad to hear the Minister say that provision was being made for the provision of a new animal health laboratory. It is certainly not before its time. I hope the new building to house the Agricultural Department as a whole will soon be erected and that it will be equipped with modern laboratories that will do justice to the department, and to the highly qualified officers working there.

The Minister for Mines: Every member of the Government is with you there.

Mr. OWEN: I shall refer briefly to a few other matters that specifically affect my electorate. One outstanding requirement is the extension of the electricity supply. Particularly in the rural areas is there a crying need for an ample supply of cheap power. Many districts are fortunate in having one available for use not only for lighting and household purposes but in the form of power for pumping, woodcutting and so on. Because it lies on the outskirts of the metropolitan area, the Swan electorate has perhaps more electricity extensions approved than has any other district. I must admit that the Government has done much for the electorate in the past and no doubt even at present is endeavouring to assist, but it is handicapped. An extension of the system to Maida Vale is most essential. That extension was approved some years ago and the necessary work was actually commenced. The main low-tension wires have been installed and many houses are wired ready for the current. Unfortunately, a transformer and some miles of high-tension wire are required to complete the installation.

On making inquiries, I was informed that the delays in connection with the work were mainly due to lack of manpower. It certainly cannot be on the score of lack of money because the settlers paid their guarantee money more than four years ago. It would be interesting to know what has happened to the money they contributed, and I trust that the small amount of interest that must have accumulated will be credited to the district. Other extensions have been approved in the electorate, and it is my earnest hope that the Government will make a start on them immediately manpower and possibly materials are available. Another matter that has come to the fore most prominently

recently and of which possibly more will be heard in the future relates to the water supply problem. Just now Western Australia is experiencing one of the driest seasons on record and many rural centres are woefully short of water. Fortunately, the metropolitan area has large reserves. Members possibly appreciate the fact that the Swan electorate has within its boundaries the four main reservoirs supplying water for domestic purposes—Mundaring, Canning, Churchman's Brook and Victoria. Notwithstanding that fact, portions of the electorate are without water supplies. Possibly the two districts most unsatisfactorily circumstanced in that regard are Maida Vale and Kalamunda. The latter district is surrounded by dams which are within six or eight miles of the hills resort. Kalamunda is also only eight miles from the main link—as it is termed—between the metropolitan water supply system and the Mundaring Weir scheme. Notwithstanding that fact, it is impossible to get water through to Kalamunda. I recognise the difficulties involved because Kalamunda is situated on a higher elevation than the reservoirs, and a pumping station will be required in order to convey water to that centre. When I prosecuted inquiries in that regard, I was surprised to learn how extensively the question of the Kalamunda water supply had been investigated.

Under existing circumstances it seems that the people there will have to continue suffering hardship until an extension of the Mundaring scheme can be carried out. The waiting period imposes real hardships upon the settlers and the residents. Last winter, many of them bought extra tanks, while others endeavoured to do so but found it impossible. Others have gone to the expense of putting down bores as a result of which some have been able to secure water supplies. It is doubtful, however, whether those supplies will hold out throughout the summer. In the Maida Vale district there are many orchards and poultry farms. Producers there have had to sink bores to a depth of 80 or 100 feet in order to reach water, and that has involved considerable expense. The provision of pumping plants has added to that expenditure and yet possibly by the end of the summer all will have been in vain. It is very disturbing to think that after these people have gone to so much expense all the equipment will have to be scrapped

when the water scheme is extended. It is my sincere hope that the Government will make some extra effort to supply both Kalamunda and Maida Vale with an adequate water supply. In my opinion, the best scheme to be adopted would be to join up the main link at South Guildford with the main passing through Maida Vale and on to Kalamunda. If that plan were adopted, there would be consumers along the whole route, and the cost would be spread over a large number of settlers and residents with the result that the expenditure could possibly be met out of ordinary rates.

Reverting to the Estimates under discussion, I agree that where possible every effort should be made to balance the Budget, but I am rather inclined to support the remarks by the member for Mt. Magnet, who said that it would be better to have a deficit of anything up to £500,000 if the State could make more progress. I believe that would be so, particularly if that progress would in time enable us to achieve not merely a small surplus but a large surplus in later years. In conclusion, I would remind members of the story of the prodigal son and his worthy brother. It was the brother who by means of careful living received the praise of all concerned. No doubt he balanced the budget, but it was the prodigal son who, after his waywardness, collected the fatted calf. I suggest to the Premier that the fatted calf in the form of increased Commonwealth grants might well be awarded to that State which, by adopting a bold and progressive policy, incurs a moderately large deficit but develops its territory in so doing.

MR. SHEARN (Maylands): In view of the lateness of the hour—

The Premier: It is not late. We have been two months on this debate and want to get along.

Mr. SHEARN: I was not suggesting it was time to adjourn, but I am desirous of facilitating the desire of the Premier and to give other members an opportunity to speak after having listened to the member for Murchison solving the financial problem. I wish to bring before the notice of the Government two matters of extreme and immediate urgency. The first was referred to by you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, a few evenings ago. During recent days

quite a considerable number of people in my electorate have approached me about the shortage of ice, and several ice vendors have told me that their supplies are no longer available. Some people might consider that this is not a matter of moment, but it is a vital matter to a great mass of people living in your electorate, Sir, and mine. In view of the weather we are having at present and may continue to have in the next few months, the matter is one that the Premier should tackle seriously. I suggest that it is his responsibility to ascertain what can be done to meet the difficult conditions at present existing.

This trouble has been gradually developing over the years, but the present situation is such that I consider it the duty of the Government to take action. I am not speaking without having made full and definite inquiries. I find the position to-day is that the ice supplies in the metropolitan area are from 25 to 30 per cent. less than in 1939, and of course all members are aware that as a result of war conditions, there has been a great influx of people from country districts to the metropolitan area. In consequence of this, the difficulty has become accentuated, until now the capacity of the existing plants is totally inadequate to meet the needs of the market. There are three or four fairly large plants that have been closed down for some reason unknown to me. What is to be done about that? The suggestion has been made that people ought to purchase refrigerators, but you, Mr. Chairman, pointed out that the price of a refrigerator is quite beyond the financial resources of the average householder, and even if he could find the money, I know from experience I have had on behalf of other people that it is problematical whether he could secure the delivery of one.

The Premier: It is practically a certainty that he could not.

Mr. SHEARN: I understand that a quota system has been applied throughout Australia. As a result of representations made to Senator Keane, I gather that he recognised that States such as Western Australia and Queensland, where climatic conditions differ materially from those of the other States, ought to receive some additional priority in the matter of the supply of refrigerators. This, however, would not meet

the situation as it affects ordinary working people. I feel concerned about the present position and the outlook. This is a matter that we cannot afford to think about for 12 months; it calls for immediate action. The Premier should explore the possibility or practicability of making contact with the manufacturers of ice. I understand that there is one in the Premier's district, one in the Bunbury district, one at Albany, and others elsewhere, and I want to know whether it would be practicable to make an arrangement under which the supplies of ice available in the metropolitan area could be augmented by supplies transported from those country districts. If this could be done, it would alleviate the position that exists today. I understand that something along those lines was done in the past.

The Premier, too, ought to consider the practicability of establishing an additional freezer in Perth. Despite what private enterprise is doing, there is room for the Government to establish freezing works in Perth. The capacity required is about 50 tons per day. Alternatively, the Government should give private enterprise an opportunity of securing material and labour in order that the present storage capacity of ice works might be augmented. This is an important matter that affects the health of the community, and I hope the Premier will be prepared to do something about it speedily.

The Premier: As we did to meet the firewood shortage.

Mr. SHEARN: The Government did an excellent job in that direction. In complaining of the present difficulties in regard to the shortage of ice supplies, it is only fair that one should suggest methods to overcome them. I have proposed that arrangements should be made to bring ice from the districts I have enumerated. If this could be done, the situation would be relieved. There is quite a number of ice-making plants. I know of one almost on the border of my district that has been doing an excellent job, but in consequence of a breakdown in the plant, it can no longer supply its former clientele. One manufacturer who has ceased operations in the last day or two informed me that he had requested another vendor to take over 175 customers, and that he could not do it. Thus a great part of my district—and I imagine this is common to all metropolitan

districts—will probably be without supplies of ice. I feel sure that both the Premier and the Minister for Health must be seized of the seriousness of the position. I hope the Minister will give the matter thought and, if he cannot devise a better scheme, will explore right away the possibility of calling up available resources from the country where, as a result of the exodus from those districts, the demand has fallen off, and thus relieve the situation in the metropolitan area.

Another matter of almost equal importance is the gradually increasing acuteness of the housing situation. Of course I shall be reminded that there is a war on, but I am not at all satisfied that we are making any real effort to meet a situation which day by day is becoming worse for the community. I made some inquiries and found—I do not know the reason for it, though it may be known to the Premier—that there is greater progress in relation to rebuilding in the other States than in Western Australia despite the availability of raw materials here. I trust the Premier will take note of this, and see that some consideration is given to temporary provision, at any rate, for the people of this community. From personal experience I know that the housing position today is such that when the next winter arrives, unless conditions improve materially in the meantime, results will accrue that one does not care to speculate about. There are other matters I might discuss, but those two I feel are of such immediate importance that I have taken the liberty of introducing them on these Estimates in the hope that the Premier will cause something to be done.

MR. HOLMAN (Forrest): At the outset of my remarks I would ask permission to pay not only my own personal tribute, but also the tribute of the people I represent in the Forrest electorate, to the memory of the late Mr. Gerald Foley, who, in addition to being chairman of the Broadcasting Commission, was secretary of the Timber Workers' Union in this State. The labours of Mr. Foley on behalf of the timber workers of Western Australia, who form a large proportion of the Forrest electorate, are incalculable in their beneficial results. His loss is indeed a sad one, especially to that section of the community, as well as a misfortune to the State as a whole. In ad-

dition, Mr. Foley's loss will be felt throughout the Commonwealth of Australia. In speaking to the Estimates a question arises which I desire to bring before the Committee, a question which has been debated at some length in the columns of our daily and weekly Press. It is a controversy on the existence of tuberculosis in our dairy herds. I am not at all satisfied as to the manner in which this problem is being met. In point of fact, it is causing doubt in the minds of the mothers of the community, and moreover, because of that doubt, is capable of causing great harm to the dairy industry.

The reason I bring the question forward is that the dairying industry, like the timber industry, is very closely connected with the Forrest electorate. It is only of recent years, by virtue of the assistance given to the dairying industry by the Government of Western Australia and also by the Labour Government of the Commonwealth, that the industry is now getting on its feet. As dairy farmers themselves express it, "At last we are in receipt of a living wage." But the discussion proceeding in the Press can do the industry an immense amount of harm. On the 29th October a weekly paper published an article that contained some very sweeping statements as to existence of T.B. in the cows providing the metropolitan area with milk. The statement contains a reference to the cows in the metropolitan area. When that reference speaks of the milk being served in the metropolitan area, it casts a reflection on the herds of country producers in the South-West and other dairying districts of the State. I believe that about two-thirds of the milk supplied to the metropolitan area comes from the South-West. The statements made in "The Sunday Times" were of a definite character, and the person who furnished that copy to the paper had evidently gone into the subject fairly fully. He criticised the various Government departments which had the means of testing for such germs in milk supplies. He also criticised the number of itinerant veterinary surgeons at the disposal of the Government.

Mr. Doney called attention to the state of the Committee.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

MR. HOLMAN: I thank the member for Williams-Narrogin for his action, because I believe that members who have now re-

turned to the Chamber will remain to listen to a somewhat interesting debate. As I was stating in regard to information supplied to the "Sunday Times" as to alleged T.B. in cows supplying the metropolitan area with milk, the writer has drawn attention to the fact that our own kiddies are partaking of this milk, whereas the authorities in command of the Allied Forces in Western Australia have insisted on any milk supplied to their men coming from herds free from tuberculosis. Further, they insist on that milk being pasteurised. The following week a health inspector also contributed to the paper what the "Sunday Times" termed "alarming disclosures." The article stated that the powers-that-be admitted that no particular inspection had been made in order to ascertain the incidence of T.B. in the herds that supply the metropolitan area with milk. Both those articles omit to give the name or official status of the writers, so that any clear-thinking person must feel inclined to discount to a certain extent some of the statements made by them. On the other hand, one cannot disregard statements made during the week by responsible officials.

There is a statement in "The West Australian" by Mr. Baron Hay to the effect that he was unable to comment on the quality of the milk supplied to the metropolitan area. He said that it was a matter which concerned other authorities, but that it was a recognised fact that tuberculosis in dairy cows was transmissible to man. The extent to which milk is responsible for the infection of children in this State, he said, was not known. So we have a responsible official admitting that the degree of infection in children is not known. We also have a statement by Dr. Henzell, the Medical Superintendent of the Wooroloo Sanatorium. He said it was understood that there was a considerable amount of tuberculosis in cattle in the metropolitan area, and that the risk to the consumers lay in the occurrence of tubercle bacilli in the milk. We also have a statement by Dr. Park, the Commissioner of Public Health. He said that the suggestion by a veterinary surgeon that there is in the dairy cattle of this State a large proportion of reactors seems to be an overstatement. In the course of his remarks to the Press, he admitted that his opinion

was a guess, inasmuch as no effort seemed to have been made to determine the situation throughout the State. He went on to say, "It is largely a matter of compensation." I take it he meant by this that compensation would have to be paid to the dairy farmers whose herds contained a percentage of reactors that would have to be slaughtered.

The fact that such compensation might have to be paid is therefore evidently the reason why there is not to be a complete examination of the herds for tuberculosis. The chairman of the Metropolitan Milk Board, Mr. Stannard, also replied to the alleged disclosures made by the "Sunday Times." I believe Mr. Stannard when he said that the correspondent cast a most unwarranted reflection on a great number of milk producers. That is why I prefaced my remarks by the statement that immense harm could be done, and possibly had been done, to our milk producers. He also said that a scheme for stopping the supply of the milk from T.B. cows to the Allied Forces had been in operation for some time. In America, all herds are tested for T.B. reactors; according to one statement, no fewer than 4,000,000 cattle had been destroyed in America because they were found to be reactors to the tuberculosis test. Mr. Stannard also said that the board has endeavoured to bring about compulsory pasteurisation of milk, but that the present time is inopportune for its introduction.

I ask the Government to take this matter in hand. After all, the Government should be the protectors of all sections of the community. If one section is attacked by anonymous letter writers, the Government should stand four square and make an official statement on the position. If an examination of the facts disclosed that it was necessary to take drastic action, such action should immediately be taken by the Government, especially where the health of the community was involved, or where the livelihood of the producers was threatened. If it is found that cattle supplying the milk for the community are suffering from T.B., then the necessary finance should be provided to deal with such an unhealthy situation. I sincerely hope that the Government will not delay in taking action, because the matter is not only serious for the producers; there is the psychological effect on the community that must be considered. Many people have

approached me and asked the simple question whether they should continue to buy milk for their children. That the Government should take immediate and necessary action is my desire. There are one or two other items which I want to discuss.

In regard to the Education Department, I shall again quote from letters that have appeared in the Press. I am not the only member who has taken notice of this particular controversy. The member for Pingelly has done so. He has replied to certain allegations that have appeared in the Press. I refer to letters that were printed under the heading of "Education Needs," which dealt mainly with parents and citizens' associations. The idea originally was that these associations, which have been doing such marvellous work in their own centres, should again hold an annual conference at which matters concerning the education of children—and particularly of country children—could be discussed. The contribution of Miss Hooton, president of the W.A. Parents and Citizens' Federation, was very sensible. Her criticism was constructive, and I compliment her on her letter and on the work she has done for the association and the well-being of children in the past. I am afraid I cannot say the same for the correspondent signing himself R. W. Phillips, president of the association at Tambellup. His audacity is something beyond my comprehension. His flamboyant statements in the Press warrant his being taken to task. In his remarks he stated—

Our local association of this small town discovered ten years ago that any approach to State members or Government departments for building additions or equipment for the poverty-stricken country schools was a "mere whisper in the wilderness."

Further down he said—

It would appear that the personnel of our State Parliament lack the vision and initiative to give country educational facilities a strong priority.

That gentleman is "talking through his hat." If a man with that type of mentality is president of the association at Tambellup, all I can say is that I am sorry for the association; and I think I can speak not only on my own behalf but also on behalf of other members of this Chamber. His remarks are a reflection on our present Minister for Education who, incidentally, has assisted me on every occasion on which I have approached him on behalf of the

parents, citizens and school children in my electorate. I freely admit that primary education and the facilities for it have been sadly neglected in past years. I also admit that, because of the crisis we are passing through, we shall have to wait until such remedies as we would like to see put into operation can be effected. I would like to see another form of education to prevent such foolish statements being made by irresponsible persons concerning members of Parliament in this State.

I compliment the department and the East Claremont school on enabling pupils taking the country correspondence course to come to the city. It is only a few weeks since those children were brought to Perth, and that visit was rendered of greater value by the parents of the children at the East Claremont school. The education derived from that trip was of great value to the children concerned. With the Minister for Education, I had an opportunity to visit the children, and I am quite convinced that much good will result from their experience. It will broaden their outlook and give them some idea of education standards in the city. I suggest to the department that it should arrange some trips to the country for metropolitan children in order that they might see the disabilities from which country children suffer. That is quite a different story. It is only necessary to go through my own electorate—through the mill towns—to see some of the hardships that children endure. Some have to travel miles to the smaller schools, and teachers are required to teach children from the lowest standard up to the seventh class at the one time. Much good would come out of visits of city children to the country. It would broaden their vision and would react on their outlook in later life. At Brunswick Junction at present there is a move afoot to establish a youth centre similar to centres being planned in other parts of the State. In this connection, I would like to pay a tribute to the Town Planning Commissioner, Mr. Davidson, for the assistance he has given to projects of this kind.

I desire now to refer to a matter that has been mentioned by other members. I speak of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the question of vermin eradication. My attention has been drawn to the condition of cattle trucks that transport stock to various parts of the State. I have

been informed—and believe—that those trucks are not receiving the attention they should. During a certain debate in this Chamber we heard of the incidence of mastitis, mastitis and contagious abortion amongst cattle in the South-West. I am informed that trucks used for the transport of cattle from the South-West to the Midland slaughter-yards are also used to take back to farms in the South-West prize cattle or high-grade stock used for breeding purposes. These cattle trucks are evidently not cleaned out before the high-grade cattle are placed in them. We can see the danger that must arise. It is conceivable and highly probable that many of the cattle taken to the slaughter-yards could be infected with these diseases. It is also highly probable that when the choice cattle are trans-shipped to the farms and travel in these uncleaned vans they could become infected with those diseases. That is an archaic state of affairs! I believe that before the war in Germany and other European countries the vans were immediately disinfected after cattle had been taken from them. That should be the position in this State. It is of no use to appoint a Select Committee to go into these matters if we do not take the necessary precautions. The old saying, "Prevention is better than cure," stands out in this particular instance. I hope this matter will be looked into.

Carrying on with the Railway Department, I received earlier in the session certain replies from the Minister for Railways to my questions relating to the housing of railway employees. He acknowledged that there was a serious shortage of housing accommodation for the staff and that as a result employees had to refuse transfers and promotions. He also assured me that the department had a programme for building 100 houses as a post-war measure. In the meantime the employees are suffering. When the Minister starts on this building programme I am going to ask him to change the whole of the present idea of railway housing. I have been in some of the houses and I do not blame the railwaymen for their criticism. It has been put to me that because the Commissioner of Railways builds these houses in the railway yards he gets away with almost anything. In the town of Harvey, in the district represented by the member for Murray-Wellington, there

is the spectacle of two railway houses in the railway yard and their lavatories are right on the road and directly opposite the Harvey hospital! Not only that but, when passing through that town the other day, I noticed that one did not even have the trap on. The pans were in full view of the public and provided a wonderful convenience for the flies of the Harvey district. It is only recently that we read in the Press of the spread of enteritis in the goldfields areas. We are told that it is because of the abnormal number of flies now in those districts. But how much worse is it to have lavatories to provide the means for flies to spread this disease opposite a hospital! I do not blame the Minister for Health for the position; I blame the railway authorities.

The Minister for Mines: If they are right alongside one of my hospitals I will have to shift the hospital.

Mr. HOLMAN: I hope that some better plan will be provided when new houses are built for the railway employees. I could mention a number of other cases in connection with the railways, but having regard to the lateness of the hour I shall wait until that particular item is being dealt with on the Estimates. Another question I wish to raise has to do with the timber workers of this State. We have heard a lot about the new order and the post-war period, and what is going to happen when this wonderful era dawns. I hope and trust that, as distinct from my memory of the previous treatment of timber workers—and I can safely say during my father's life, too—this time they will get some benefit from the promised new era. It appears to me that they have never had their fair share in any of the prosperity that this State has enjoyed. Probably they have had it by way of increased wages, but let us not forget that increased wages are granted mainly because of increases in the cost of living. I therefore do not term such an increase a suitable reward. I believe that there should be some means of providing more comfortable conditions for these people because they have to live in the bush areas.

I was struck this afternoon by the remarks of the member for East Perth when he was speaking about hotels. He said that

reforms should be put into operation so that a more equitable distribution could be made to the workers in order that they could have a drink when they felt the need of it. But little has been heard of the need of the timber worker when he desires a drink. Some of these mills are between 20 and 30 miles from the nearest hotel. Incidentally, some of the bush camps are between 40 and 50 miles away. What chance have those workers of enjoying the privilege of a drink? Who is more worthy, after the hard work that they perform in handling the jarrah and karri trees of the South-West, of consideration than these workers, especially the fallers? I can name one place in particular, Hakea, the No. 4 State mill, which is between 20 and 30 miles from the State hotel at Dwellingup. Those workers have no opportunity to come in after work and have a drink. They have much less opportunity now of being provided with bottled beer or bottled liquor of any sort because of the shortage of bottled liquor and because, in the majority of cases, especially in the city and larger country centres, it is being sold over the counter at exorbitant prices.

Those workers are justly entitled to a fair share in the distribution of comforts and amenities such as are enjoyed by workers in the metropolitan area and elsewhere in the State. I hope the authorities will see fit, if they are not prepared to provide them with an hotel, at least to allow them to have a gallon license. As it is, all they are able to get very often is cheap wine, concerning the drinking of which there has been considerable criticism. Another disability suffered by the timber workers is that because of the rentals paid they are deprived of the right to exercise the franchise for the Legislative Council. In the course of previous debates I have heard it said that only property owners, or in other words, those with their feet firmly planted in the soil should have that privilege. What section of the community could be regarded as having their feet more firmly implanted in the soil than those who are engaged in chopping down the giant jarrah? The heavy work that is evidently their heritage makes the claim in that respect only too obvious. Those men are penalised in many ways. They and their families cannot enjoy the many social amenities that are

available to city dwellers and, as affording them some relief in that respect, I urge that—having regard to the war situation—timber workers be granted additional petrol supplies to enable them to take their families to the larger centres where they may enjoy some of the amenities of life.

I hope that these men will, under the new order of which we have heard so much, be able to participate in any housing scheme that may be launched. I have not gathered much encouragement from what I have read or heard in this respect. I also hope that they will be able to secure refrigerators and other domestic comforts that at present are entirely lacking. The timber workers certainly come within the category of those referred to by the member for Murchison as producing the real wealth of the country. From statements made from time to time, it is clear that the timber workers will be called upon to play a prominent part in giving effect to post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation plans. The Civil Defence and Food Commissioner from Ceylon, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, in the course of a published statement said—

There will be a considerable demand for Western Australian timber in Ceylon after the war, particularly for railway sleepers for relaying our railway tracks.

In addition to that, it is easy to visualise the enormous quantity of timber that will be necessary to carry out the post-war activities that are contemplated, particularly in connection with the post-war housing scheme and the standardisation of Australian railway gauges. Strange to relate, we are now being told that when the war is over it will be necessary to import timber in connection with the housing scheme. That statement was actually made in Canberra recently. As regards any scheme that may be arranged for the settlement of soldiers or for closer settlement generally, I would remind the Government that when such schemes were in operation in years gone by we had the spectacle of huge quantities of timber being ringbarked or cut down, in connection with which the economic waste was terrific. Further than that, the loss to the State from a financial point of view was almost beyond computation. I suggest to the Government that in any such scheme as may be launched this time, the possibilities regarding the utilisation of

timber that will have to be cleared on areas chosen for settlement, should be fully investigated. If possible spot mills should be provided so as to make full use of the timber that will be available and thus help to do away with the necessity for importations.

After the conclusion of the 1914-18 war, much to the disgust of many returned soldier settlers who obtained war service homes, considerable quantities of timber were imported from the islands to the north of Australia for the building of these homes. Much of that timber had been attacked by borers and in a very short space of time it was rendered almost completely useless because of the continued activities of those insects. With the use of the bulldozers the pulling of timber and clearing will be accelerated. In that respect I hope the Government will take every possible step to ensure that plant, including bulldozers and other types of machinery now used by the Military Forces, will not fall into the hands of private enterprise for the exploitation of the people, but that the Government itself will secure control over that plant for the benefit of the people as a whole. I must confess that I appear to be somewhat unfortunate in that so often I am a late-comer in debates of this description. On this occasion I shall not delay the Committee any longer although I have much more that I could deal with. I shall reserve my remarks and criticisms until in due course we deal with the items concerned.

[Mr. Fox took the Chair.]

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall): I do not propose to delay members long at this late hour. Mention has been made that these accounts take a considerable amount of understanding, and I confess that although I have a not inconsiderable knowledge of accountancy, I have experienced some difficulty. I wish to raise a point at this stage because I hope the Premier will be able to disabuse my mind of what might be a misunderstanding in connection with the amount of money we are receiving from the Commonwealth under the uniform tax scheme. Probably the Premier will be able to reply on some appropriate item under the Treasury vote. It will be observed that the amount received last year was £2,546,000. Included in that is an amount of £275,750 representing the hospital fund tax.

The Minister for Mines: That is paid into the hospital trust fund.

Mr. LESLIE: Where was this amount shown in previous years before uniform taxation came into operation?

The Minister for Mines: It was not shown at all.

Mr. LESLIE: In 1939-40 we received from income tax, financial emergency tax, and dividend duty a sum of £2,273,766 and there was also another £270,000 from hospital tax which brought the total amount of taxation in that year to £2,543,766. Incidentally, in 1940-41 the total including hospital tax was £2,641,168, and in 1941-42 the total was £2,333,867, not including the hospital tax of £292,700. I have heard it suggested that we are well off under the uniform tax scheme, but it seems to me as if we are down to the extent of well over £100,000. This calls for some explanation. Not only are we down to that extent, but I submit that, by virtue of the buoyancy of employment and the additional earnings that workers are receiving at present, our receipts should be actually greater than that amount. I raise this point in the hope that the Premier will explain how we appear to be well over ££100,000 worse off under the Commonwealth uniform tax scheme than we were previously, even in 1939-40 when the measure of employment in this State was not as great as it is to-day. I have an item in mind on which I propose to raise the point again in the hope of getting a reply from the Premier. I have also quite a number of other questions but these will be best brought up when specific Votes come before the Chamber for consideration.

Vote put and passed.

This concluded the general debate.

Votes and items discussed as follows:—

Votes—Legislative Assembly, £3,460; Joint House Committee, £4,895; Joint Printing Committee, £6,110; Joint Library Committee, £265; Premier's Office, £9,918; Treasury, £30,930; Governor's Establishment, £2,488; Executive Council, £5; London Agency, £9,785; Public Service Commissioner, £1,726; Government Motor Car Service, £1,994; Audit, £18,250; Compassionate Allowances, etc., £2,984; Government Stores, £19,610—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.55 p.m.