

# Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 22nd October, 1929.

	PAGE
Question: Land Settlement, 3,500 farms scheme ...	1074
Leave of absence ... ..	1074
Deputy Speaker, nomination ... ..	1074
Bills: Agricultural Bank Act Amendment, 1A. ...	1074
Industries Assistance, 1A. ... ..	1074
Interpretation Act Amendment, 1A. ... ..	1074
Licensing Act Amendment, 1A. ... ..	1074
Roman Catholic New Norcia Church Property, 1A. ... ..	1074
Dried Fruits Act Continuance, 3B. ... ..	1074
Royal Agricultural Society Act Amendment, Council's amendments ... ..	1075
Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment, Council's amendments ... ..	1075
Treasury bills, 2A., Com., report ... ..	1075
Land Tax and Income Tax, 2A. ... ..	1076
Mental Decency, Com. ... ..	1074
Annual Estimates: Votes and Items discussed ...	1082
Lands Department ... ..	1082

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

## QUESTION—LAND SETTLEMENT, 3,500 FARMS SCHEME.

MR. C. P. WANSBROUGH, for Mr. Thomson, asked the Premier: 1, In view of the fact that many settlers have gone out fifty to seventy miles from a railway on what is known as the 3,500 farms scheme, and as, apparently, railway transport and water facilities are being held up pending the report of the Migration and Development Commission, will he inform the House in what manner the Government propose to assist settlers on those blocks? 2, When may the settlers expect to obtain railway communication? 3, Will the Government provide dumps and finance for wheat produced in those areas? 4, In view of lack of transport facilities for the settlers, will the Government waive residence conditions in respect of blocks situated more than 15 miles from a railway?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The 3,500 farm scheme has been the subject of negotiation between the State and the Commonwealth, and is not yet finalised. All settlers have, from time to time, been informed that no rail facilities were provided, nor could any guarantee be given as to when they would have rail communication. In evidence before the Land Board, settlers have declared their intention of taking possession, and complying with the conditions of the Act. It is not proposed

to extend any assistance beyond that given under Agricultural Bank conditions. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, No. 4, No, not as a general rule, but should circumstances be such as to necessitate settlers leaving their holdings, special consideration will be given to the question of temporary exemption.

## BILLS (5)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Agricultural Bank Act Amendment.
- 2, Industries Assistance.
- 3, Interpretation Act Amendment.
- 4, Licensing Act Amendment.
- 5, Roman Catholic New Norcia Church Property.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by Mr. North, leave of absence for one month granted to Hon. W. J. George (Murray-Wellington) on the ground of ill-health.

## DEPUTY SPEAKER—NOMINATION,

The SPEAKER: I desire to inform the House it is my intention to visit my constituency to-morrow. Owing to the absence of the Chairman of Committees through illness, it will be necessary to have one of the temporary Chairmen of Committees to act as Speaker. I therefore nominate Mr. Panton, the member for Menzies, to act as Speaker during my temporary absence.

## BILL—DRIED FRUITS ACT CONTINUANCE.

Third Reading

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE  
(Hon. H. Millington—Leederville) [4.41]:  
I move:—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [4.42]: Before the measure passes the third reading, I think it desirable to offer a few remarks showing the importance of the dried fruits industry. I should mention that I was unavoidably absent when the Bill was previously before the Chamber. Hon members will no doubt recollect that on the 19th of this month the West-

ern Australian representative on the Commonwealth Dried Fruits Board, Mr. Yates, made a statement illustrating the importance, and the growing importance, of the industry to Australia as a whole. I do not wish to weary the House, but it is well to place on record a few figures given by Mr. Yates, as they may be taken to be absolutely authentic. Mr. Yates said that the total exports of dried fruits from the Commonwealth to Great Britain had reached for the current season the figure of 43,654 tons, including 29,906 tons of sultanas, 11,596 tons of currants, and 2,156 tons of lexias. Mr. Yates estimated that approximately 6,000 additional tons of dried fruits, principally sultanas, would be shipped to London this season. He further stated that the annual value of the dried fruits industry of Australia had reached the sum of £1,000,000. That being so, Western Australia should try to cater for that trade. A considerable area of our lands is now under vines for dried fruits, and a good deal of State money has been advanced to the growers. While we pass legislation of this kind, we know that the principle which it involves is not highly acceptable.

Mr. Sampson: It is generally approved, though.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is approved. We are acting wisely in protecting the industry that now exists. In my opinion, the small burden placed on consumers does not by any means outweigh the benefit to those engaged in the industry. I see no objection to the passage of the third reading, as the figures I have quoted originate from a man qualified to give authentic information. It is well that such figures should be promulgated, since considerable sections of the community cavil at legislation of this nature, and find fault with those who support it in Parliament. Further, the opinion is widely held that members sitting in Opposition should oppose any legislation brought forward, no matter what its character. In the case of this measure, however, the Opposition took what I regard as a reasonable view of the matter. The figures I have cited from a report in the "West Australian" go to support the Bill, and I hope they will assist its passage through another place.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.

## BILLS (2)—RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.

1, Royal Agricultural Society Act Amendment.

2, Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment.

With amendments.

## BILL—TREASURY BILLS.

*Second Reading.*

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.47] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is required to authorise the issue in London of Treasury bills under the signature of the Agent-General and the accountant at the London Agency for the purpose of liquidating or reducing the bank overdraft if occasion arises. Under existing legislation Treasury bills can be issued in the State for the unraised balance of Loan Acts, amounting in this case to £6,000,000. The Bill extends that provision to London and enables the bills to be signed there, as I have mentioned, by the Agent-General and the accountant of the London agency, instead of having to be forwarded to Perth for signature by the Treasurer and the Under-Treasurer. Owing to the closing of the money market, no loans have been floated by this State since May of last year, and consequently money for our London requirements has since been obtained by means of bank overdrafts. Recently the Commonwealth issued Treasury bills in London to the amount of £5,000,000. That was for the States and the Commonwealth, and our share of that money amounted to £684,967. This amount was applied towards clearing the overdraft at our London bank. Failing the issue of a loan in the near future, the State may have to issue Treasury Bills for the purpose of placing the bank account in order, and it may be desirable to issue those as State Treasury bills instead of Commonwealth Treasury bills, according to the requirements of the market. In view of that, this authority is sought. As I have said, the Treasury bills raised five weeks ago were Commonwealth bills, and therefore the necessity for this Bill did not arise. But according to how the stocks stand in the London market, the Loan Council may decide that it is advisable for each State to issue Treasury bills in its own name, instead

of the Commonwealth issuing them on behalf of the States. Should that situation arise, it will be desirable that we should have authority for the signing of our Treasury bills in London, instead of their having to come to Western Australia, or instead of our having to bring down a Bill for the purpose at the moment when the necessity arises. That necessity may arise even during the recess, in which event the bills would have to come to Western Australia for signature.

Mr. Latham: Will they be backed by the Commonwealth Government?

The PREMIER: All Australian loans are now backed by the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. Latham: And these bills as well?

The PREMIER: Certainly. Under the Financial Agreement, as the hon. member will know, this course is necessary.

Mr. Latham: Subject to their approval, we can go on the London market.

The PREMIER: That is so. Subject to their approval, we can either raise a loan or issue Treasury bills. The procedure under the Bill is similar to that which was authorised in 1921. In that year we had a situation rendering it desirable to raise a short-dated loan in London, and the Leader of the Opposition, who was then Treasurer, issued in London, Treasury bills for £2,000,000 for six months, to enable him to tide over the time during which the market was unfavourable. A similar Bill to the one before us was introduced on that occasion, authorising the signing in London of the £2,000,000 worth of Treasury bills. The same authority is sought in this Bill. The Bill also authorises the rate of interest to be in accordance with the decision of the Loan Council. Previously the rate of interest was fixed in the Bill, but since the rate of interest is no longer in our hands alone, but has to be fixed by the Loan Council, the Bill enables the rate of interest to be fixed in accordance with the decision of the Loan Council. The present position of the London market demands that every precaution be taken to enable the State to finance under the most favourable conditions, and the £5,000,000 worth of Treasury bills issued by the Commonwealth a few weeks ago and distributed amongst all the States and the Commonwealth will not go far. So if the London market should continue unfavour-

able, as it is at present, it is quite possible, in fact quite likely, that Australia, either the Commonwealth or the States, will again have to issue Treasury bills to carry on until such time as a loan may be raised. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**HON. G. TAYLOR** (Mt. Margaret) [4.55]: The Leader of the Opposition, who has discussed this Bill with me this afternoon, has no objection to the measure, since there is nothing dangerous in it. As the Premier points out, it merely gives power to the Agent-General and another officer in London to sign Treasury bills that, otherwise, would have to be signed by the Treasurer and the Under-Treasurer. Whatever loans may be floated under this Bill will have to be approved by the Loan Council. I assume that any Treasury bills signed under this measure will be deducted from the State's portion granted by the Loan Council.

The Premier: Of course. It is all part of the borrowing under the Financial Agreement.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: So the only thing the Bill will facilitate will be the signing of Treasury bills by the Agent-General on the spot.

The Premier: That is the only thing—instead of their having to come out here.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It will save time and I presume that, unlike the Bill of 1921, which was for a short period, the present Bill will be a standing authority. I will support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

## **BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE PREMIER AND TREASURER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [5.0] in moving the second reading said: This is the annual Bill—

Hon. G. Taylor: A hardy annual.

The PREMIER: Yes, and it is on precisely the same lines as the Bills of last year and the previous year.

Hon. G. Taylor: You will have to reduce the rate a bit this year.

The PREMIER: The Bill is necessary to enable us to collect the land tax and income tax for the year. Members will be pleased to learn that no increase of taxation is proposed this year.

Mr. Latham: We expected a reduction in consequence of the Financial Agreement.

The PREMIER: The taxes in this State compare favourably with those of other States.

The Minister for Lands: Particularly those of South Australia.

The PREMIER: Of course there are other forms of taxation not affected by this measure. While it is not desirable that income taxation should be high, I regret it is not possible to make further reductions this year. The financial position of the State does not at present justify the adoption of any such course. Last year's income tax produced £329,603, which was slightly above that of the previous year when we collected £323,597. The receipts have not increased to the extent that would be expected from the growth of the State. The dividend duty, on the other hand, was less, having been £315,233 as compared with £324,940 in the previous year. The land tax, £196,301, showed a fairly substantial increase over the receipts for the previous year which were £162,906. That was largely due to the increase in the values of land, they having in some instances, doubled and even trebled as members will see by a perusal of the report of the Commissioner of Taxation which was laid on the Table of the House last week. The increase is also partly due to new land being brought under the Act. Members are aware that there was no increase in the rate of land tax. On the whole the total increase under the three heads has been very slight. There has been a considerable reduction in the total amount received from income tax over the past three years. For example, in 1925-26 we received £566,344, as against £329,603 last year. The £566,344 was received in the last year of the higher rate of tax. The considerable reduction, amounting to about £236,000 this year as against four years ago, was mainly due to the reduction of 33 1/3rd per cent. which took place in that year. Nevertheless the

total amount derived by the Treasury from income tax showed a considerable reduction. The land tax has gone up year by year, due as I have explained, in a small measure to the increase in the tax but mainly to the increase of valuations which runs into many millions of pounds.

Mr. Latham: It is about time we had another reduction of railway charges. That was the reason why the land tax was put on.

The PREMIER: In the year in which the tax was put on, the reduction in railway charges was equivalent to the amount of the increased land tax.

Mr. Latham: Not quite; you got a profit out of it.

The PREMIER: There was no profit in that first year. Any increased receipts from land tax were due, not to an increased rate of tax, but to an increase of assessments. The land tax in this State is not high as compared with other States of Australia. Nor is the income tax high; in fact, both taxes are much lower here than is the average of nearly all the other States. With the exception of Victoria, I think our taxes are lower than those of the other States.

Mr. Latham: Very well, we shall quote the others.

The PREMIER: The only one the hon. member will be able to quote as being lower is Victoria, and I can quote the other four States against Victoria. It will be noticed that the percentage of land tax imposed in the metropolitan area is 36.8, goldfields and other towns 4.87, country 45.57 and pastoral leases 12.76. Turning to the comparison of income tax, if we take an income of £500, the tax in Western Australia is 3¼d. in the pound. I would like members to note particularly the figures for South Australia, where the rate is 9¼d., which is 200 per cent. greater than our tax. In Victoria the rate is 4½d., New South Wales 10d., Queensland 9d., Tasmania 4¾d., and the Commonwealth 5¼d. Consequently on incomes of £500 we are below the other States, and very much below several of them. Taking an income of £1,000 the rate in this State is 5½d., in South Australia 12½d., Victoria 6d., New South Wales 12d., Queensland 12d., Tasmania 6¾d., and the Commonwealth 7¼d. There again Western Australia is lower than any of the other States, being less than half of three of them. On an income of £1,500 Western Australia charges 7¾d.,

South Australia  $15\frac{1}{4}$ d., Victoria  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d., New South Wales 14d., Queensland 15d., Tasmania  $8\frac{3}{4}$ d., and the Commonwealth  $9\frac{1}{4}$ d. It is at this point that Victoria comes down below our rate. At £2,500 the progressive rate in Victoria ceases and a flat rate of  $10\frac{1}{4}$ d. applies. On an income of £2,000 the rate here is  $10\frac{1}{4}$ d., in South Australia  $18\frac{3}{4}$ d., Victoria  $9\frac{3}{4}$ d., New South Wales 16d., Queensland 18d., Tasmania  $10\frac{1}{2}$ d., and the Commonwealth  $11\frac{1}{4}$ d. At £2,500 the rate here is  $12\frac{1}{2}$ d., in South Australia  $21\frac{1}{4}$ d., Victoria  $10\frac{1}{4}$ d., New South Wales 18d., Queensland 21d., Tasmania  $12\frac{3}{4}$ d., and the Commonwealth  $13\frac{1}{2}$ d. Thus Victoria is the only one below us at that point. On an income of £3,000 the rate here is  $14\frac{3}{4}$ d., in South Australia 25d., Victoria makes no increase, New South Wales 20d., Queensland 24d., Tasmania  $14\frac{1}{4}$ d., and the Commonwealth  $15\frac{1}{4}$ d. Consequently with the exception of Victoria, Western Australia's rate is the lowest up to £3,000 of income. At £3,500 the rate here is  $17\frac{1}{4}$ d., South Australia  $28\frac{1}{8}$ d., New South Wales 22d., Queensland 27d., Tasmania  $16\frac{1}{8}$ d., and the Commonwealth  $17\frac{1}{2}$ d. At £4,000 which is our maximum rate, the levy here is  $19\frac{1}{2}$ d., in South Australia  $31\frac{1}{4}$ d., New South Wales 24d., Queensland 30d., Tasmania 18d., and the Commonwealth  $19\frac{1}{2}$ d. From those figures it will be seen that our rate is very reasonable indeed.

Hon. G. Taylor: By comparison.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Still it is too high.

The PREMIER: A comparison is the only thing to guide us. It would be delightful if we could abolish taxation and finance the State without imposing any taxation on the people. But taxation must be levied to carry on the services of the country. The figures I have quoted clearly show that our income tax is well down when contrasted with that of the other States. With the exception of Victoria, both on the lower and up to the middle rates, our charge is only about one-half of that of the other States.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course we have been deducting one-third for some time.

The PREMIER: I am referring to the present rate. Prior to the  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. reduction our income tax was higher than that of most of the other States, but the reduction brought us very much below them. At the time we made the one-third

reduction, the South Australia Government and Parliament increased their rates considerably. Unfortunately that State was then experiencing a run of bad seasons.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The special grant from the Commonwealth will cease a year after this.

The PREMIER: That is so. Unless it is continued it means we shall have to find an additional £200,000 from some other source.

Hon. G. Taylor: It ought to be renewed now with this Government.

The PREMIER: I hope that whatever Government are in office it will be continued, because the term for which it was granted, namely five years, is not in conformity with the recommendations of the Royal Commission which dealt with the whole situation. No impartial judge of the position would agree that Western Australia's difficulties could be met by a grant of five years such as has been given to us.

Hon. G. Taylor: A five years tenure would not be of any use to us.

The PREMIER: We cannot overlook the fact that the Commonwealth finances, in common with those of most of the States of Australia, are in a bad way. When a Treasurer is casting round to reduce deficits and balance his ledger, and he sees sums like £200,000 a year just expiring or representing a liability—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is £300,000.

The PREMIER: It commenced at £300,000—there is a great temptation to him to lay hold of it or to discontinue payment.

Hon. G. Taylor: You ought to have a good idea of that.

The PREMIER: Members have complained that our land tax is too high and ought to be reduced. Our land tax compares very favourably with similar taxes in the other States. I am taking the improved value, because that is where the penny rate operates. On the unimproved land the rate is 2d. Practically the whole of our agricultural lands come under the penny rate. On page 12 of the Taxation Commissioner's report it is shown that the amount of country lands which come under the penny rate, that is as improved land, represents a value of £16,037,147. Those that come under the 2d. rate, the unimproved land, represent a value of £706,000, as against one of £16,000,000 under the penny rate. Practically all the country lands are rated at 1d. On a £500 value the tax

here is 1d.; in South Australia it is three-farthings plus a 25 per cent. super tax, that is 25 per cent. of the amount of the tax. A man may at the three-farthing rate be taxed £10, but with the 25 per cent. super tax there is added £2 10s. There is very little difference between South Australia and this State in that respect. In Victoria the rate is  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound for a value of £250, with an exemption expiring at £500. There is also a five per cent. super tax. There the tax is lower than ours. In New South Wales the rate is 1d., and in Queensland it begins at 1d.

Mr. Lindsay: And no exemption?

The PREMIER: Not in the case of undeveloped land. There must be an enormous area of developed land in Queensland. In Tasmania the rate is  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. And so it goes on at these rates. South Australia is about the same as ours, Victoria is slightly under, New South Wales is the same, and Queensland is much heavier because the tax there is a progressive one somewhat similar to our income tax. Ours is a flat rate of 1d., irrespective of the value. No matter how high the value goes the flat rate remains at 1d. In Queensland the land tax is progressive. It starts at 1d. on £500, but at £1,000 it is  $1\frac{3}{4}$ d.; at £2,000 it is 2d.; at £2,500 it is  $2\frac{1}{4}$ d.; at £3,000 it is  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., and at £4,000 it is  $2\frac{3}{4}$ d. in the pound. That is a very big increase over ours. The tax keeps on increasing in that State according to the value until it reaches a maximum of 6d. in the pound. That is on the very high unimproved value of £75,000. There are not many properties of that character.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Mr. Theodore made a beautiful job of it.

The PREMIER: I do not know that he is responsible for that. He has never been Treasurer in Tasmania, and yet in that State there is a progressive tax beginning at  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. in the pound, and going up to  $3\frac{3}{4}$ d. It will be seen that neither our income tax nor our land tax can be regarded as excessive in any way when compared with similar taxes in the other States. Again I would remind members that something approaching half of the taxation in Western Australia is paid within the metropolitan area. That represents at least 36 per cent.

Mr. Lindsay: That is a long way from half.

The PREMIER: That is compared with 45 per cent. paid on country lands.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Quite 50 per cent. of the comforts are enjoyed by the people of Perth.

The PREMIER: Much of the values in the city represent unearned increment, which comes to the owners because of the rapid rises in price. It is interesting to note from the table in the commissioner's report that the total amount paid by farmers last year was £32,947, and the number of those who paid this sum was 2,241. This worked out at an average for each person of £14. That is not a very large amount.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is that land tax?

The PREMIER: Yes. I know this is not the only tax the farmer pays, because there are many other forms of taxation as well.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is of course no exemption. Every bit of land pays.

The PREMIER: Yes. Against that there were 187 pastoralists who paid in taxation £33,914. These pastoralists together paid £1,000 more in taxation than did 2,241 farmers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They have ten times as much land.

The PREMIER: The moral there seems to be that a man should become a pastoralist rather than a farmer.

Mr. Ferguson: Wool has dropped 50 per cent. in value.

The PREMIER: That will come into next year's Treasury accounts. There will be a big drop in the receipts from the pastoralists by way of income tax next year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are talking about land tax.

The PREMIER: I am not quoting income tax. The average paid by these pastoralists was £181 per head, as against £14 paid by the farmers. Pastoralists are taxed far and away the highest on the list that I have here.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The timber merchants pay the highest. They did so last year.

The PREMIER: The timber merchants referred to here paid an average of £33. I have no doubt many of them, working as they are under company organisation, would also paid under dividend duties, which would not be shown.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They pay the highest.

The PREMIER: Not according to these figures. The pastoralists make the highest income tax payments.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I have not seen the latest report.

The PREMIER: The hotel-keepers and clothing manufacturers pay more than the timber merchants, with an average of £69. Our taxation cannot be regarded in any way excessive. I regret that the position generally will not permit of any reduction. It cannot be gainsaid that the conditions existing in the other States reflect upon a State that is comparatively prosperous. Australia as a whole is facing a very serious economic position with bad seasons all over the Eastern States, and the tremendous fall in the price of wool which, so far as taxation goes, will be felt next year. As the price of wool affects the circulation of money, the commercial aspect of the question, the fall will be felt at once. As much money as before will not be available to wool-growers. Judging from the prices obtained this year and last year our income from wool will not be more than half the total amount received last year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There are more sheep of course.

The PREMIER: That will increase the amount received, but the price remains at about half.

Hon. G. Taylor: There is more wool, but we are getting less for it.

The PREMIER: The increase in the number of sheep will affect the total amount received.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The price is better than half for the whole of the clip.

The PREMIER: Last year it was between 23d. and 25d.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It did not average 18d.

The PREMIER: I suppose it will average about 12d. this year according to the prices we see in the paper. That is a very serious decline and will have a considerable influence upon the State. The fall in values will be felt throughout Australia. Having regard for all the circumstances we cannot hope to reduce taxation. It might be said that in view of the fall in prices we ought to bring down taxation. When a fall in price takes place it affects the revenue of the State in so many directions that this is the very time when it becomes impossible

to reduce taxation. It is when prices are high and the State is prosperous, and when money comes into revenue from many sources, that it is much easier to reduce taxation than at a time when prices are low and the season unfavourable.

Hon. G. Taylor: There is not so much need for reducing taxation then.

The PREMIER: That is the unfortunate part of it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

## BILL—MENTAL DEFICIENCY

*In Committee.*

Mr. Panton in the Chair; the Minister for Health in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Commencement:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It would save a lot of time if the Minister would make a statement in connection with the Bill which is now before us, as amended in accordance with the select committee's report. I do not propose to question the Bill because it was referred to a select committee and the Minister placed before us the report of the committee. If the Minister can tell us that the Bill is strictly in accordance with the report of the committee, the measure will probably be accepted with very slight amendment. I hope that will be the position.

The Minister for Health: I will make a statement on the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister cannot make a second reading speech in committee.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It will save a lot of time.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot help that. I have to carry out the Standing Orders.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: So far as the recommendations of the select committee are concerned—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot allow the Minister to make a second reading speech on the clause. We have the Standing Orders to guide us. I am sorry, but I cannot allow the Minister to proceed.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The Leader of the Opposition asked for an explanation. I wish to tell him that the Bill is absolutely accurate and in accordance with

the recommendations embodied in the select committee's report.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is all I wanted to know.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 25—agreed to.

Clause 26—Duration of detention under order:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Subclause 14 refers to sterilisation. Will the Minister make an explanation?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Subclause 14 was inserted as an amendment suggested by the select committee, and goes a little further than the Bill as originally introduced. The only complaint the select committee had regarding this phase was that the Bill did not go far enough. It was urged that it should provide definitely for sterilisation. I do not think any member of the select committee was in favour of going to that extent, but the committee agreed unanimously to the proviso inserted in the subclause. The board, with judicial authority, will have the right to discharge a mental defective if in their opinion he is fit to be discharged. All that the subclause does is to give the board power to make a conditional order respecting people who, in other circumstances, would not, in the opinion of the board, be fit to be discharged. The board will have power to make a conditional order setting out that, provided the defective consents to sterilisation, he may be released. If the patient does not consent, the board will not make an order for his release. That refers to defectives who are in a fit condition to give their consent. If the mental defective is not fit to do so, it will be for the parent or guardian to give the necessary consent.

Hon. G. Taylor: And then would the patient be discharged?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes, if he consented to sterilisation.

Mr. Latham: But what if the patient were not fit to give his consent?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Then the board would not issue an order for his discharge. We had to be sure about that. There is no clause in the Bill inserted for the purpose of restraining or detaining a mental defective in an institution or under guardianship, in respect of which the right of appeal has not been provided.

The Bill represents new legislation and I do not desire to see any such legislation on the statute-book that would enable a person to be placed in an institution merely because someone, who was perfectly qualified to do so, had issued a certificate regarding his mental deficiency, without the person concerned having the right of appeal. In every circumstance that may arise, we have provided that right of appeal. That is one of the principal reasons why the proviso was placed in the Bill. The suggestion was made to the select committee that the section appearing in the Alberta State Act in America should be embodied in our legislation. The committee did not see fit to do so because the Alberta section makes sterilisation mandatory. In that State a mental defective cannot be liberated unless he agrees to sterilisation. I have given a great deal of thought to matters relating to mental defectives. There will probably be many instances in this State, particularly in connection with women, of patients reaching the age of 50 or 55 years, at which stage the board may reasonably agree to their discharge. There is no possibility of such women propagating their species. Despite that, if we adopted the Alberta section, it would be a condition of the release of those elderly people that they should be sterilised before being liberated. We do not go that far but give the board power to discharge a patient without that necessity, if they see fit to do so. Thus we give the board power to order the release of a mental defective if it is considered that the patient is fit to be discharged without being sterilised, and that the patient cannot reproduce the species.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then the subclause is limited in its application?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am glad to hear the Minister's explanation, which we were entitled to have. Without it, we might consider we were embarking upon a drastic change with regard to sterilisation. As the Minister has made clear, the subclause will be limited in its application. I have talked this matter over with the Minister and I am not at all satisfied that we would be justified in ordering sterilisation in many instances to which he referred. We should not legislate in that direction lightly, nor agree to it without much more extensive inquiries than members of Parliament could make, even with the assistance of depart-



mental officials who are available to us. I will not object to the limited operation of this new departure, as indicated in the sub-clause, but I would object to the proposal if it went any further. We are justified in moving slowly and feeling our way, as it were. That is what the Minister is doing. The desire is to do good, and I am satisfied that if we do err in the framing of this legislation, we shall be able to rectify the position later. We wish to do good and so shape the Bill that it will meet the situation. I am obliged to the Minister for the explanation he has given.

Mr. LATHAM: I protest against rushing this legislation through. On Wednesday last the Minister submitted the report of the select committee, and the report and evidence were ordered to be printed.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is out of order.

Mr. LATHAM: I wish to point out that country members have not had an opportunity to peruse the Bill or to see the evidence taken by the select committee. As a matter of fact, I was not even aware that the clause we are discussing was in the Bill, and now that I have read it I cannot agree to support it right away. The greatest authorities in the world differ on the question of sterilisation, and we have been told that the line of demarcation between a mental defective and a person who is insane is very slight indeed. On the word of one or two or probably more men who are to be constituted a board an operation is to be performed. We are told that sterilisation will only prevent an individual from propagating, that it will not have the effect on that class of individual with whom we have so much trouble from time to time.

The Minister for Health: If he is a mental defective, it will.

Mr. LATHAM: I say you cannot deal with them under this clause. Authorities have appeared before the court and declared that a certain class of people are unable to control themselves, and these are the people who at times are ordered to be flogged when perhaps they should be treated as mentally deficient. Sterilisation will not affect them except to prevent them propagating.

Mr. Sleeman: Who said that? You are differing from the medical men who gave evidence.

Mr. LATHAM: The principal medical officer states that sterilisation does not af-

fect the individual except to prevent him propagating. What we want is to prevent him from committing the act.

The Minister for Health: Sexual criminals are dealt with under the Criminal Code.

Mr. LATHAM: I want them to be treated under this Bill. In any case I protest against rushing the Bill through. I was not aware that the Bill was on the file, and I was not aware that it was proposed to take it at this stage. This particular clause is very important.

The Minister for Health: It is the most important in the Bill.

Mr. LATHAM: Then the Minister should give us the opportunity to study it closely. The Minister and his colleagues on the select committee know all about it, but I can assure him that I was not aware that the report and evidence had been printed. It was ordered to be printed on Wednesday, and I understand it was here the next day, which is most unusual.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I assure the hon. member I have no desire to rush the Bill through. We have made good progress with it and I shall have no objection to deferring consideration of the Bill.

Progress reported.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1929-30.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the 17th October; Mr. Pantou in the Chair:

Department of the Minister for Lands and Immigration (Hon. M. F. Troy, Minister).

*Vote—Lands and Surveys, £77,569:*

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. M. F. Troy) [6.10]: When I spoke on the Address-in-reply I made a fairly comprehensive statement regarding the activities of the Lands Department and I do not suppose hon. members will expect me to repeat at length the information I gave to the House then. As I previously explained, the department's record has been one of continued progress. The great demand for land which has existed for some years past has not shown any sign of abatement; we are experiencing the greatest difficulty in supplying the wants of all the applicants. At the present time there is only a limited area available, consisting of the most part of

light land. The other day sixteen blocks were made available for selection, and for those blocks there were no fewer than 700 applications from 141 applicants. It is gratifying to find that there are in this country a number of young men who are prepared to undertake pioneering activities which characterised the development of the country in the years gone by. No subdivisions have been made available since September last year, as it has been found necessary to withhold the throwing open of additional subdivisions until matters have been completed in connection with the scheme which has been submitted under the Migration Agreement. A few of the important facts and figures may be repeated here. The area approved under terms of conditional alienation during the last financial year totalled 2,616,763 acres. This established a record. Last year's figures are all the more remarkable in that such large areas of unsurveyed land were withheld from selection throughout the year. Pastoral lease applications were approved for an area of 1,777,802 acres. Under conditional alienation applications were received for an area of 2,209,837 acres. Under pastoral lease the total area applied for was 12,685,768 acres. The number of blocks allotted by the Land Board was 1,149, and the number of new settlers for the year was 1,433. Loans approved by the Agricultural Bank amounted to £905,075. Wire netting was supplied to 409 settlers at a cost of £72,878, the distance equivalent of the netting being 1,616 miles. Since the inception of the scheme to the end of June last, 7,275 miles of netting have been supplied to 1,757 settlers at a cost of £332,720. A large amount of classification work has been carried out. The close classification of the country between Southern Cross and Salmon Gums which was commenced during the preceding year, was completed, and full information made available to the Development and Migration Commission. Another classification that was completed was that of the country between Lake Hillman and the Murchison railway line. The classification of the country between Dartmoor and the Murchison River was also concluded, and the land is now being subdivided. Accompanied by the Surveyor-General I recently paid a visit to this area, to determine whether it should be made available for selection, and it has been decided to carry out experimental work there be-

fore throwing open the land for selection. Cabinet has endorsed a proposal by which experimental work will be carried out in that area under the direction of the Agricultural Department. In view of all the circumstances, I think that is the wisest policy to pursue at present, although I feel quite sure that in the near future the area will come under development and become a profitable proposition. It is adjacent to the coast; in fact, within twenty miles of it. The Valuation Board appointed to assess group settlement locations have, as hon. members are aware, already assessed 327 locations. They are now in process of assessing 300 more. Therefore we may take it that at the end of the year the board will have assessed over 600 locations and this is evidence of definite progress in that respect.

Mr. Latham: How long are the services of the board likely to be required?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The board merely act from day to day, week to week, or month to month; and upon the completion of the valuations now engaging the attention of the board it is possible that that body will be dissolved, Mr. Grogan reverting to his position in the Agricultural Bank and the other members to their ordinary occupations. Recently the board's work has been held up by reason of the fact that Mr. Johnston, one of the members, has had a serious illness; I regret to say that he has not yet completely recovered. However, the other members are carrying on; and it is expected that Mr. Johnston will be in a position to resume the work in a short time. On the group settlements at the 30th June last there were some 14,000 cows and heifers. Since June the Government have purchased 300 head locally, and have brought 1,520 head from New South Wales. The whole of the cows required would be purchased locally if it were practicable, but it is not. This year it was arranged for Mr. Rose, a member of the Group Settlement Board, to go to New South Wales and purchase there.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is a certain type of milch cow being adopted?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. In point of fact, our opportunities to purchase are restricted. We can purchase only in Northern New South Wales and South-

ern Queensland. We are not permitted to buy in Victoria or South Australia, because pleuro exists in those two States, and the Chief Inspector of Stock will not agree to the importation of stock from them except under conditions that render importation prohibitive. From Northern Queensland we cannot import because of the tick. The tick might disappear on the journey across, but we are not prepared to take the risk. Again, from Southern New South Wales we cannot get cattle because of the existence of pleuro, and so we are restricted to purchasing in Northern New South Wales.

Hon. G. Taylor: What class of cattle do you import?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Principally Jerseys. The Chief Inspector of Stock tells me that the cattle purchased in the Eastern States are the finest lot of cattle ever imported into Western Australia. I admit that some of the cattle from the East are poor when they arrive here, but this is due to the periods during which the cattle have to undergo quarantine in the place where they have been reared and on this side, besides standing the strain of the steamer voyage.

Hon. G. Taylor: They are wasting all the time.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. Hon. members who know how cattle fall away in transit from Meekatharra to Perth will appreciate how the sea voyage must affect cattle imported from the East. It is evident that cattle cannot be imported here except at heavy cost. With a purchase price of £6 or £7 at the place of rearing, the cost landed here is up to £20 per head.

Mr. J. H. Smith: What do they cost the settler by the time they are on his location?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: An average cost is not applied to them. They are priced according to the value of the beast. I do know, however, that they are priced to the settlers at less than the cost of importing them into the country.

Hon. G. Taylor: They run into about £20 a head, I suppose.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is to the State. I think the cost to the settler is about £17. Pigs on the groups at the 30th June last numbered 3,425, and poultry 32,070. Now I would like to re-

ply to a few remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. Speaking on the Estimates the hon. gentleman dealt with the subject of expenditure on group settlements. In quoting some remarks of Mr. Angwin from "Hansard," he compared figures given for specific holdings, and he cited group averages. Mr. Angwin's figures, as I say, were for specific holdings.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course; and I said so, too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think so. I shall show the hon. member just where he has erred. I do not say his error was intentional.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I gave the number of the block.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I shall give the number of the block and show the hon. member where he has made an error—a natural error in view of his not being aware of all the facts.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I quoted what Mr. Angwin said.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is quite correct, but I shall explain to the hon. member what is the exact position. In August, 1924, Mr. Angwin stated, a block on Group 1 had cost £1,881, exclusive of stock and plant. In August, 1928, I stated, the cost on that block had risen to £3,071. The Leader of the Opposition, in quoting this amount, did not realise that it included stock and plant and also a larger acreage.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You said the value of the stock and plant was £277.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Whatever the stock and plant cost, I gave the figure. I may have said that the average cost was £277. However, for some blocks the cost is more. Exclusive of stock and plant, the amount was £2,902. The increased expenditure is easily understood when I say that at the time of the first return of cost only 25 acres had been cleared, whereas the second return of cost referred to a cleared area exceeding 50 acres, or more than double the area originally cleared. Every year we have been establishing and nursing pastures, and therefore the expenditure must increase. Increase on that head brought the cost of the block up to the higher amount. The hon. gentleman similarly included stock and plant in other groups quoted by him. In respect of Group 29, he quoted expenditure at the 30th April, 1928, as £3,411, exclud-

ing stock and plant, while the figures accompanying the Valuation Board's report of 14 months later show a total of only £3,081. The hon. gentleman said it was remarkable that although the Valuation Board gave the expenditure at a date 14 months later, with the addition of interest and other costs, the average expenditure according to the board was less than that quoted by the Minister. Hon. members will see that it is not remarkable, when I point out that the board's valuation excluded four holdings, which they did not add to the total. I gave the expenditure for 10 holdings, from which the Valuation Board excluded four lots, these four not being in their valuation at all. I will give the Opposition Leader the figures, so that he may appreciate the position. The total expenditure on 10 holdings to the 30th April, 1928, was £34,115. The interest for 14 months amounted to £3,500. This meant a total expenditure of £37,615. The Valuation Board did not include four lots, on which the total expenditure was £7,000. Their calculations were based on an expenditure of £30,813, as against my expenditure of £34,000 odd. Hon. members will understand just how the Leader of the Opposition made his error. The Valuation Board did not value certain holdings.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is nothing to explain. I can only take the figures published.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But the hon. gentleman accepts certain figures without knowing that the Valuation Board's figures are not on the same basis. The Valuation Board, I repeat, did not value certain holdings; and therefore their average cannot be similar to the average increase in respect of the larger number of holdings.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The board should have explained that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In regard to Group 30 the Opposition Leader drew attention to what he termed an error in expenditure, and he asked the Minister to agree with his contention. The Opposition Leader compared the average of 15 holdings, which I gave as at the 30th April, 1928, with the average of 10 holdings valued by the Valuation Board in 1929. Those 10 holdings, having been valued by the board, would average less because the other five holdings had not yet been valued.

If the Leader of the Opposition, when making up the figures again—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not make them up.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the hon. gentleman again makes up figures for submission to Parliament, I suggest he should inquire of the Government how the figures on which he works have been arrived at. If he does that, he will be furnished with all the figures.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You gave the figures.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but I gave the figures of the whole group, and the Opposition Leader took the Valuation Board's figures for half the group. He asks how the Minister came to give those figures one year whereas the Valuation Board gave the other figures the next year. The reason is that the two sets of figures are based on different premises. My figures were based on 15 holdings, and the Valuation Board's figures on 10.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If you divide your total by 15, and the board divide theirs by 10, the results should be similar.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, because all these locations have different expenditure charges against them. That method, therefore, will not do. I do not want to suggest that the hon. member wanted to mislead; I merely give him the facts to show how simple it is to fall into error. Another of his statements referred to cows sold. He stated that 100 cows had been sold in Manjimup.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, that 200 cows were sold at Bridgetown.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He stated that the Government purchased 100 the same day.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: About the same date.

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

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Before ten I was speaking about some figures presented by the Leader of the Opposition to the Commonwealth Commission, and was endeavouring to show that he had made an error in arriving at those figures. Now the hon. member states that when the basis of expenditure was changed, he had the right to assume that it meant the same thing. Of course it does not. For instance, if the total expenditure on 20 locations was

£45,000, the expenditure would be £2,250. But if we take away five of them and the expenditure charged against the 15 is £30,000, it would be £2,000 each.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Just the same figure.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, the remaining five may mean £15,000. That is the position. The same expenses are not charged against all locations. So if the Valuation Board have not assessed a number of locations at the same figure, the total is no criterion of the individual assessments. I do not wish to say any more about it. I have endeavoured to give the facts as far as I can. I want the Committee to understand that I do not get out these figures. That is the business of the accountant. I expect him to provide accurately the figures required. And I do not in any sense cook these figures. In fact, I am not competent to do so, for I am not an accountant. Now, without further remark, I submit the Estimates of my department.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [7.33]: These figures before us include a vote for migration, and I assume that in the general discussion we are permitted to cover all the departments under the Minister for Lands. I am glad to see there is an ever increasing demand for land in the State. The pity of it is we cannot satisfy that demand and give a block to everybody who wants one. At different times throughout the last 20 years there has been a tremendous demand for land, and of course it will be an ever-increasing demand, because the available first-class land is becoming less each year. Fortunately the price of wheat has been fairly high, and so we have sold a great deal of second-class land. Land that at one time was classified as second-class is now classified as first-class, due of course, to the price of wheat. I hope that price will be maintained. The tractor has made possible the cultivation of an enormous area of light land which, in our long and comparatively dry seasons, gives excellent crops. This has helped us considerably. The lighter lands are easily and cheaply handled, particularly now we are using motor power. That has helped Western Australia a great deal, and as the price for wheat improves, as some day it will, the prospects will improve and we shall use more light land and derive considerable

revenue from it. The Minister, when touching upon the 3,500 farms scheme, referred to the fact that the Development and Migration Commission have taken some part in that connection and are to find a considerable sum of money for development purposes. They did find the money to build the railway from Norseman to Salmon Gums and put down the dam at McPherson's Rock. I hope the land that can be settled down there has been settled. Also, we had some money from the Development and Migration Commission for railways and a little money for land development south of Southern Cross. It is wonderful to have had the statements made to-day about the crops around Southern Cross, the farthest east settlement that we have, in this, a relatively dry year. The Minister and Mr. Sutton have come from there, and I have been told of the possible results in that district in this dry season -- rather, we have had three dry months. I hope that what they say will be realised and that the crops generally throughout the State will be better than we have a right to expect.

The Minister for Lands: They are extraordinary in view of the last three months.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, marvellous. The crops around Northam are very green indeed, although we have had August, September and October exceptionally dry. All this is gratifying, and it does help us a bit these times, when the outlook is not too bright, when wool is depressed in price and everybody is finding reasons why it should be depressed. But those reasons usually are not based upon facts. We know so little of the world that takes our surplus products that we cannot really judge what will happen. We know that wool is down by 33 per cent. as against last year's price, but can we believe that the world has so changed in 12 months as to justify the drop? We are told that wool is over-produced, and that much artificial silk is being made and introduced into clothing. But as I say, we know so little of the world that it is very hard to judge what the future holds in store. I doubt if we are justified in feeling depressed. If we thought we were going to lose on wool this year with the chance of getting a better price next year, we should not feel despondent about the thing. But it seems to me that, really without justification, we believe we are in for a long series of lean prices for wool.

I have looked into this question as much as it is possible for me to do, have considered the position overseas, and the clip in the various countries of the world, yet I cannot find that the output of wool is increasing. Certainly there has been some small increase during the last 15 or 16 years. About 13,000,000 sheep have been added to the nearly 600,000,000 that the world previously possessed. But in the meantime the population of the world has increased very considerably. So there does not seem to be any reason why the demand for wool should not be greater than ever it has been before. However, the immediate position we have to face is that we are getting less for our wool. The price has fallen and many fear the reduction will continue for a number of years. All this is causing a depression that will be very hard for us to withstand for the moment. The financial position, too, in our case is made the more difficult by this fall in prices. We are importing more than we are exporting, and we are told that at any rate because of bad seasons in the East our wheat will yield very much less than it did last year—the Australian wheat I mean—and because of the fall in the price of wool we shall get very much less. Between wheat and wool it is expected we shall have £30,000,000 worth less to export. It means that we have to increase the quantities of produce we are going to export, or reduce our exports and so get into very serious trouble. In the past England, when we wished it, always lent us any money that was necessary to pay for our imports in excess of exports. I do not know that that will be the case in future, and so probably for a season, unless we are careful, we shall find some difficulty in carrying on satisfactorily. We are not carrying on satisfactorily if we have unemployment. If there be no money to find work for the workers, then the workers and all other people are in trouble. In these Estimates we have an amount dealing with migration. It is not a large sum, £5,792, but it is here and so we can discuss this question. It is of no use bringing out men to join the ranks of the unemployed. Indeed, it is ridiculous to think of immigration while we have men unemployed. If we could bring out people and put them straight on the land they would provide work for those out of work in

Western Australia. So, notwithstanding that we are getting cheap money under the migration agreement, it is very difficult for us for a time satisfactorily to place our migrants. It is very unfortunate, because if those people could be brought out and put straight to work on the land, we would have our unemployed difficulties very much reduced. Under the migration agreement we have had £35,000,000. We had the best part of a million last year. The money has been used. We are paying very little for it, and I think those who declaim against it might remember that the men we have brought in have come backed by this cheap money, which has helped to find employment. Besides the item itself, there is not much that one can discuss, because nearly all the rest of these Estimates are salary items. There are a few increases, which members might carefully look at. We shall have not only migration but the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board Bills before us in a day or two, when we can discuss those departments; and we shall then have the Loan Estimates, which will give us a further opportunity. I will content myself now by saying a word or two in reply to the Minister for Lands. The other day I quoted from "Hansard" speeches which the then Minister for Lands (Hon. W. C. Angwin) delivered in this House in 1924, and in which he referred to certain locations that he said had been completed according to the agreement. I do not want to repeat what I said then. Members will find in "Hansard" all that I quoted. The Minister has stated that in making the comparison I got the wrong average per block. He quoted location 9029, Group 1, Manjimup area, cost-£1,880. He might have taken a very much better example in Group 8 which, in 1925, had cost £1,117 and has now cost £3,422. However, the Minister does not dispute that or any other statement I made that was taken from "Hansard," but he did say that in connection with Group 30 I quoted the wrong average. He pointed out that when he made his statement he referred to the average cost of 15 blocks, whereas the Group Settlement Valuation Board had valued 10 blocks and had referred to the average cost of them. The Minister also pointed out in connection with Group 29 that the same thing had happened. All I can say is that it did not make very much

difference to the cost of each block. There was just one man drawing sustenance or doing contract work on each block. There was the one house and the one set of costs.

The Minister for Lands: Some of the groups cost more than others over the year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the house provided cost the same in each instance.

The Minister for Lands: Some of the groups cost £5,000 and some £2,000.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the work paid for in each instance was the work of one man, apart from the standard house, the fencing, the water supply, and of course the stock which we have been told will cost about £277. I took the figures as I found them on the printed sheets, and if the average cost of the blocks in Group 30, as supplied with the Valuation Board's report, were not correct, I am prepared to correct them. The Minister certainly quoted the average of 15 blocks on Group 30 and the Valuation Board quoted the average of 10 blocks, but as I have pointed out, I do not think that would make very much difference. The position is due to the fact that from 1924 until now these excessive costs have been piling up. I do not suppose that that matters a jot, because we simply have got to develop this land. The Minister has referred to the keen demand for land. We have to develop the South-West as well as the wheat belt. I do not believe there is one block of good wheat land for every man in this State willing and anxious to get one, and I think our own people should have the preference when it comes to the selection of the remaining blocks of first-class wheat land fairly centrally situated. With the South-West it is a different matter. There has been very little settlement in the South-West and there is very much land to be settled. It would be indeed unfortunate if we could not develop the South-West at very much lower cost than has been our experience up to the present. If we can develop it at much lower cost, we should proceed with the work. Of the £3,000,000 worth of foodstuffs we now import, we could produce a couple of million pounds worth. It is important to the Treasurer that this should be produced within the State, because we shall find it a fairly difficult matter to export goods to cover the cost of the foodstuffs we are importing. Apart from that, why should the Eastern

States supply us with the food we could grow so well and easily for ourselves? Why should Eastern States land produce butter, bacon and cheese to the extent of £2,000,000 for our 400,000 people? It is unthinkable that that should continue. We are glad that the butter production of the State is increasing yearly, but thank God so is the number of people. Our importation of butter decreases slightly each year, although we are increasing the local output of butter. The Australian is not only a great meat eater, but he also loves butter. I think he eats more butter than the people of any other country of the world per head of population. When it is necessary to provide a quarter of a cwt. of butter for each man, woman and child, it means that a great deal of land is required to produce all that is needed. I have examined the Estimates carefully and I cannot see that there is very much we could alter even if we desired to do so. We have no control, and neither has the Minister control, over the salaries of the various officials connected with the department, and there is very little else contained in the Estimates. Consequently it is of little use spending much time on the Estimates of the department.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [7.52]: The Minister's remarks on land development were interesting, but I sometimes wonder whether in our rush to get the land developed, we are consolidating the position of the settlers as it should be consolidated. Let me explain what I mean. Some twenty years ago a party of ex-civil servants were settled on country round about Nungarin. In 1911 I was out there on one of my first visits and the settlers had experienced a pretty bad season. They had slightly better crops until 1914, in which year the season was a complete washout.

Mr. Mann: It was so all over Australia in that year.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am not saying it was otherwise. Then followed a couple of years when the crops were badly affected by rust. I mention those items to illustrate the in-and-out seasons those settlers have experienced, with the result that they have become loaded up with accumulated interest and other arrears. Compound interest is a terrible thing. While a certain amount of assistance has been afforded them by the Agricultural Bank in the

direction of capitalising their debts and spreading them over a term, when they experience a season like that of last year and this year and the consequent set back involved, they find that the accumulated debt is becoming too great for them to carry. I have recently heard some remarks about the crops in that part of the wheat belt. I hope that the optimistic views expressed by the Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Kirwan and Mr. Sutton will be justified. At the recent field day at Merredin, the Minister pointed out the wonderfully fine work being done by the State farms, and he said there were many crops belonging to established farmers in the district that had justified the gospel of fallow and good farming. That is true. Many of the established farmers are expecting fairly decent crops, but a lot of the farmers in the north and north-east part, particularly around Lake Brown and in the newer settlements, who were hit hard by a dry September last year, are going to be hit hard again this year because a great many of the crops were sown on unfallowed land. I fear that their crops this season will prove to be very much below expectations. I do not like taking a pessimistic view, but I feel there is a tendency to exaggerate what has been done at the State farms. Those farms are a splendid illustration of what can be done, but we must remember that they have resources that are not possessed by new and struggling settlers. I am afraid that a lot of the new country will not crop as well as we hoped it would. I might go so far as to say that I have seen crops into which no harvester will be put this year. I am sorry to say it, but there is the fact and we cannot close our eyes to it. The point I was making is that certain settlers have got into a difficult position and the bank has agreed to capitalise their debts. The settler on one block has to pay £200 a year for 10 years, while to the I.A.B. he has to pay £137 and to the Agricultural Bank £119, a total of £466 a year. This farmer is one of the civil servants to whom I referred. I quote this case because I have the exact figures. Those men have gained their experience and they are now farming on fairly good lines. This man says, "I have 500 acres under crop. If I get 12 bushels at 4s. I can get along pretty well." The position is that he needs something more

than 500 acres producing a 12-bushel crop at 4s. a bushel. It was pointed out to me that there were quite a number of areas in that district that had been abandoned. One of them adjoins the holding of the member for Perth. It was held originally by Mr. Knowles, the block number being M132. On that block there are 330 acres of cultivable land; the rest is salty and good only for grazing. There is a debt on the block of £1,400 to the Agricultural Bank. Two inspectors have been out to look at the block for different banks, but they will not advance one penny on account of the debt hanging to it. The land is doing no good; in fact it is merely breeding vermin to cause devastation on adjoining blocks. If such abandoned blocks were leased to some of the settlers who are prepared to run more stock and go in for dairying, it would be putting them to useful purpose. I commend that suggestion to the Minister. It is no use keeping such blocks idle. No one is likely to take them up, but if they were leased to farmers in the neighbourhood who could make use of them or them olbottoiske make use of them, I think they would find a way of meeting the burden of debt now hanging over them. Some years ago there was a good deal of agitation about wodgil land. At the time I was member for York. I frequently brought the matter up and subsequently a Royal Commission was appointed. This commission inquired into the position as it then existed. It was shown that the settlers concerned had jointly taken up about 6,000 acres of which 4,000 acres was wodgil country. The Royal Commission made certain recommendations as to these people being recouped. It was impossible to recoup them altogether for the loss of money, time and labour, and it was recommended that the wodgil country should be cut away from the balance of the property. Quite recently I had another case brought before me in connection with this type of land. In this instance the Lands Department sold what purported to be first-class wheat-growing country, but it has turned out to be a first-class salt proposition. So far as I can gather from information received, the settlers were told that the bank would help them concerning some other land they desired to get. The former land contained 80 per cent. of a timber known as Yorral, and a large per-



centage was useless for wheat-growing. The matter has been clearly placed before the department. An analysis of the soil has been made, and the crop upon it is a failure. These settlers have been offered two other locations. The reserve price upon one is £2,000 and upon the other it is £1,800. They are quite willing to take up the blocks. It happens, however, that they have already put all their capital into the other land. They are good farmers but have lost their all. The bank disclaims any responsibility. As the Lands Department sold the land to these settlers, they should assume a certain amount of responsibility towards them. They should see that the settlers are helped with their task and assisted to make good. In the short time in which the land has been held, about 45 acres has been cleared and 100 acres has been fallowed. Mr. Tolhurst, about whom I am speaking, is not a waster. He has put all his capital into the other block but has seen it all go. To-day the department are asking him for fees and other charges, but he has not a penny. In a letter to me he states—

We are feeling rather anxious, and wondering what will be done. Our position here is very serious owing to the almost total failure of the crop. We do not know what action Westralian Farmers may take at any moment. If you can do anything to hurry things along, it will be much appreciated.

He also wrote to Mr. McLarty in reply to a communication from the bank with regard to fees, etc., and said—

I am in receipt of your communication of the 9th ult. re Poutcher's and McNamara's properties. As I pointed out when in Perth, I consider Poutcher's place essential in conjunction with McNamara's, and although I consider £2,000 too high a valuation, still I am prepared to take it over at that figure. With reference to ingoing, rates, etc., I did not mention them in my tender, as I thought it was clearly understood that I would not be able to put up any cash, as I am not only penniless but heavily in debt to the Westralian Farmers as well, and my position to-day (in spite of almost superhuman efforts on my part) is solely due to the rotten block I was unfortunate enough to take up. On my return from Perth I found the land on McNamara's was too hard to fallow, but was able to get some done on Poutcher's, and I have also cleared about 45 acres on the last-mentioned place.

In a further letter to me this settler says—

You will note that the terms of sale are that I pay as ingoing rents and rates outstand-

ing and cost of transfer. The position is that I am absolutely penniless, and with no means of raising money. I should have thought that after all the losses I have suffered on the other property some arrangement could have been made that I would not have to find any cash. It seems to me that if this is all they are prepared to do for me, I shall not be able to get another start, and as the season is not too good, we shall be absolutely destitute after harvest. I am convinced that given these properties and some measure of assistance, I will make good in no very great time, and improve both properties far beyond their present value.

This man has lost his all on the bad property. The land was sold to him as a first-class proposition. The Agricultural Bank say they have put up their money and should not be at any further loss. The Lands Department are the people responsible, and they should assist this settler to re-establish himself on the other land. The member for Guildford knows these people well, and is very sympathetic in the matter. He informed me he regretted not being in the House to-night, for he was quite prepared to put up a case to that effect. He considered these settlers were not being fairly treated. In conclusion, I hope that the prospects that lie before the north and east of the Merredin district will be fulfilled, but I am doubtful.

**MR. SAMPSON** (Swan) [8.7]: I join with most people in believing that the operations of the Agricultural Bank, and Industries Assistance Board, and the Soldier Settlement Scheme are in the interests of the State. I feel, however, that our migration policy is ripe for radical revision. The expenditure disclosed in the Estimates is not excessive, but the advantages derived are not very apparent. Money is spent to bring people here, but when the migrants arrive they slip through our fingers. Our population is almost negligible for the size of our State. This is borne out by figures given in the Quarterly Statistical Abstract. During the first quarter of the year, according to Table 2, dealing with arrivals in and departures from Western Australia, the number of arrivals was 1,304 and in the second quarter it was 2,170.

**Mr. Marshall:** Were there any Maltese amongst them?

**Mr. SAMPSON:** For the first six months of the year, to June last, the departures were 92 less than the arrivals.

**Mr. Sleeman:** Do you refer to Southern Europeans?

Mr. SAMPSON: With regard to assisted and nominated migrants for the first quarter the number of arrivals was 938 and for the second quarter 673. I acknowledge with regret that many of the migrants do require support. Another point is that taxation is steadily increasing. Whilst it may not appear from the figures set out in the Budget that individual taxation is increasing, such is the case. The interest charges are mounting up, whereas unfortunately the population figures remain almost stationary. The great need in Western Australia is increased population so that the burden may be distributed over a greater number.

Mr. Marshall: Do the Maltese pay taxes?

Mr. SAMPSON: The present Government have failed in the vital matter of immigration, and the difficulty of unemployment has not been surmounted.

Mr. Marshall: According to your argument, we should bring in more people.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is difficult to get migrants, and when we get them we cannot retain them. This is because the State is afflicted with chronic unemployment. It is interesting to note an extract from the "West Australian" dated 8th April, 1924. This has a direct bearing on the question. It says—

Work in the country, demand for men: The report on the labour market during March furnished by the secretary of the State Labour Bureau, Mr. Hitchens, is of an interesting nature. It states that during last month there was a large demand for men for all classes of country work, and no fewer than 726 men were engaged through the Labour Bureau. At the end of the month 205 vacancies remained unfilled.

That was a great tribute to the position as it was then.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you remember the deputation that waited upon you?

Mr. SAMPSON: At the end of that month 205 vacancies remained unfilled.

Mr. Sleeman: They could not get a feed when they asked for one. I can bring down the file.

Mr. SAMPSON: The extract continues—

Of the total engaged 328 were for Government works and 398 for private employment. Those engaged for the country numbered 656, and for the town 70.

This is as it should be. So long as there is ample work in the country, the better it is for the State. In that case there was more work available than there were men to carry it out.

Mr. Sleeman: Was there no unemployment in your last year?

Mr. SAMPSON: I regret that a world-wide difficulty of unemployment exists. I realise that in putting up this criticism I am not greatly advancing the case. We have heard on different occasions statements with regard to the 3,500 farms scheme. I hope that a definite progress will be made with it.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is only a scheme on paper.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is beginning to look mythical. We have heard of it so often and it is so long in arriving that it seems as if it will never materialise. If the scheme is ever to become an actual fact, I hope our own people will be given the first opportunity to take up the holdings. The matter has been so often discussed that I am beginning to lose faith in it.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: What is the cause of the delay?

Mr. SAMPSON: In the course of his reply, the Minister may give the House a further assurance on the subject. If it is possible to learn that the scheme will shortly be put into operation, we shall all be very grateful.

The Minister for Lands: I was not in the confidence of the Bruce Government.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister now has the opportunity to receive the fullest possible information and when he has obtained it we shall be very pleased to hear what it is. We do not want to be held in doubt for a longer period.

The Minister for Lands: There is a wise old saying "Hasten slowly."

Mr. SAMPSON: But the hastening process is such as to remind me of the story of the boy who was going to school. He got there eventually and, in answer to the teacher's remonstrance, explained that for every step he took forward he slipped back two. The teacher expressed surprise that he arrived at all, and the boy said that he had only done so by turning his back to the school. I hope the Minister has not turned his back on the 3,500 farms scheme. Wherever people are gathered together there is to be heard criticism regarding the group settlement scheme. I join with the Minister and with Sir James Mitchell in expressing my absolute faith in the ultimate triumph of that method of settling the great South-West. Should anyone travel throughout the South-West from

Armadale to Augusta, particularly, if he desires to see the best example of clover production, and to the electorate represented by the member for Nelson, in the vicinity of Manjimup, he will see as splendid examples of clover production as can be shown in any part of the world. When we realise the increase in the production of butter, we can appreciate the wisdom of the group settlement scheme. It was a great conception, and like all great schemes has been subjected to much criticism. I can applaud the magnificent work Sir James Mitchell has done for Western Australia regarding group settlement matters. Although criticism regarding that scheme has not yet ceased, it will conclude in the near future, and people will then appreciatively acknowledge what Sir James has done for Western Australia.

Mr. Sleeman: And what has been done by the present Minister?

Mr. SAMPSON: They will give the present Minister due credit, too.

Mr. Wilson: But you nearly forgot him.

Mr. SAMPSON: We will give credit to everyone who has helped towards the success of the scheme. I have no doubt whatever of the ultimate result. Every big effort brings down most bitter opposition and adverse criticism upon the person responsible for its initiation. Perhaps that is one proof of ultimate success! There never been a big scheme without the persons responsible having had to encounter bitter opposition. We remember what happened with regard to the settlement of the eastern wheat belt. It was said of the wheat growers who went out beyond Kellerberrin, and even this side of that centre, that they were going to certain death, that the rainfall was insufficient, and so on. The lumpers of Fremantle were sent up there by Sir James Mitchell when Minister for Lands.

Mr. Sleeman: And they made good.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, but remember the criticism! Those who were responsible were stigmatised as murderers; the finger of scorn was pointed at them. Ultimately the men made good, and to a large extent Western Australia owes her present position to the fact that that land was taken up and utilised for wheat production. What happened in the eastern wheat belt will be our experience regarding the South-West. Much could be said about the settlement that is proceeding in the Morawa, Gutha and Mul-

lewa districts. The country there is magnificent and is giving splendid results. I would listen with the greatest possible interest to the story of the development of those districts as told by the Minister himself, who is a successful farmer in that part of the State. I understand that Morawa is really the capital of the country where the Minister's farm is located. I hope that settlement and development will continue. I regret that migration is not progressing satisfactorily, and that we are suffering from the world-wide epidemic of unemployment.

Mr. Sleeman: For how long have we been suffering from that?

Mr. SAMPSON: Since 1924.

Mr. Sleeman: That is different from what you told the Maltese last year.

Mr. SAMPSON: I regret that that statement appeared in the "West Australian," but I contend that there should be no unemployment in this State. Any man who attempted to foster unemployment in Western Australia would be worthy of public castigation.

Mr. Sleeman: But the statement you made to the Maltese last year was that there was no unemployment in Western Australia.

Mr. SAMPSON: It would appear from the statement by the member for Fremantle that there was unemployment in the State then.

Mr. Sleeman: Then why did you tell the Maltese a different story?

Mr. SAMPSON: It is a matter for regret that the statement was made, but it was made in all good faith. I could hope that the member for Fremantle would bend his mind to creating employment rather than to attempting to justify the present most unfortunate position.

Mr. Sleeman: I am doing my best.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [8.22]: I do not intend to delay the Committee, but wish to say a few words about group settlement matters. I listened with interest to the Minister's statement regarding the revaluation of the group settlers' holdings, and the good work done by the Valuation Board. The fact remains that there are a few anomalies. I believe the settlers will ultimately make good if the Minister will only extend a little more sympathy towards them regarding interest payments.

The Minister for Lands: My alternative scheme was better than their own.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not know that it was; the Minister has not pointed out the defects of the settlers' scheme.

The Minister for Lands: I replied by giving them better terms.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am not conversant with the terms, and the Minister did not outline them. I hope the Government will realise it is positively imperative that the settlers should be exempted from interest payments during the first few years.

The Minister for Lands: I have done that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am pleased to hear it.

The Minister for Lands: Under my alternative proposition, they will pay less at the outset than they were prepared to pay.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Then the settlers will be more than satisfied with that. I appreciate the difficulties experienced by the Minister regarding the provision of stock for group settlers. It is necessary before the settlers can be placed on their own resources that they shall have sufficient stock to enable them to carry on. We know that the stock was not procurable in Western Australia, and the Minister sent one of the best judges of dairy cattle, Mr. Rose, to the Eastern States to purchase stock. No doubt Mr. Rose did his best, but many of the cattle were poor and scrubby. The Minister has indicated that the price worked out at approximately £20 a head, and that it had been reduced to the settlers to £17 a head. I think £17 is too much.

The Minister for Lands: My figures were approximate. That would not be the average.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am aware of that. The Minister knows that all the stock were young, and will not be brought into productivity for two or three years. Then again they represented a mixed lot, including Jerseys, Shorthorns and Guernseys. They will not be of much use until their second calving and will only be of full use after their third calf. In those circumstances £17 seems to be a high capitalisation, seeing that the settlers have to wait so long for a return.

The Minister for Lands: If they can buy better, they can be financed.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is the trouble. A few isolated settlers may be able to buy better, but the bulk of them are not in that position. Then again many of the settlers

have not ten cows on their holdings. Some have more than ten cows, but some will not have that number, and they are on blocks that will be taken over by the Agricultural Bank. I presume the Minister and his officers have made provision to carry those men on until they reach the ten-cow stage.

The Minister for Lands: The Agricultural Bank officials will provide for those men when they are taken over. It will be done under ordinary bank conditions, not under group settlement conditions.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is so. I appreciate the difficulties that have confronted the Minister, but I am quite certain that the settlers will be successful in the end. My notice was drawn to remarks made by tourists who have been visiting the South-West. One gentleman, who came from Gippsland, spoke about the magnificent country we have there. He was referring to the area out from Pemberton. I would like the Minister to use his influence with the Premier regarding an area he knows so well. It is held up for forest purposes and much of it has been dedicated to that end. If the Minister can get on the sympathetic side of the Premier—I confess I cannot—and secure some of that area for further settlement after reclassification, it will be in the best interests of the State. Recently the South-West conference passed a resolution in favour of the establishment of an agricultural college in that part of the State.

The Minister for Lands: That is not a matter for my department.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I know it comes under the department controlled by the Minister for Agriculture, but the Minister might do what he can to secure the provision of that college. The soldier settlers in my electorate are having a trying time. Something is radically wrong, and they are envious of the conditions enjoyed by the group settlers.

The Minister for Lands: I know they are.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The soldier settlers say that they have rendered far greater national service than the group settlers, and yet the latter have been brought here and have been given more favourable conditions regarding their holdings. The settlers in the Manjunnup area and in fact, in other heavily timbered country, are hard up against it to-day. Their interest has accumulated, and much of it is interest upon interest. Implements were bought in the early days that were useless. Now after ten years they find

themselves hard up against the wall. To add to their troubles the time has arrived when they must pay back principal as well as interest. It is impossible for them to do that. Some of the settlers were notified that if they did not pay up their arrears within a certain time they would have to vacate their holdings. Many of them have had to vacate them. Then we find the Agricultural Bank calling for tenders for the various blocks. Although the settlers have been advanced up to £2,000, others are getting the blocks for from £900 to £1,400, or from £600 to £700 less than the soldier settlers owed. That is what happened in numerous cases. Soldiers have gone off the land and other people have taken it up under the tender conditions and are making good. When it came to the show down the Minister could say to the soldiers "We will give you the first preference of holding on to your land at the bid of the highest tenderer." Parliament would be quite justified in agreeing to the granting of such a concession to the soldiers. That is all I desire to say in regard to the Estimates.

**MR. MARSHALL** (Murchison) [8.31]: I regret that I shall have to delay the passage of the Estimates for a little while, but I cannot miss the opportunity to say the little it is usual for me to say upon the Estimates of the Lands Department seeing that I missed the chance to do so when speaking on the Address-in-reply. An obligation devolves upon me to say a few words in regard to migration and land settlement. Like some previous speakers, I do not intend to advocate the migration of any particular nationality, at any rate not just at present. I do not think you can empty a case of oranges by adding thereto instead of taking therefrom, and when we find as we do to-day in Western Australia and indeed right throughout the Commonwealth, huge numbers of unemployed and incidentally huge numbers from other parts of the world making Australia their destination, it seems to me to be absolutely an anomaly for the taxpayers of this State to be assisting people to come here when those same taxpayers cannot provide all that are already here with an ordinary day's work. I know that the Government have their troubles, but I suggest to the Premier that now there is a change of Government in the Federal arena he should renew his activities at least

in the direction of doing as much as he possibly can to restrict the arrival of foreigners. I do not want anyone to run away with the idea that I am altogether opposed to the foreigner. I have had to work with the foreigner and may have to do so again. Amongst them I have found some splendid workmen, and gentlemen too. What I am particularly opposed to is alleged representatives from this State preaching in a foreign country—

Mr. Latham: It is not a foreign country.

Mr. Sampson: What are Maltese?

Mr. MARSHALL: It is all very well for those hon. members to advance the argument that Maltese are British subjects.

Mr. Latham: So they are.

Mr. MARSHALL: So is a Hong Kong Chinaman and so are the Hindustani, the Africaner, and the Zulu, and whilst the member for York's leader suggested that we should adopt the same standard of living as these people, I admit the hon. member himself did not go so far.

Mr. Sampson: Well, do not become frantic about it.

Mr. Latham: You are trying to whip yourself into a frenzy about something you do not understand.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have here the very words that were spoken in Malta by the two hon. members interjecting, and sent to us by cable. Here we find members of the Country Party talking about migration and the development and the filling up of the empty spaces in Western Australia. Do we not know that whenever a block of land is thrown open for selection there are always 50 or 60 applicants for it?

Members: Hundreds of applicants.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, hundreds of applicants for some blocks.

Mr. Latham: Those are picked blocks of land.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Land Board experience great difficulty in fining their choice down when they have such a number of applicants for blocks that are thrown open. Anyway, where are those empty spaces that the two hon. members referred to in Malta? There are no empty spaces; there are vast areas, but they are not empty spaces. They are under a form of development which is in accordance with the law, but which I do not agree with altogether. I disapprove of the granting of a million acres to an individual. It is a bad advertisement for this

State when we say that a pastoralist must have a million acres so that he might earn a living. But let me return to what the hon. gentleman said when he was in Malta.

Mr. Latham: Which hon. gentleman?

Mr. MARSHALL: Both of you. Listen to this:

Australia wants permanent settlers who will send as soon as possible for their wives and children, said Mr. Sampson. In Western Australia especially large families, such as I hear you have here, would be very welcome. The old idea of making money and coming back to Malta is no good for settlers who want to achieve something big. Let Maltese go out in great numbers and settle permanently in Australia.

Mr. Sleeman: And flood the labour market.

Mr. MARSHALL: Mr. Sampson is referred to. I do not know whether he is the member for Swan or not. He went on to say that there was no unemployment in Western Australia. As a matter of fact we have never been rid of unemployment since group settlement was first inaugurated.

Mr. Latham: And never will be.

Mr. Sampson: That is untrue.

Mr. MARSHALL: That brings me back to the point I was about to make that I look to the future with some concern. We have an agreement with the Imperial Government whereby we get cheap money, a big sum at one per cent. We get that simply because we have bound ourselves to take a certain number of migrants.

Mr. Latham: We get it for one per cent. and we charge those who borrow it seven per cent.

Mr. MARSHALL: Incidentally we are under a contract that for every £75 we spend upon public works we are to take one migrant. Hon. members will readily appreciate the fact that if we fulfil such a contract, sufficient migrants will come out to construct all the public works necessary for ever, and the consequence will be that those who are here will be in a state of unemployment for the period of the cheap money contract with the Imperial Government, which is ten years. Then when we come to the end of that ten years, we will find that the Imperial Government, having handed over the suckling infant and placed it on the lap of Australia, will demand payment of full interest.

Mr. Sampson: Why not develop the country?

Mr. MARSHALL: We cannot develop it more rapidly than it is possible for us to get the money with which to carry on that development. At the present time the Treasurer finds that he will have to do with a million less this year than he anticipated being able to spend.

Mr. Sampson: How would you get over the difficulty?

Mr. MARSHALL: I can understand how the hon. member would get over the difficulty. He would get all the people he could at 5s. a day.

Mr. Sampson: But what is your solution?

Mr. MARSHALL: My solution would be to leave to the Imperial Government the obligation of looking after those who were sent out by the Imperial Government a let Shylock who created the chaos, carry his own baby. We can steadily advance and look after our own. You can get millions with which to cause destruction, but when it comes to borrowing money for legitimate development and building up we find that Shylock tightens up.

Mr. Latham: Return the country to the blacks.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is a lot in what the hon. member has to say. Judging by the way things are progressing, under the present capitalistic system, there would be no harm if we returned the State to the aborigines.

Mr. Latham: The position will be worse in another ten years.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is another feature of migration to which I would like to draw attention. I do not know whether the Government have anything to do with the matter, but there are organisations within the borders of the State that seem never to be satisfied unless they are bringing in migrants. I think the Salvation Army is one of those organisations, and there are others who specialise in bringing in youths. I do not know whether the Treasurer assists them in any shape or form, but it is a remarkable thing that no one ever seems to think of the Western Australian born. One organisation brings out children and sends them to the Fairbridge Farm school, whilst the locally born are totally ignored, notwithstanding that there are any number of them willing and able, if the opportunity offered, to go to a farm school. But no, these organisations must specialise in bringing in children from outside, leaving our own to walk about in search of work.

or sustenance of some kind. A few weeks ago I had the temerity to submit two motions to this Chamber calling for files from the Lands Department. That request of mine created no end of wrath and was responsible for a great deal of innuendo as well as a personal attack upon me. Long before I entered this Chamber I had been in the din and strife of political elections and I became aware of the tactics of professional Parliamentarians. I learned that when they had a very bad case they religiously refrained from touching it and they painted the other fellow as black as possible and made anything he might say look bad in the eyes of those who were listening to him. But I am too old to be caught like that and that is why I called for the files. As I say, I got the files and a lot more with them. Most of my arguments beforehand for the production of the files were built on personal knowledge of the two blocks, as well as on what I had heard from persons specially interested in the areas. I had no knowledge that applications for forfeiture of one block had been lodged, apart from the person who was the original applicant for forfeiture. I said to him that there must be something peculiar about the transaction if forfeiture was not granted. I knew every foot of the block far better than the lessee himself. I knew the other block also. The Minister said one block was of no value. However, he got his information solely from the file. He has never seen the block. So valueless is it that there were no fewer than four applications for forfeiture. My conscience being perfectly clear, I have never squirmed under the Minister's allegations. Those who know the facts give the Minister no credit, as when he made his allegations he knew he was astray of the facts. It is perfectly true, as the Minister himself has said, that he heard in Meekatharra of my intention to call for the files. I spoke of my intention to Mr. Baker and several others who had approached me regarding the position in which they found themselves. I said that if the true position in regard to the block was as had been stated to me, then, in the absence of some good reason to the contrary, I would take the matter up. The Minister attacked me personally, simply because I did not go to his office and say, "Mr. Troy, will you kindly tell me about this matter?" He has attacked me personally because I challenged his administration. For three

and a half years one of the blocks was held without a penny of rent being paid on it; that block was under repatriation conditions. The other block was held for four and a half years with rent owing on it, with neither improvements nor stock on it, without the lessee himself ever having seen it. Applications for forfeiture were lodged in respect of both blocks. Because I wanted to inquire into what was going on in the Lands Department, the Minister accused me of attempting to undermine other members. Because I introduced Mr. Noel White to him, the Minister says, "You are not going to undermine other members." The Minister was speaking without his book. I have known old White for 22 years, and I can declare him to be as good a pioneer and as good a servant of this State as any other man.

The Minister for Lands: But how did Mr. White know what was on the file?

Mr. MARSHALL: I shall explain all that in good time; now I am speaking for myself. My long acquaintance with Mr. White did not influence me in introducing him to the Minister. The Minister did not know that most of the land in dispute is situated within my electorate, though it is true that Mr. White lives in the Cue electorate, and not in mine. The Minister has overlooked the fact that the man whose money was going in for the improvements on the block is an elector of mine. Thus I had some justification for taking Mr. White along to the Minister. A returned soldier—I mention this in allusion to the Minister's platitudes about returned soldiers—had spent more money on his land than these other two put together. What happened to the returned soldier, Wertheimer? The Minister in that case threatened to forfeit. Noel White and Langford had improved and stocked beyond the requirements of the regulations under the Land Act. Neither of the other men had done anything. Wertheimer had spent between £400 and £500; yet, because he had not complied with the law, the Minister said, "There will be a forfeiture of that block." In the case of the Minister's personal friend, however, there was not the slightest hitch about getting a transfer. Mr. Herbert, whom I do not know but whom I believe to be a fine chap, kept his block for three years without touching it—doing nothing, as the file shows, except appeal to the Minister to defer payment of

rent. At the expiration of three years Mr. Herbert applies for a transfer, and four days later the Minister writes, "Under the circumstances I agree to a transfer." But the Minister did not agree to Mr. Wertheimer's transfer, although this man had done a great deal more on his block than the other man had done.

The Minister for Lands: Mr. Wertheimer's application never came to me; you forget that.

Mr. MARSHALL: I was in the Minister's office while Mr. White presented the case and while the Minister replied. Mr. Wertheimer had sold his land to Langford and White, and had lodged a proposal for a transfer from himself to Langford and White. The Minister refused the transfer, saying "There is nothing else for it but forfeiture. In view of a number of applications lodged for the forfeiture of the land, how can I very well refuse?" But there were four applications for forfeiture of the land held by the Minister's friend, and the Minister easily refused to forfeit that. I have been accused of shooting at Mr. Herbert and Mr. Rodan: but there will be no Bruce-Page partiality in administration while I am here. What is good for Mr. Herbert and Mr. Rodan should be good for Mr. White, Mr. Langford, and Mr. Snell. Snell's is another case in point. Speaking on my motion for production of the files, the Minister advanced as an argument that there were arrears of rent totalling £168,000. What mercy did the Minister show Mr. Snell when owing 12 months' rent? Mr. Snell's lease was cancelled.

The Minister for Lands: I was not in the State at the time.

Mr. MARSHALL: No; the Minister was knocking around New Zealand at this State's expense.

The Minister for Lands: How could I deal with Mr. Snell's case when I was not here?

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. gentleman excused himself in regard to one case by saying that the lessee was a returned soldier, and that he, the Minister, had been approached by a man of means who proposed to assist Mr. Rodan to develop the lease. It is very appropriate for the Minister to become patriotic now, after sitting on the fence during the conscription campaign and being toppled off the fence only in time to go into the polling booth. On the file there

is a letter with which I wish to deal. Four parties were concerned in the application for forfeiture of the block.

The Minister for Lands: Whose block are you referring to now?

Mr. MARSHALL: Mr. Rodan's block. I did not know that Mr. Lukin, manager and part owner of Lake Way Station, had also lodged an application for forfeiture. However, he did so; and the reply he received was that the block had been made available for selection. In a further communication he was informed that the block had been withdrawn. Then Mr. Lukin wrote—

Lake Way station, 26-6-28. To the Minister for Lands, Perth. Dear Sir, I wish to bring the following to your notice:—I was advised by the Lands Department that Lease No. 3335/97, adjoining my station, was open for selection. By the following mail I was further notified that the lease had been withdrawn from application. The lease has been held in the name of Mr. Rodan for about three years, and there have been no improvements whatsoever carried out as required by law. In fact, I am prepared to say that Mr. Rodan has never seen it himself. Similar cases of land being held up have occurred and are occurring in this district, and the general opinion among pastoralists is that speculators, by having the right influence in the Lands Department, can hold leases indefinitely without troubling about doing the necessary improvements as required by law.

Mr. Lukin and all around him were left under the impression that it was the officers of the Lands Department who were doing this job. To this day they are not aware of the fact that if there was any influence used, it was the influence of the Minister for Lands himself, for it was he that withdrew the land from selection. The excuse he gave for withdrawing it from selection was that a certain wealthy person was going to develop it. That prospect has never matured. The excuse given with regard to the other lease was that there had been a case of illness. The same man, however, went out to develop the land, and is developing it now. In neither case did the excuse of the Minister come to maturity. From a letter dated the 25th June, 1928, it is plain that the Minister had spoken to some of his officers about their audacity in regard to the lease—

Pastoral Lease 3335/97. In accordance with your verbal directions, I have looked into the matter referred to in Mr. Lukin's letter. The position is that Mr. Rodan held two pastoral leases, Nos. 3335/97 and 3311/97, but as he



did not comply with the conditions, it was decided in January last to forfeit them, vide page 15 of File 4675/24 attached. The holder then made representations to the department, which resulted in your approving of his being granted a final two months' extension of time (page 20 of the aforesaid file). The holder did not, however, produce any evidence at the end of that period that the department's requirements were being complied with, and the leases were accordingly cancelled, vide page 24 of the same file.

This shows, of course, that these people were on their defence! The officials were pointing out to the Minister how it came about that the lease was forfeited, notwithstanding the fact that it was due for forfeiture on every ground according to law! The minute continued—

The land was then thrown open for selection again, and the various enquirers were advised, pages 22 and 23 herein. Instructions were, however, almost immediately issued by yourself (page 24) that the leases were to be withdrawn from selection for the time being.

So it was not the fault of the officers of the department! It was the fault of the Minister. I have no objection to Mr. Rodan or Mr. Herbert or any other individual who finds himself in the happy position of being able to pull strings to his advantage, but I want my letters replied to. Here we have an instance of one man owing a year's payments, while others have owed their payments for five years without any improvements or stocking up. Whatever is good for the Minister's friends will be good for my friends while I am here. There is no John Brown or Holloway about me! There will be no wriggling out of it!

Mr. Latham: You are hollering now!

Mr. MARSHALL: And I am going to holler, too. I was very unwise in having the temerity to call upon the Minister to present these files. He has been eavesdropping in my electorate, and dropping the information here and there that I was to call for the files. He forgot to tell the Chamber that he poked his nose into a meeting of the Prospectors and Leaseholders' Association to solicit business, but was rebuked by them, and was told that no assistance was required from him, as the member for the district had not up to then failed them.

The Minister for Lands: When was that?

Mr. MARSHALL: I received two letters while the Minister was up there interfering in my electorate. As a matter of fact, the

Minister was up there congratulating himself because there was no selection ballot.

The Minister for Lands: I have not met them, and do not know them at all!

Mr. MARSHALL: When the Minister was there he told them, "You give me that job, I will fix it up when I get to Perth."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member is slightly out of order.

Mr. MARSHALL: I thank you, Mr. Chairman for reminding me. I know that I am out of order. Just because I introduced pastoralists whose property is more or less in my electorate and the financier of the blocks, Mr. Nairn of the Yarrababba station, the Minister has taken exception to my action. I introduced them for the purpose of saving the whole of their life's interests slipping from them. The last word I heard the Minister say to Mr. White when leaving his office was, "I will protect your improvements if I can."

The Minister for Lands: I always do that.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister was going to the Solicitor General direct in order to ascertain if he could protect that individual's improvements; he was not too sure about it. At any rate, the Minister did not forfeit the block. He told three deputations that he would, and he wrote letters intimating that he intended to do so. He knew I was going to compare these files in connection with the actions he had taken, and he did not forfeit the blocks.

The Minister for Lands: That scared me!

Mr. MARSHALL: The fact remains that the Minister did not forfeit the land. At any rate, I have done that much for the individuals concerned. I have saved their life's earnings. I have known one man for 22 years. The Minister can laugh. I have known Mr. Langford and Mr. White for about the same period. In one instance these men saw their life's earnings slipping from them, and the Minister could not do anything for them. When it came to consideration being given to the Minister's personal friends, there was no trouble about it at all. It was merely a matter of a letter and the thing was attended to. What happened regarding Mr. White's land? I received a minute from the Minister a few days after his conversation with Mr. White and Mr. Nairn, in company with the member for Leonora (Mr. Cowan). He insisted on three occasions that the leases had to

go because Wertheimer had not complied with the law. I agree with the Minister on that point, and had he been consistent, I would not have raised my voice against his action. As a matter of fact, Wertheimer had spent more on his block than the other two men had spent in the aggregate on theirs. They were allowed to do just what they desired, but Wertheimer had to experience the cold, hard, matter of fact enforcement of the law. What did the Minister do? He sent an inspector up and notified me to that effect. That was the last intimation I had. What could the inspector find out? As a matter of fact the Minister himself was on one occasion within a few miles of the land in question. Had he so desired, he could have investigated the position for himself. There was no need to send an inspector out to see the block and the improvements at all. The inspector could gather no further information than it was possible for the Minister to obtain, so why was he sent up? The Minister wanted somebody to clean up the mess he found himself in. That is why the inspector was sent up. How can the Minister expect officers of the Lands Department to respect him? After receiving three deputations and intimating what he would do, he does not do it, but sends up an inspector to view the improvements and stock. He knew all about it from the correspondence and from what three deputations told him. Yet an officer had to be sent along to inspect! What was the inspector commissioned to do? What could he possibly do? Nothing! The Minister had a Government motor car and a Government chauffeur, brought all the way from Perth. They were at his disposal and he was going round Leonora trying to undermine the member for the district, who is the father of nine children. Could the Minister not have gone out and inspected the property had he wanted to do so?

[*Mr. Lambert took the Chair.*]

The Minister for Lands: It was a shame, was it not?

Mr. MARSHALL: Then, again, the Minister said that the member for Murchison had reaped where others had sowed. Never where the Minister sowed! The Minister never sowed anything in his life. For 25 years I worked in a responsible position in

this State and I left it honourably before I came here. This paper that I hold is not a certificate of title for land, but it is a certificate of 100 per cent. efficiency in a school examination, awarded to the eldest of five children. I have fathered six. What has the Minister done for this country?

The Minister for Lands: I think you are as fit for Claremont.

Mr. MARSHALL: I would not like to tell the Minister where he is fit for. Claremont is far too clean for him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member should not continue along those lines.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then make the Minister keep his muck to himself. I am stopping him. If I ever reaped where others sowed, it was not where the Minister sowed. The Minister is like the proverbial flea on the back of the dog; he has done nothing but suck. What rates did the Minister pay for the clearing of his farm? Let him tell the Committee that. He is a stalwart regarding Labour principles! What did he pay the men on that work?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That has nothing to do with the question before the Chair.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so. I have another matter with which I wish to deal. The Minister for over two years has sat on an application for a stock route from Mount Augusta station to Meekatharra. In order to thoroughly understand the position regarding the proposal, hon. members must realise that there are two stock routes, one north of Meekatharra and the other slightly to the west of that centre. The one to the west struck out from the North-West and passes through to Mingenew and Nannine. It was possible for drovers to get through by making arrangements with others through whose territory they passed, and so reach Mingenew by a shorter route. They could go directly west to Meekatharra 110 or 120 miles. Unfortunately the stock routes of Western Australia have not been reconditioned since they were established many years ago, with one exception. Recently the department shortened the stock route to Leonora. When within 120 miles of Meekatharra, the old stock route necessitates drovers going north and north-east and then returning to a spot within 20 miles of the point from which they started going in a northerly direction. In other

words, they have to travel for three days, whereas if they could travel due east they could cover the required distance in one day. It was found that quite a number of growers between the two stock routes were hard pressed to get through. They could not get to either the one route or the other. They sent a petition to the Meekatharra Road Board urging that a stock route from Mt. Augusta station to Meekatharra should be made available. That is the proposal upon which the Minister has sat for close on two years. An inspector was sent up and I think I received a minute to that effect. On the other hand, I have been told indirectly that this particular proposal has been rejected. I do not know how the inspector reported on the proposal but I know the people concerned have been making application to have the matter attended to. There is one gentleman who is said to have caused some trouble. Nothing seemed to please him. Unfortunately there were two stock routes already going through his property and this proposal would mean a third stock route. That seemed rather a tall order and to justify serious consideration being given to the proposal. But it does not follow that because twenty stock routes go through one run there will be twenty times more stock going through it. There will only be the same number of stock going through, but they will have farther to travel. They will travel through there just the same. I understand from the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) that the stock route has been rejected. I asked a question about it here some time ago, and was told it was then under consideration. Perhaps it is a coincidence, but the proverbial nark, the gentleman who, whenever stock is coming through does all he can to inconvenience them, did not, when the proposals were first made known to him, go to the Meekatharra Road Board and explain the position to them. No, he came to Perth, and then turned round and made it public in Meekatharra. He said, "I have a thousand pounds to say it does not go through." And it never did go through. Apparently it is a coincidence that it should have been turned down and that he should have made that statement. I would have had very little to say if I had been treated fairly; but when I ask for files and know I am not on sure ground—after all, I do not

blame the Minister for sticking to his friends, but I do accuse him of being inconsistent. And when he takes it on himself to personally attack me, although all I want is to see that everybody gets fair play, it is the Minister and I for it. I will meet him on any ground he likes. When he accuses me of reaping where others have sown, let him, if he can, produce his record of something attempted, something done. Then he can talk. Quick to realise the possibilities of getting place and pay, he seized the opportunity and then inserted his fangs and has thrived on suckage ever since. Then he says that I reap where others have sown. Let me put these two gentlemen in the position of Mr. Snell, who lived the whole of the 27 years in the bush. Put Mr. Rodan or Mr. Herbert in his place. Would they then have cherished the friendship of the Minister? Not much! Let me put them in the position of Mr. Langford and Mr. White, who spent their life earnings on those leases and purchased them innocent of the fact that because of another they could not get a transfer. Then they found every penny they had earned in 20 odd years rapidly going. And the Minister was callous enough to say, "It must go, but I will consult the Crown Law Department, and if possible will save the improvements." As for the stock, what could be done? They were to be allowed to go anywhere for the time being until it was seen whether, after the land had been forfeited and again thrown open for selection, those gentlemen would be the successful applicants for it. That is very different treatment from what Mr. Rodan and Mr. Herbert got from the Minister. And I am not having a shot at Mr. Rodan and Mr. Herbert; I am having a shot at the Minister, and I am not going behind his back to do so. I shall be in front of him if ever he attacks me personally again. I will take none of his insolence. My record on behalf of the pastoralists will compare favourably with that of the hon. gentleman, this most infallible and immaculate administrator! I have done more for the pastoralists than ever he has thought of doing. I have stood up in season and out to battle for them, but I have never heard much from the hon. gentleman on their behalf. I am going to make a confession, merely to show what is going on in regard to the stock route that was turned down.

Seemingly those concerned can get information more quickly than I do. This which I am going to read comes from Landor Station. I confess I wrote to the manager of this station, and I admit I was electioneering. For 22 years I have served this movement in an honorary capacity. I do not know what the Minister ever did for it in an honorary capacity. Indeed, I have never known him to do much except as a paid servant. I have done it for 22 years as an apprentice. I want to show what they think about the position. I admit I wrote to Mr. Russell, the manager of Landor Station, in regard to Mr. Hickey's candidature. This is part of what Mr. Russell said in reply—

The latter view I share, the former, relating to the Government, I have to differ with you upon. By giving support to Mr. Hickey we in this district would be helping to keep in office one Troy, a "good democrat" who professes belief in the greatest good to the greatest number, etc., and then, against the wishes and interests of a whole province and a local governing body, he upholds the selfish attitude of one individual.

**Mr. Latham:** How many more letters like that have you?

**Mr. MARSHALL:** The Minister can imagine how popular he is round about those districts. I am prepared to stand my ground with the hon. gentleman in the House or out of it, and I do not want any more of his personal attacks on me; because if they do come, by God, I will retort.

**MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [9.22]:** I should like to say a few words on the subject of land and migration. Whilst we have not been getting many migrants during the last 12 months, I am of opinion that a lot of those that have arrived from the Old Country are not of the right type. Not that we can blame the migrants themselves. Unfortunately for them, they are mostly young fellows who left school during the war period, and many of them have never had a job in their lives. They are brought out here as migrants, and are expected to go straight on the land and stay there. Work on the land is a big job capable of bluffing quite a lot of Australians who have seen bush life, so we cannot expect these young migrants to be dumped out in the bush and, with long days of hard work, to stay there. If on being brought out here they were given some suitable training, there would be a chance

for them on the land. We must do something for them, instead of expecting them to stay on the land and blaming them when they come back to the towns. Even down on the group settlements, 75 per cent. of the settlers will tell you they came from London, Birmingham or some other big industrial city.

**Mr. J. H. Smith:** Forty per cent. of the settlers on the group settlements are Australians.

**Mr. SLEEMAN:** It may be so, but quite a lot of the migrants there have gone through a big battle to stay there. The young fellows coming out are not to blame, because they never have had a chance in life. If the Old Country wants to transfer her unemployed to Australia, she should send out, with a view to maintaining them until they made good, some of the money they would be costing her in doles if they remained at home.

**Mr. Sampson:** That is a very sound suggestion.

**Mr. SLEEMAN:** The member for Swan to-night said we had to do something to remedy unemployment. He also said that until the present Government took office there had been no unemployment in Western Australia.

**Mr. Sampson:** Not until April of 1924.

**Mr. SLEEMAN:** I am surprised at the hon. member making such a statement. I have here a newspaper cutting of a date when the previous Government were in power.

**Mr. Sampson:** What is the date?

**Mr. SLEEMAN:** This is from the "West Australian," of 30th May, 1923. It was the only occasion when the hon. member, as a member of the late Ministry, had an opportunity to receive a deputation. On all other occasions, when other Ministers were in town, they received deputations, but this was one received by the member for Swan. This is how it reads—

The Colonial Secretary (Mr. R. S. Sampson) who controls the Charities Department and the Government Labour Bureau, stated last evening that late in the afternoon he had received a deputation of unemployed, introduced by Mr. H. Millington. A number of the men looked far from well-fed, and they had asked that in the distribution of sustenance, pending the finding of employment, single men in necessitous circumstances should receive consideration as well as married men. He had promised to authorise the Charities Department to co-operate with the Labour Bureau in giving a meas-

ure of relief in cases in which inquiries showed that the circumstances justified it. Several of the men present had said they could obtain work in the country if railway tickets were advanced to them, and he had promised to consider their request.

He did not even say, "Here is a railway ticket to take you out into the country." To-day applicants for work have no trouble in getting railway tickets to take them to the jobs. Yet the member for Swan said to-night that in those earlier days there was no unemployment. I have here another cutting from the "West Australian," the Bible of the Nationalist Party, dated 29th June, 1922. It reports the holding of a public meeting in the Town Hall at which the following resolution was carried:—

That this public meeting of citizens declares the State Government to be deserving of censure for having failed to make adequate provision to ensure employment for the more than 2,000 Western Australians to-day unable to find work, and calls upon the Government to exercise all possible expedition to secure employment for the vast army of workless men and women now idle and eager to work, and failing that, sustenance and shelter until employed.

Mr. Sampson: Who organised that lot?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not know, but this is what the previous Government attempted to do. They could find work for a few, but not at the ruling rates of pay. And a little further down the column they are protesting against unfortunate out-of-works asking 10s. per day.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Who suggested that?

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Trades Hall suggested this: This is a cutting from the same paper, indeed from the same column—

Last week a Trades Hall deputation requested that 13s. 4d. instead of 10s. per day should be paid to relief workers. This request was refused, and a letter embodying the reasons for the refusal was sent by the honorary secretary of the War and Unemployment Distress Relief Fund (Mr. I. Crawcour) to the general secretary of the A.L.P. (Mr. H. Millington).

In those days the Trades Hall had to come to light.

Hon. G. Taylor: They did not come to light this time.

Mr. SLEEMAN: There is no need for them to come to light now. When a man is given a job, he is given at least the basic wage, which in my opinion is not enough, but there is no cutting of wages.

Mr. J. H. Smith: And he has to buy a union ticket before he can get a job.

Mr. SLEEMAN: He had to have a union ticket in those days, too. At any rate, he had to join up when he got a job, and that is only right. The member for Nelson believes that every man on a job should hold a union ticket. There is nothing wrong in that.

Mr. Latham: We did not deprive them of the right to work.

Mr. SLEEMAN: But the Government which the hon. member supported deprived them of a feed and a ticket to the country. All that the then Government said was that they might give them a ticket to the country.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! These Estimates involve no question of union tickets.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, it is a matter of providing railway tickets to migrants going into the country.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member confines himself to that, we shall get along much better, but he must not discuss union tickets, which have nothing to do with these Estimates.

Mr. SLEEMAN: In 1922 and 1923, when the unfortunate migrants arrived here, they were dumped in the bush sometimes hundreds of miles from anywhere, and sometimes 20, 30 or 40 miles out, and because some of them drifted back to the city they were blamed, and were refused a feed and a ticket. That is the way in which the migrants were treated by the previous Government. Consequently I hope that whenever unemployment or migration is mentioned we shall not have members from the opposite side of the Chamber telling us there were no unemployed when they were in power. We have had read to us by the member for Murchison what the members for York and Swan told the Maltese people, that Western Australia was a land flowing with milk and honey. They tried to get those people out here to flood the labour market, hundreds of thousands of them.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Not hundreds of thousands.

Hon. G. Taylor: Oh, he is talking about those tiny lollies.

MR. SLEEMAN: Those members forgot the hundreds and told the Maltese to come out in thousands and bring their big families with them. My regret is that they

did not come out and sit on the doorsteps of the members for York and Swan and compel them to provide them with sustenance for a while. Those two members practically tried to entice the Maltese to leave their homes and friends where they were comfortable and come amongst strangers. I hope something will be done for the migrants who are already here, and for those who are yet to come. I suppose we shall be getting more of them. If we are going to get more migrants, let us have them from British stock. I advocate preference to Britishers all the time. If we take migrants from the Old Country, we should get some money also to enable us to tide them over the difficulties inseparable from settling in a new country. A lot of those young fellows coming here have good hearts, but they are not able to stand up to the work. Put an Australian in their position and his difficulties would be just as great. Let an Australian boy just from school remain in idleness for five or six years and then go to another country and attempt to do useful work. He would be just as useless as are some of the young fellows brought out to Australia during the first few months they are in the country. I trust something will be done to ensure that when we receive migrants, we shall get some of the money now spent by way of the dole in the Old Country in order to tide them over their initial difficulties here.

**MR. CORBOY (Yilgarn)** [9.34]: It is necessary to say a word or two on land settlement in the Yilgarn district. Let me state quite candidly that the position in that district is not nearly so bad as it has been represented to be in the metropolitan area. There was a paragraph in the metropolitan Press headed "Starving Yilgarn Farmers," or something to that effect, and it went on to say the position was desperate. That is not so. The position is not nearly so bad as it has been painted. Despite a very meagre rainfall during the last three months of the growing period, some astonishingly good crops have been grown wherever anything like decent farming practice has been observed. During the week-end, in company with the Minister for Agriculture, the Director of Agriculture (Mr. Sutton), the Superintendent of the State Wheat Farms (Mr. Thomas), and other officers of

the Department of Agriculture, as well as members of Parliament, I had the pleasure of seeing some of the crops in the Yilgarn district. We saw several crops that in my opinion and in the opinion of other visitors will go at least five bags to the acre. In view of the meagreness of the rainfall during the latter portion of the growing season, they are very fine crops indeed. Of course they were put in under proper conditions. Apart from the crops we saw, we heard of others that promise excellent results. The chairman of the road board, Mr. Crewe, whose property we were unable to inspect, assured us that his crop will go at least six bags. In practically all those instances the crops were sown under reasonably decent conditions. The best of them were sown on fallow. I mention that because it is essential that the policy of introducing fallow to that district this year should be continued, as it is obvious that that has been the means of placing the Yilgarn district definitely on the map from an agricultural point of view. Unfortunately quite a number of settlers, who this year availed themselves of the advance provided by the Minister to put 300 acres under fallow for next year, had no fallowed land to sow this year. Consequently their crops, which were merely scratched in without fallow or cultivation, have failed, as they must do in such a season. Those settlers are in the position of having to face a partial or total failure this season while having 300 acres of fallowed land to plant next season, and unless they receive further assistance it is extremely doubtful whether they will be able to remain on their blocks in order to reap the benefit of the work of fallowing done by them this year. I mention this in order that the Minister might, if possible, make further provision for them. Last season he advanced to each settler 10s. per acre for fallowing 300 acres, a total of £150, and I appeal to him to assist those settlers once more to the end that they may be able to fallow for the succeeding crop. If that is done, they will have next year a crop grown on fallow, which ought to be a good one, and they will also have fallow available to crop in 1931. With such help they should be able to carry on. Unless such provision is made, I am afraid that it will be impossible for them to carry on and that they will slip back into the position which the Minister tried to rectify by granting them the assist-

ance to fallow this year. There is another question wrapped up with the matter of fallowing, which means sound farming and which has demonstrated this year that Yilgarn is a perfectly safe area provided proper farming methods are adopted, and that is the type of fallow, clean fallow, etc. It is necessary that as early as possible those settlers should be enabled by the provision of the necessary water supplies to carry sheep so that they will be able to have clean fallow and to reap the benefit from running sheep on the fallow.

Mr. Latham: What is the prospect at Ghooli this year?

Mr. CORBOY: In the opinion of Mr. Thomas and other experts, the crop at the Ghooli farm will average about 10 bushels. I think the hon. member will agree that those experts know their job and do not usually wax enthusiastic unless enthusiasm is warranted. The State farm crop is by no means the best in the district. We saw crops on the blocks of Mr. Davies, Mr. Goode and Mr. Leckie that will go at least five bags. Those crops were sown on fallow. I want the Minister to consider seriously the advisableness of adopting the two-year fallowing policy so that the settlers will be able to get one crop off fallowed land before the assistance ceases. Otherwise some of them will have the utmost difficulty to do any fallowing next year, and if that happens, the department's policy this year will have been nullified and the settlers will find themselves back in the old position that the department tried to remedy.

MR. LATHAM (York) [9.41]: I have no intention of stonewalling the Estimates, but I wish to utter a protest against the innovation of the Lands Department in imposing residential conditions on grazing lands that come under Section 68 of the Land Act. No doubt the Minister satisfied himself that his action was perfectly right. While I do not pretend to possess any legal knowledge, I maintain that the Minister stretched the meaning of the Act considerably when he decided that Section 25 gave him power to take such action. I wish to point out for the benefit of the Committee—the Minister knows the conditions under Section 68 of the Act—that we have a lot of light country which is being served by railways. Roads are provided: usually it is easy to obtain water supplies, and no

financial assistance is granted. If we are going to compel selectors to reside on their holdings, we shall simply be handicapping them. I shall do all I can to encourage people to select and use such land without imposing impossible conditions on them and preventing them from making good. I was disappointed when I heard the Premier's reply to the questions asked by the Leader of the Opposition about the conditions under which such land is being selected outside payable distance from a railway. If the Premier takes a glance at the map, he will see that quite a number of settlers are outside the payable distance.

The Premier interjected.

Mr. LATHAM: It is all very well for the Premier to say that; I know he does not mean it. He is aware that men who go out and select land cannot provide railways for themselves. Having done their share, they depend upon the Government to do their share to open up the country.

The Minister for Lands: They have been there only 12 months.

Mr. LATHAM: East of Kondinnin they have been settled considerably more than 12 months; they have been there for years.

The Premier: Where?

Mr. LATHAM: At Karlgarin and East Bendering.

The Premier: The Karlgarin people do not come under the question that was answered to-day.

Mr. LATHAM: Those are the people I refer to.

The Premier: There is a railway authorised for Karlgarin. The survey is being made and the line will be started as soon as possible.

Mr. LATHAM: That is good news. I hope the railway will be extended to the people east of Bendering. They have spent every shilling they had and have exhausted the advances the Agricultural Bank were prepared to make. They are down and out and have not a penny to go on with. I am sure the Premier would not desire that the people should reach that condition if he could help it.

The Premier: These people are not included in the 3,500 farms scheme. My answer to the question was that we were dealing with those who will be affected by that scheme.

Mr. LATHAM: I hope every endeavour will be made to provide these people with

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** Immediately an attempt is made to consolidate legislation, members want to amend it in a hundred different ways. Undoubtedly the Land Act will have to be brought down as a consolidating measure, and a number of very necessary amendments made to it. I know this man is holding 30,000 acres of country but I am powerless to act. A large number of these locations are grazing leases, but I cannot find the original owners. The other day I forfeited one but immediately received a letter from a solicitor declaring that this could not be done, because the selector had complied with the conditions and effected such improvements as were necessary.

**Mr. Davy:** You would not require to forfeit against a man who has complied with the law.

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** This land has been held for many years, but we cannot find the owners.

**Mr. Davy:** You would be no better off if you did.

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** If I could forfeit land that is adjacent to a railway, I could give it to someone who would bring it to a better state of productivity. There is at present a great demand for land in this State, and it is essential that every acre in close proximity to a railway and fit for cultivation, should be put to its fullest possible use. Thousands of people are looking for land every year but are unable to get it. It is unfair that alongside our railways large areas of beautiful country should remain locked up. That sort of thing will have to end. Both the member for York and the Leader of the Opposition have referred to certain settlers who, they claimed, should be treated as if their properties formed part of the 3,500 farms scheme. Those settlers will be served by that scheme. Land was made available to them in 1,000-acre blocks. I consulted with members of the Migration Commission, Sir Chas. Nathan and Mr. Gunn concerning what could be done. I said there was a great demand for land in Western Australia, and that we could not hang up this large area indefinitely. They said, "Go ahead; it will be all right." We therefore accepted their assurance.

**Hon. G. Taylor:** Their verbal assurance?

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** Yes. They are honourable men and they meant what they said. Neither they nor we could

foresee the objection that had just arisen. We felt that these settlers would be in the scheme, and they are in it. The scheme that was considered by the Migration Commission provided for railway communication for the settlers concerned, and the Mollerin line is now being built. The department have treated those people well. True, they are a long way from the railway yet, but they have been treated as no other settlers in the State have been treated. About 200 holdings have been approved and the Agricultural Bank has advanced no less than £250,000 upon them. I believe that already a considerable portion of that money has been drawn. They could have derived more advantage from it if they had done the clearing work themselves. If instead of having the work done by others they had done it themselves, their position would have been far better than it is today. Settlers seem to want the taxpayers to find them unlimited cash so that others may be engaged to do the work for them. They want to rush into prosperity.

**Mr. Latham:** A quarter of a million represents only about £100 a block.

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** On these blocks it represents £1,250. Ten years ago most farmers did their own work, just as the hon. member did. They were able to live on the bank advances until they had received railway communication. Settlers who went out east of Wagin, 50 miles from Lake Grace, did not receive railway communication for three or four years, and those who are now on the Wongan line had to wait five years, but they did their own work and lived on the bank advances. No matter how big our desire may be to assist settlers, we cannot find all the money required to provide the labour, in order that the holders of the land may be swept into prosperity in a year or two. We have not the financial resources to enable us to do that. The settlers must realise their own responsibility and endeavour to live as frugally as possible upon the advances they get from the bank. In this State more Government assistance is given than in any other part of the world. The member for Yilgarn referred to the necessity for greater advances being made for fallow. The present administration have made advances for that purpose. We have spent a lot of money in that direction, I believe with happy results to the State.



railway services that are so sorely needed if they are to make a success of their undertaking. I am not going to declare myself in the same optimistic strain that has been adopted by the member for Yilgarn. I feel that the position will be very serious for many settlers who are out on the eastern part of the wheat belt this year. The position this year, coming as it does on top of last year's results, will create a good deal of trouble for the Government. I do not know what is anticipated, but I see that some legislation is to be brought down to amend the Industries Assistance Act.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in anticipating legislation.

Mr. LATHAM: I cannot anticipate it because I have never seen it. I hope some provision will be made to help these settlers. The Agricultural Bank Act limits the advances to £2,000. To-day I was discussing the position with a settler from Lake Brown. He told me that the settlers there had exhausted their £2,000, and are now saddled with a water scheme which they are unable to utilise, important as the work is, because of the lack of funds. They have no money for fencing or for stocking up their holdings, and yet they have to face this additional annual expenditure.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: They are saddled with it at their own request.

Mr. LATHAM: It is admitted that the country would be no good for stocking purposes without the water.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: It would appear from your remarks that we had inflicted upon them a burden they did not want.

Mr. LATHAM: They have exhausted their own funds and cannot make full use of the water supply. They want additional financial assistance in order to subdivide their holdings and stock them. They must get this from stock merchants or in some other way. I hope the Government will give consideration to them either by administrative act or by some amending legislation. Many of these holdings are neither fenced nor subdivided.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Upon what have they spent their money?

Mr. LATHAM: On improving their holdings. It costs £1,500 to clear 1,000 acres. Then they have had to sink dams, erect

houses, etc. In all probability many of these settlers are persons who last year were informed that they had received their last financial assistance, but they will have to be assisted further if they are to make a success of their holdings. If we are going to write down these properties, or give any financial assistance at all, we ought to give it to those who have been on their farms for years, rather than hand them over to new settlers who may prove no more successful than the present holders. The matter is important and concerns me very much.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet—in reply) [9.50]: With one exception I have to thank members for the manner in which they have received these Estimates. The member for York made reference to grazing leases. The department are prepared to consider any applications or cases that are put up to them. A great many people have taken up grazing leases in excess of their capacity to work them. They have taken large areas of land upon which they have paid no rent for five years and no local government rates for two years.

Mr. Latham: Most of them have had to pay survey fees.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have been told that the department are not doing their duty, and that it is unfair to land seekers. This is said because, for instance, one man at present holds 30,000 acres of conditional purchase and grazing country close to a railway line. He does not hold this area in his own name, but has transfers in his pocket of grazing leases that are held by other persons. Certain minor improvements have been effected but these persons are not living upon the areas. We cannot find them. The department cannot forfeit the leases, notwithstanding that they have been worked for a number of years. Some of the leases are really first-class propositions and capable of being put to very much better use.

Hon. G. Taylor: Is not Parliament capable of doing something to assist you?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It would be necessary first to amend the Land Act. This must be done at no distant date, but it is the work of a whole session to amend it in every particular and consolidate all the Acts relating to the measure.

Hon. G. Taylor: We have amended Acts before on less provocation than this.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is the outcome of experience.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I hope the bank will continue its policy so far as its finances permit. The member for York referred also to the writing down of property. Both he and the member for Avon stated that the Government ought to write down the value of a number of properties so that the settlers might start again instead of having to abandon their holdings. That is a matter for the discretion of the trustees. It is not one with which I ought to interfere. They have been dealing with their clients for 10 or 12 years. I agree that when a man is a trier and has done his best he should receive consideration. I am sure there are cases known to hon. members where, if we write down the value of the property, the settlers would merely build up again further liabilities. It is no use carrying a settler indefinitely. There must be an end to that sort of thing. I would always as sympathetically as possible consider the cases with the trustees, but I do not think I should interfere unnecessarily with the duties and responsibilities of a body of men who come personally into contact with the settlers and know them so well. With regard to the attack made upon me by the member for Murchison, I do not know whether I ought to feel intense pity, or intense loathing and contempt, for him. I feel he must be a paranoic to indulge in such a long tirade and the insinuations and blather which fell from his lips to-night. I have never had a more painful experience. I am charitable enough to have very little regard for what the hon. member has said beyond stating that I will relate the facts concerning the subject to which he referred. He was the attacker in this Chamber; not I. He was the attacker in the country; not I. He went throughout the country telling people that I was crooked, that I was corrupt, that he would drag me down and destroy my reputation. But when he approached the subject in this Chamber, he said that it was most unpleasant for him to have to do so, and that I should not have compelled him to do it. He said there must be something wrong with the Minister who opposed his motion. And the amazing ass did not know that there was nothing wrong, that the Minister intended that he should come out into the open and make his charges publicly instead

of indulging in insinuations behind the Minister's back. What is the position with regard to Rodan's file? The hon. member imagined a lot of things, and said there had been a grave miscarriage of justice. Those words mean to the ignorant a tremendous lot. The hon. member said there had been a lot of wire pulling. On the file there are two instructions from me—one, "Hold up," and, six weeks later, "Forfeit." That is all I put on the file; there is nothing else on the file from me. And that is done every day in the week—"Hold up," or "Forfeit." And so it is to-day. I hold up forfeitures for months in order to give people a chance to prove their bona fides. When the hon. member says that friend of mine was concerned, or that I am crooked, or that there has been a lot of wire-pulling, my reply is that there is not an action taken by me or by any other Minister every day when someone, if he were dirty enough, could not say that there had been wire-pulling or a grave miscarriage of justice. As regards Mr. Lukin, I wrote, "What are the facts?" On the facts I instructed, "Forfeit." I had given these people six weeks in which to put up a proposition. If they did not do it, I must forfeit. That is called a grave miscarriage of justice. And yet that is the whole of the charge in respect of that file, as hon. members may see for themselves. I really do not know what the hon. member was particularly referring to, he so blathered around his subject. Never have I heard a worse tirade of abuse and misrepresentation in this Chamber. He mixes up White and Wertheimer—this is the first we have heard of those two cases—with Herbert. He also mixes up with Herbert's case the case of Snell—Snell being another person whom the hon. member accuses me of being unfair to. I never heard of Mr. Snell previously. I was in New Zealand when Mr. Snell's case was dealt with by the Lands Department. He blames me for something of which I cannot be guilty, since I was not in the State at the time it happened. He says I treated White very badly by forfeiting. As a matter of fact, I did not forfeit White's leases; they were forfeited before my return from New Zealand. The matter was handled by the Minister who acted in my absence. On the representations of the departmental officers he forfeited. When I returned, these people made complaints of unjust forfeiture; and for four or five months I earnestly went

into their cases to get the rights of the matter. God knows I could not have done more! The facts are that I did my best to get at the truth in order to do justice to these people, and that I did not forfeit their blocks at all. In point of fact, I did not refuse Mr. Wertheimer's transfer either, because that transfer was never put to me. He had proposed to give a transfer to certain people. The facts of the case, so far as I know them, are these: Mr. Wertheimer did not make the improvements. He held the lease as a returned soldier, certainly. He never complied with the conditions, so far as I can learn from the file. The other parties state they made the improvements after they purchased the leases. They had the advantage of holding leases for which no rent was paid because they were held under a returned soldier concession. After seeing a representative of these people, I saw Mr. Marshall and Mr. Cowan. Eventually I sent an officer, Mr. McLean, to look into the matter personally and get the facts on the file. After Mr. McLean had gone into the question, I reinstated the majority of the leases. I did say to Mr. Nairn: "The leases are forfeited, but I will do this much: I will try to protect your improvements." Really the improvements belonged to the Crown. However, I was giving the benefit to these persons. And yet charges of unfairness are made against me! It might easily be said by members of this Chamber if they are malicious enough, that in considering the cases of White and Langford for four months after their leases had been forfeited by another Minister, I was considering my friends. I held up the cases for four or five months in order to get at the facts—not to do these people an injury. On the other hand, my alleged friend Mr. Rodan got the short shrift of six weeks. So it will be seen that I find it difficult to understand the hon. member's statements. I do not like to express my opinion of him. Never before have I heard such malice, misrepresentation and abuse. Finally, after having indulged in that sort of language all the evening, the hon. member sneaks out of the Chamber, leaving a trail of slander behind him. That is all. I thank hon. members for the consideration they have given to the Estimates, and I shall do my best to meet them in regard to suggestions which have been put forward. I assure the member for York that persons who are bona fide occupying grazing leases and making im-

provements need not fear the residential condition if they approach the department for consideration on their merits.

Vote put and passed.

*Notes—Agricultural Bank, Industries Assistance Board, Soldiers' Land Settlement £83,704, Group Settlement £2,039, Immigration £6,767—agreed to.*

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.9 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 23rd October, 1929.*

	Page
Question: Road Boards, revenue ... ..	1108
Assent to Bills ... ..	1108
Bills: University of Western Australia Act Amend- ment, 32. ... ..	1109
Agricultural Products, Room. ... ..	1109
Treasury Bills, 12. ... ..	1111
Transfer of Land Act Amendment (No. 2), report	1111

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

### QUESTION—ROAD BOARDS, REVENUE

Hon. E. H. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: What road boards derived less revenue, from the general rates only, than £600 per annum during the two consecutive financial years 1928-1929?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

Name of Board.	Amount collected.			Amount collected.		
	1927-1928.			1928-1929.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Coolgardie .. ..	542	12	7	448	10	9
Greenbushes .. ..	316	6	6	226	2	11
*Lawlers .. ..	523	12	8	545	14	0
Mt. Magnet .. ..	722	14	3	510	4	3
Mt. Margaret .. ..	343	10	5	321	1	0
Nannine .. ..	329	13	8	331	0	8
Norseman .. ..	117	1	5	188	0	8
Nullagine .. ..	505	7	3	538	12	4
Port Hedland .. ..	468	7	4	530	9	0
Roebourne .. ..	586	10	8	453	1	3
Shark Bay .. ..	216	19	7	280	18	0
Table Land .. ..	569	13	2	493	1	7

\*Lawlers Road Board has now been abolished.