

doubt about the condition of the rooms they were in. Those rooms certainly could not be regarded as calculated to assist towards a quick recovery. For years the Narrogin and Muresk institutions have been starved for funds. That certainly should not be so. I will admit that since the present Minister for Agriculture and his predecessor assumed charge of the Department of Agriculture, there has been some activity in regard to new buildings.

The outlook is therefore more encouraging now than it has been for several years past. Finally, might I say that when Mr. and Mrs. Shugg, who preceded the present principal and his wife, left the Narrogin School of Agriculture, they and their work were so highly regarded that it was considered almost impossible to secure persons of like ability to succeed them. I am, however, happy to recognise that in appointing Mr. and Mrs. Shelton to succeed them, the Government has made a very wise choice indeed, so that the good work done in the past will certainly be continued. I had intended to refer to the need for an appointment of a veterinary department at the school, but the member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) has adequately dealt with that point. I would therefore merely add, in closing, that I am entirely at one with him in the matter, particularly in his opinion that if such a department could be started at the school, the difficulty now being experienced by this State in its supply of veterinary officers would in part at least be overcome.

On motion by Mr. McLarty, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.22 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 17th August, 1938.

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

QUESTION—MINING.

State Prospecting Scheme.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: With reference to the State Prospecting Scheme mentioned in the "West Australian" of the 12th August, 1938—1, Is it not a fact that this scheme, alleged by the Minister for Mines (Mr. Panton) to have been inaugurated by the late Mr. Munsie, was in operation during the administration of the late Mr. Seaddan? 2, If not, and there were two schemes, in what respect do they differ?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1. No. The present scheme was inaugurated by the late Mr. Munsie in May, 1933. 2. At the time Mr. Munsie took over from the late Mr. J. Seaddan, the assistance for prospecting comprised sustenance orders for 7s. per week for married men and 10s. per week for single men, who were registered with the Unemployment Relief Department, and the loan of prospecting tools. The present scheme provided for a flat rate of 15s. per week, and allowed men on the goldfields and in the country in straitened circumstances, but not necessarily sustenance men, also to apply. It was operated by the Mines Department, and also authorised the issue of explosives, prospecting tools, and rail passes. Previously passes were issued only to men sent from Perth and this was altered so that men on the goldfields could proceed to other districts. Supervisors experienced in practical mining were appointed to inspect regularly prospectors' operations, and to assist them with advice. The present scheme is a very complete one in all ways.

QUESTION—HOSPITAL TAX.*Receipts and Expenditure.*

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What was the total amount received from the hospital contributions tax for the year ended June, 1938? 2, What portion of this amount was expended in building or rebuilding hospitals? 3, What amount was expended in providing equipment for hospitals?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, £245,659 10s. 3d. 2 and 3, Buildings and equipment £34,159 11s. 5d. Expenditure on buildings and equipment has not been kept separate, and would entail considerable work to segregate.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS.*Travelling Expenses Incurred.*

Hon. E. H. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: What were the respective amounts of travelling expenses incurred by the Commissioner of Railways and the Railways Finance Officer in connection with their visit to the Eastern States, extending from the 7th July to the 6th August?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The expenses from 2nd July to 6th August were £78 and £56 respectively.

MOTION—HEALTH ACT.*To Disallow Amendment to Regulations.*

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [4.36]: I move—

That the amendment to Schedule B of the regulations made under the Health Act, 1911-1937, as published in the "Government Gazette" on the 5th August, 1935, and laid on the Table of the House on the 10th August, 1935, be and is hereby disallowed.

On the 20th November, 1935, a regulation somewhat similar to that recently laid on the Table of the House was disallowed by this Chamber. That regulation, dealing with the inspection and branding of meat for sale in the metropolitan area, applied over the whole State. A month later, on the 17th December, 1935, regulations further amended were tabled. Those regulations applied in a similar manner, except that carcasses of veal up to 150 lbs. weight were exempt from their application. Those regulations also were disallowed. In view of

the fact that Parliament on two occasions definitely indicated, by the rejection of the regulations, that it disapproved of them, I ask whether it was reasonable for the Government to impose fresh regulations of a like nature, and to put them into effect several months before Parliament met. One would have thought that the Government, recognising the attitude of Parliament, would have waited until the House met, and then gazetted the regulations so that they could be laid on the Table of the House and exception taken to them, if necessary, before serious damage was done by their application.

The regulations to which an amendment has been made come under the provisions of the Health Act, and it is very difficult to locate them except by the expenditure of considerable time. I draw attention to the fact that, although the previous regulations were tabled on the 17th December, 1935, that was the last sitting of the session. Had they not been dealt with on that evening, they would have come into force and would have operated to the detriment of the people that this House should protect. It was not fair that the tabling of the regulations should have been left until the last minute, and I can accept no excuse for the delay. As members know, according to the procedure of the House, if a member desires to move a motion for the disallowance of a regulation, he has to do so by giving notice of his intention at one sitting and proceeding with the motion at the next sitting. In the case to which I have referred, there was no next sitting. As a consequence, I had to ask the indulgence of the House by seeking a suspension of the Standing Orders, which was granted to me. As a result of my motion, the regulations were disallowed. The present regulations are slightly different from those to which exception was taken previously. They embrace an area within a radius of 25 miles from the General Post Office, Perth. Where the circle passes through part of the district of a local governing authority, the whole of the district is automatically included. That is not a regulation. It is a proclamation by the Department of Agriculture under the Abattoirs Act, and it has become law. The Health Department has been asked to follow that up with the regulation now on the Table, taking a radius of 25 miles from the General Post Office. The

question arises whether it is fair and reasonable to impose such a regulation. We are told that the main issue at stake is the health of the people; but I ask, has there been a case of illness directly traceable to the disposal of meat that has been sent through these channels in the metropolitan area? Personally I have never heard of one. On the other hand, we have to think of the producers.

I have here a pile of letters received from producers affected by the regulation, though I will not weary the House by reading them. If the 25-mile radius is accepted, before long there will be another encroachment in the same direction. There are about 3,000 small producers who look to the metropolitan meat sales market from which they raise a few shillings to keep themselves going, and at the same time dispose of stock which they could not dispose of, except at ruinous prices, through the Midland Junction sale yards or abattoirs. The plea on behalf of the regulation is made on the score of health. The Minister for Agriculture, commenting on the subject, said that one butcher had declared some of the meat in the market was not fit for dogs. However, that has also proved to be the case at Midland Junction. Some of that meat has been brought into Perth from Midland Junction distinctly marked with the Midland Junction brand. The Perth City Council and Midland Junction brands differ. I do not know whether the Minister for Agriculture is an expert on the subject of meat unfit for human consumption. Jersey meat is very unattractive because the flesh is dark-coloured. It is good wholesome meat, although not presentable in a shop for disposal.

Hon. L. Craig: Jersey meat is splendid meat.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. I know what Mr. Craig means: but that meat, when hanging in a shop, looks very unattractive. I have previously spoken about the inspections carried out at the metropolitan meat salesrooms. They are inspections carried out by competent health officers, and are as satisfactory as the inspections made at Midland Junction. We are told that inspection in the metropolitan markets is not so rigid as that at Midland Junction. My experience, however, is that metropolitan inspection is just as rigid as that in the abattoirs. I had arranged for a personal inspection

to be made of the abattoirs. Members will be surprised to learn the procedure adopted there at the present time, when it is so necessary that there should be the strictest supervision. One cannot be sure as to carcass meat unless the viscera are there for the health officer to inspect. Let us see what happens. Take beef. When the carcass has been dressed ready, it is simply opened and left there for the health inspector to examine. He examines a gland in the fat around the viscera and lets the lot go. That is as regards beef. There is an advantage over the metropolitan market, because the viscera are not produced there. However, what I have described is all that is done.

We are told that all carcasses of sheep are examined. However, it is interesting to know that the inspection I refer to showed that there was practically no examination at all. There is no difference from a health point of view between the examination of sheep killed at Midland Junction and the examination of sheep killed outside the metropolitan meat markets. The sheep viscera are not held for health examination. As regards the examination of pig carcasses, I was fairly astounded. It must be realised that in the case of the meat of the pig there is a big risk. The pig is an animal that one must be most careful about. At Midland Junction the practice with regard to pigs is simply to let the whole of the intestines go without any examination except as regards the liver and the lights. These are left on the breathing tube, attached to the carcass. Examination is made of one lung only. Surely the examination cannot be called very rigid. Pigs, I repeat, should be rigidly examined. The same thing could be done at the metropolitan markets by sending the lights and the lung attached to the carcass. That would be no detriment, except, of course, in summer time. Summing up the whole matter, the Midland Junction examination is no better than the examination in the metropolitan markets. The effect of the proposed amendment is to sacrifice numbers of small producers whose very existence practically depends upon the extra money they receive for the carcasses they send in. I quote from one of the letters received by me a statement by the Department of Agriculture—

That dealers visited Subiaco, purchased tuberculous cattle, took them to their holdings, slaughtered them, cut out the affected

parts, and had them inspected and passed at the markets.

It is news to me that an inspector can be fooled in that way. The reply is—

At Subiaco the Department of Agriculture has placed a qualified inspector, and if any animal shows signs of tuberculosis, his duty is to place a broad arrow on it, in which case it must be sold for slaughter at the Midland Abattoirs.

The second statement was that a larger proportion of hinds than fores was sold, thus proving that the animals were affected, disease being traceable only in the fores. The reply to that is—

Never have we had an excess of hinds over fores from producers, except where a producer has retained a fore or a hind for his own consumption. This can be verified by the statistics kept by the health officer regularly attending the Fremantle market, who is employed under the jurisdiction of the Health Department and the Fremantle City Council.

The third statement was that the offal was required for inspection to permit of the definite diagnosis of tuberculosis. If that is so, why is not the offal kept at the Midland Abattoirs? The reply is—

In every instance producers send with each animal the head, tongue, heart, tail and liver.

That is all there is to aid an inspector when dealing with a carcase at the Midland Abattoirs. That fact shows clearly that the amendment of the regulations has not been made in the interests of health at all. I admit that on some of the farms better conditions may be required for the slaughtering of animals, but as regards the health of the people, the meat supplied in the metropolitan markets is just as good as that supplied from the Midland Abattoirs. Meat is sold at a cheaper price at the local sales in the metropolitan area, and I am satisfied that the idea in the minds of the executive officers of the Department of Agriculture is that of which we were informed in 1935. If all the producers affected by the regulations are compelled to send their stock through the Midland Junction Abattoirs, the revenue of the abattoirs will be increased by £20,000 a year. That consideration, I believe, is influencing the department more than is the health of the people. All said and done, the Department of Agriculture has taken the initiative because its officials have extended the radius of the abattoirs' area from 12 to 25 miles, and they have asked the Health

Department to follow suit. In 95 per cent. of the cases in question, the senders to the Midland Abattoirs are under too heavy a cost. Mr. Wood gave some figures yesterday when speaking on the Address-in-reply. I have an example from Mt. Helena, showing the loss that will arise from the extension of the abattoirs' area to producers in that district. This farmer stated—

I had two porkers ready for disposal on the 5th July. Previous to this new regulation they would have been slaughtered and sent to Nelson's market. The return that could have been expected would have been as follows:—Two pigs at 60 lbs. each. (Three days before marketing the live weight of one was 82 lbs.) Nelson's market report for the 6th July was 10½d. to 11d. per lb. for prime handyweights. A return of 10½d. would have given a gross return of £5 2s. 6d. less commission 5s. 3d., inspection 4d., stamp 1d., freight 2s. 0d., account sales fee 6d., a total of 8s. 2d., leaving a net return of £4 14s. 4d. As it was, the pigs were sent to the Midland livestock market, and the return was as follows:—The two pigs brought 41s. 6d. each, a total of £4 3s., less commission 4s. 1d., buyer's allowance 7d., yard fees 6d., freight 3s., stamp 1d., a total of 8s. 3d., leaving a net return of £3 14s. 9d.

Thus that grower lost 19s. 7d. on the two pigs.

Hon. G. B. Wood: I gave the loss as roughly £1.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. The 19s. 7d. would represent the maximum profit that the grower would expect to receive for those two pigs. This matter has been thrashed out on two previous occasions, when somewhat similar regulations were rejected by the House. On the same ground I hope that this amendment to the regulations will meet with a similar fate. I wish to stress that the regulations will not protect the health of the people in any way. No more care is exercised when the meat is inspected at the Midland Abattoirs than when it is inspected in the metropolitan markets at Perth and Fremantle. Another important point is that those two metropolitan markets largely control the price of meat. There is no question about that. Considerable quantities of meat pass through those markets, and there many of the small butchers purchase their supplies. Should the wholesale butchers raise the price of meat too high, the small butchers are in a position to undersell them. Thus the metropolitan markets to an extent police the price of meat.

Though the amendment will result in no gain from the standpoint of health, we shall be sacrificing the very people we desire should succeed, namely, the hundreds of small producers. The abattoirs' area covers a radius of only 25 miles from the city, but it may be only a matter of time before the area is extended considerably; in fact it may be extended to embrace the whole of the State. If the officials of the Department of Agriculture attended to the Midland Abattoirs and ensured that they were satisfactory from the standpoint of health, there need be little fear regarding the inspection of meat in the metropolitan markets. Producers could still be permitted to send their pigs to the metropolitan market provided the practice adopted at Midland Junction were observed, namely, that the lights and the lungs were forwarded with the carcase for examination. In common fairness to a large body of struggling producers, the amendment to the regulations should not be permitted to operate any longer. It has been in operation for a few months, and has done serious damage. I hope the House will protect the small producers and not penalise them for the benefit of the Midland markets. I feel sure that the House will act fairly towards those producers by disallowing the amendment.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [5.1]: I congratulate you, Sir, on your re-election to the high office of President of this Chamber. I am sure it must be satisfactory to know that you have the support of a majority of members. I also feel that you will do as you have done in the past—maintain the high standard that has characterised this House ever since I have been a member of it. The Address-in-reply affords members opportunity to discuss many important subjects, from which in ordinary circumstances we would be debarred except by special motion. Recently I travelled from Western Australia to North Queensland, approximately 4,500 miles. What impressed me most was that despite the long distance travelled,

cities were still inhabited by the one people, and we travelled through one great land. That is a privilege which is not given to people in any other part of the world. I sometimes wonder whether many persons in Australia realise how wonderful this country is and what remarkable privileges they enjoy. I can well understand the Federal Minister for Defence saying that he, too, wondered whether some people in Australia were really Australians.

We have a remarkable Constitution. We have provided means whereby industrial matters may be dealt with by tribunals, and yet in many parts of Australia there are bodies of men who are apparently arrogating to themselves the right to dictate to the rest of the community as to the standard of their requirements. This flouting of law and order causes a good deal of anxiety, and one wonders whither we are heading. Occurrences such as are taking place in many parts of Australia have led other nations to abandon democracy that had been won at such great expense and turn their attention to dictatorships. It is time that some people in Australia realised the glorious privileges we enjoy. If we continue to drift, there is grave danger of losing the privileges which our forefathers deemed worth fighting for. Not only is there trouble in the Eastern States, but also in this State there has been trouble. The Government of Western Australia over-rode the Industrial Arbitration Act in connection with the Colliery miners' industrial dispute. It may be argued that, from the technical point of view, the Government was correct in what it did. I remember that the late Mr. McCallum, who was closely associated with the Labour Movement, said our Industrial Arbitration Act was the best in the world. When it was introduced by him, I had the privilege of occupying a seat in another place. I know the magnificent fight he put up for that piece of legislation. One of the longest conferences that has ever taken place in Western Australia occurred between the two Houses. After 19 hours of deliberation by the managers of that conference, the statement was made by Mr. McCallum that they had got something that was in the interests of the workers of the State and would prevent trouble. The Minister who acted in the Colliery dispute did not act in accordance with his obligations to the people of the State.

The Chief Secretary: He acted in accordance with the Act.

Hon. A. THOMSON: His interpretation of the Act was certainly strained.

The Chief Secretary: There was no strain about it.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Surely Mr. President Dwyer had had a little more experience in the administration and working of the Act than had the Minister who over-rode his decision! A double-headed penny should not be used when dealing with the interests of the people. I am not blaming the Chief Secretary for what happened, but I would be wanting in my duty if I did not draw attention to this matter and protest against the action of an irresponsible Minister. The precedent which has been established may, like the boomerang, rebound upon those who created it. The Railway Department has all it can do to make ends meet. With the aid of the Transport Act, it has eliminated competition, and conditions have been imposed that bear harshly upon country districts. The action of the Minister in over-riding the Arbitration Act, has brought increased costs to the Railway Department. That is not fair. If a private company had been involved, more would have been heard about the matter than has been heard.

I congratulate the Government upon its proposal to establish a bureau of industry and economic research. The progress of the State depends materially upon its primary industries. I trust that the development of our secondary industries, with the aid of the suggested bureau, will mean the co-ordination and co-operation of both sets of industry in the interests of the State. If the bureau is to be successful, the Government will have to pay adequate salaries to the officers appointed to staff it. Western Australia does not do justice to its agricultural officers and many of its experts. I regret that we have lost the valuable services of Mr. Pittman. He did excellent work in the Department of Agriculture but has now gone to the Eastern States at a much higher salary than he received here. I am informed on good authority that he was quite prepared to remain in Western Australia if the Government had recognised his services to a reasonable extent. He was not asking for the salary that was offered by another State. Apparently the department is quite willing to lose such excellent officers as Mr. Pittman. The de-

partment has not been paying its officers the salaries which other States are ready to pay, and we are therefore losing the services of men who are most valuable to the State.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The department is losing status as well.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. If the bureau of industry and economic research is to be effective and give service to the country, better salaries will have to be paid to the officers employed.

I now come to a matter I have referred to before, both in this House and in another place, namely, that dealing with public health. The Government proposes to erect a new Perth Hospital at an estimated cost of £765,000. A block is also being erected at the King Edward Memorial Hospital at a cost of £65,000. The total expenditure will, therefore, be £830,000. This money is being spent in the metropolitan area where half the population of the State resides, but the people are not being asked to contribute a penny towards the cost of those buildings. Let members contrast the policy of the Government towards the metropolitan area with its treatment of people residing in the country. To them the Government says, "You want a hospital for your sick and indigent people. Of course we will help you. If you find half the cost of the building and the furnishing, we will find the other half." We, therefore, have one law for the city and another for the country. If the Government were true to its obligations, it would say to the people of the metropolitan area, "You provide £415,000, half the cost of the buildings, and you may have your hospitals." The conditions would then be identical with those imposed upon the country people.

The Honorary Minister: How are you going to collect the money?

Hon. A. THOMSON: What do we find in the country? The Government says, "Your hospital in Katanning will cost £7,000. You find £3,500 and we will provide the rest." The Government is supposed to administer the affairs of the State in the interests of all the people. If it is fair and equitable to say to the people in the country, "You must provide half the cost before we will give you a hospital," it should be equally fair to say the same thing to the people in the metropolitan area.

The Honorary Minister: The poor people in the country come to Perth for their treatment.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The poor and indigent receive in the country exactly the same treatment as their fellows receive in Perth, and sometimes a little better treatment than is given here. We have often heard it suggested that people from the country are sent to the Perth Hospital, and that is advanced as the reason why it is not necessary for the people of the metropolitan area to contribute towards the cost of the construction of hospitals in the city. The taxpayer in the country is taxed equally with the individual living in the city, paying hospital tax and income tax in accordance with the respective incomes.

The Honorary Minister: But indigent people get preference in the Perth Hospital.

Hon. A. THOMSON: That may be so or it may not, but the point is that the people who come from the country pay exactly the same hospital tax as do those residing in the metropolitan area. If it is fair and equitable to provide a hospital for those residing in the metropolitan area without any cost to the residents, why should the people in the country be forced to contribute towards the cost of their hospitals? Each year I have to contribute my quota of the Katanning Road Board's proportion for the construction of the Katanning Hospital, although I pay the hospital tax as well. That applies to every hospital outside the metropolitan area. This is neither fair nor just, and the Honorary Minister cannot justify such differential treatment. I have voiced that opinion before and shall continue to do so.

The Honorary Minister: The Perth Hospital is a State hospital.

Hon. A. THOMSON: And the Katanning Hospital is a State hospital. If the Minister met with an accident or fell ill while he was at Katanning, he would receive treatment at the local hospital just as I would if I were a patient. I do not want to go to the Perth Hospital, and please God I never shall go there.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. A. THOMSON: If a man is taken ill in the country, he is admitted to the hospital under exactly the same conditions as a man is admitted to the Perth Hospital.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The Chief Secretary himself had an experience recently that proved that.

The Chief Secretary: The conditions are entirely different.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I have heard that statement before, and I have searched for the reasons. The only reason I can find, from a Government point of view, is that there is a greater number of votes in the metropolitan area than in country districts, and in consequence, the Government is not game to tell the city people that they must pay towards the cost of their hospitals, as the country people are required to pay for theirs.

Hon. G. Fraser: A man from Perth is not taken to the Katanning Hospital, but patients from Katanning are brought to the city and placed in the Perth Hospital.

Hon. A. THOMSON: And if the Katanning man were taken to the Katanning Hospital, the chances are that he would recover more quickly than he would at the Perth Hospital.

The Honorary Minister: You do not mean that.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I do. We have a very good doctor at Katanning.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must ask hon. members to allow Mr. Thomson to proceed without interruption. Those who are interjecting will have an opportunity to speak later.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I hope that, when the Minister replies, he will deal with this phase, and if he can demonstrate the justice of providing all the money required for the Perth Hospital and at the same time of charging country people half the cost involved in the construction of their hospitals, I shall apologise and express regret for my remarks. I am afraid, however, that the old adage about a person convinced against his will will apply to me.

Having dealt with that matter, I congratulate the Government on the action taken regarding the iron ore deposits at Yampi Sound. We listened to some interesting remarks by Mr. Angelo last night when he suggested that the Federal Government should assume control of portion of the north of Western Australia. I have been of that opinion for many years. It seems to me unlikely that the State will ever be able to develop the North as it should be developed, and it is certainly worth while to direct the attention of the

people resident in that part of the State to the advisability of being placed under Federal control. I believe that if the change-over were made, greater progress would result in the northern parts of this State.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: My remarks applied only to the Kimberleys.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. However, that is a matter for further consideration. If I were living in the North, I would prefer to be governed by the Federal authorities, if only for the reason that I would have one tax to pay instead of two. Then, from a defence point of view, the Federal Government would naturally have to do more than the State can possibly do. I deplore the action of the Federal Government in placing an embargo on the export of iron ore from Koolan Island. I do not know the reasons actuating the Commonwealth, and I will not assume, as Mr. Angelo did, what the reasons were. I am cognisant of the fact that the action has been detrimental to Western Australia. It has meant the loss of employment to hundreds of Western Australian workers, the loss of the establishment of a town that must have developed with so many men working there, and also the loss of a port that would have been established.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: And the loss of cattle exports to Japan.

Hon. A. THOMSON: That is so. The statement has been made that the Federal Government intends to compensate the company for losses sustained, but the State should also be compensated. The Premier should ask for a substantial grant, and any money obtained in consequence should be earmarked for the development of that portion of the North-West. The embargo was placed on the export of iron ore in the interests of the people of the whole of Australia, and as loss was imposed upon the State in consequence of that action, Australia as a whole should contribute to repair the loss that Western Australia has sustained. It seems a retrograde step for the Federal Government to take, though there may be sound reasons behind its action. The Prime Minister stated that the Imperial Government had not asked the Commonwealth Government to interfere or to take steps to prevent the iron ore deposits being exploited, and it is very difficult for a lay-

man to understand what reasons could have actuated the Federal Government.

Hon. H. Seddon: But quite simple to a military man.

Hon. A. THOMSON: That may or may not be so. I am not satisfied. The Federal Government was quite aware of what was taking place, and agreed to the company's exploiting the iron ore deposits. After doing so, it should not have enforced the embargo. It would have been different if the company had been permitted to develop the deposit into a working proposition and then placed an embargo on the export of ore, which would have meant that the action was taken for military reasons. As a layman, it seems to me a most extraordinary attitude for the Federal Government to have adopted.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: The chief complaint is that the Federal Government let the work proceed for two years before taking any action.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Exactly. In the course of my remarks, I seem to be interspersing congratulations with condemnation. Dealing with youth employment, I must confess to being disappointed with the report prepared by Mr. Justice Wolff. I deplore the masterly inactivity of the Government in dealing with this all-important question. True, Mr. Justice Wolff was appointed to collect evidence and submit a report, and we learnt from the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech that some of the legislation the Royal Commissioner recommended would be submitted to Parliament. If we are to judge the Government by its past efforts to repair the economic losses of the individual and the State through lack of opportunities owing to the depression when many of our young men were debarred from learning a trade or profession, we cannot be too hopeful about the help to be expected from the legislation indicated. Money was provided by the Federal Government for the assistance of those we term the "Lost Legion," and that money was expended by the State Government in providing facilities at Perth, Kalgoorlie and Wiluna, while a small sum only was allocated for country districts. While the expenditure of £17,000 in that direction may be helpful to boys now leaving school in enabling them to acquire additional technical education, nothing is being done for the young

men of 19 to 20 years of age. The New South Wales and Victorian Governments provided a pound-for-pound subsidy to augment the contributions of the Federal Government, and that enabled opportunities to be availed of to do something for those who so greatly needed help. On the other hand, our Government put the whole amount into buildings and plant and accomplished little that is comparable with what other States are doing.

The Chief Secretary: Was that not a condition under which the money was granted?

Hon. A. THOMSON: If that condition applied to Western Australia, it must have applied equally to Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. Each of the three States mentioned has done much more for the class of young men to whom I have referred than has Western Australia, which has done nothing at all. I will prove that statement. Queensland does not place any restriction upon the age of apprentices as we in Western Australia do. A comparatively elderly man in the northern State may start to learn a trade as an apprentice.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And there is a Labour Government in Queensland.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. That is not possible in this State. On the other hand, if a union secretary, in the course of his inspections—I am not casting any reflections upon the union official because he merely acts in strict accordance with the regulations—should see one of the young men about whom I am so concerned and ascertain from him that he was 21 years of age, he would immediately demand the payment to that young man of full wages. That does not apply in Queensland. I presume that is one of the recommendations made by Mr. Justice Wolff. We find that his recommendations will not enable young men without means or parents to support them to enter any trade under apprenticeship conditions, even if granted as they are in Queensland, and live decently.

I propose to inform the House what is being done in Victoria. Members must bear in mind that the same conditions apply there to the money made available by the Federal Government. It has been employed in a way that must prove of benefit to the young men who were compelled to drift into what have been termed dead-ends and

blind alleys. I regret that many of the young men are sons of trade unionists. Why trade unionists should raise so many objections to allowing young men to learn a trade is beyond my understanding. During part of the time I was in the Eastern States, I made inquiries with a view to obtaining information which might be useful to Western Australia. I sought information as to what the youth employment committees and the Governments there were doing. At present, in Victoria 2,833 young men are registered with the Youth Employment Committee; 268 are in training; and arrangements are rapidly being made for a larger number to be sent to schools for a period of 12 to 18 months for full daytime training in occupations for which they are considered to be suited. At the conclusion of this training, when the youths have reached 40 per cent. or 50 per cent. efficiency, employment will be sought for them at the normal wage for skilled workmen or journeymen, the difference between the efficiency of the trainee and the award rate being provided by the Government. The efficiency of the youths will be subject to periodical review by a specially appointed assessment committee, the details of which are to be finalised within the next few days. That is what Victoria is prepared to do. Victoria recognises that it has a duty to perform to these young men. It has earmarked the amount provided by the Federal Government—£40,000 I think—and has supplemented it by an additional £40,000. The young men will be told, "You shall have an opportunity of getting out of the rut and of becoming tradesmen."

When I was giving evidence before Mr. Justice Wolff, he challenged a statement I made dealing with apprentices. He said I pointed out that the restriction being imposed on apprentices was unfair and unjust. I would ask any member of this House, or of another place, or any official of the Trades Hall, or any employer, what would be said of him if he stated that education should be imparted to only one child in three. Should only one child in three have the right to go to school? Would it be said that the others did not matter? In effect, that is what the law of our land and the Arbitration Court are saying to-day. Young men are compelled to take up labouring work and are likely to remain at it all their lives. I strongly object to that. I want

every young man to have the same opportunity that I myself have had. That is what I am fighting for. I now want to show what New South Wales has done in the way of providing facilities for training young men from 19 to 25 years of age who have missed their opportunity of passing through the ordinary apprenticeship channels and of being absorbed in industry. The Government of New South Wales approved of a scheme propounded by the Employment Council to enable unemployed persons in the age group mentioned to be employed in skilled trades, either as indentured apprentices or as trainees. The training will extend over a period of four years, but the period may be reduced if the trainee has had previous experience. I shall not read the whole of the matter which I have dealing with this point. The following is further information I have obtained about the New South Wales subsidised training scheme:—

Apart from rates of pay, the period of training and the age of the trainees, all prevailing award conditions will apply, and no trainee or apprentice under the subsidised scheme can be employed without the consent of the appropriate Apprenticeship Council. Should an employer in any particular trade, where the trainee apprenticeship system is in operation, discharge a trainee employed under this scheme, due to lack of work, provision will be made to provide day training at technical schools until the trainee concerned returns to his original employer when work is available, or is transferred to another employer.

I will anticipate the Minister's reply that the Government has provided classes at the Technical School in Perth and possibly at Kalgoorlie, but the Government has not provided sustenance for the young men. What is the use of asking a young man of 19 or 20 years to train at our Technical School? He certainly gains a certain amount of knowledge, and may even obtain a certificate of competency, but he cannot get a job. He is prevented from doing so by the provisions of our awards. While many employers are willing to help young men, they cannot afford to pay them award rates after only a few weeks' training at the Technical School. That is the position with which these young men in Western Australia are faced. In New South Wales, however, the following provision is made for trainees:—

Whilst in attendance at the day training class, the trainee will receive sustenance payments from the Government, amounting in

the case of single men to 24s. per week and for married men 38s. per week.

The majority of registered unemployed youths and young men have been vocationally examined to determine their adaptability for the various trades, and the Employment Council will arrange to submit only suitable young men from whom employers may make a selection.

The following table shows the rates payable by employers and subsidies approved by the Government of New South Wales to indentured or trainee apprentices:—

Age at Commencing :	1st Year.	2nd Year.	3rd Year.	4th Year.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
19 Years.				
Employer	1 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
Subsidy	1 0 0	0 17 6	0 15 0	NH
Total	2 0 0	2 17 6	3 15 0	4 0 0
20 Years.				
Employer	1 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
Subsidy	1 0 0	0 17 6	0 18 0	NH
Total	2 0 0	2 17 6	3 18 0	4 0 0
21 Years.				
Employer	1 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
Subsidy	1 10 0	1 18 0	0 18 0	NH
Total	2 10 0	3 18 0	3 18 0	4 0 0
22 Years and Over.				
Employer	1 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
Subsidy	2 18 0	1 18 0	0 18 0	NH
Total	3 18 0	3 18 0	3 18 0	4 0 0

Hon. J. Nicholson: Is the trainee allowed to go into works and practise?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, he is a trainee in actual fact.

Hon. J. Nicholson: In actual practice?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, he is paid apprenticeship rates. A comparison with what is being done in New South Wales and Victoria shows how badly the Government of Western Australia has fallen down on this important duty placed upon it. I repeat, when what is being done by the National-Country Party Government in New South Wales and the Country Party Government of Victoria, supported by the Labour Party, to help young men to gain a living above that of a labourer, my honest opinion is that the Labour Government of Western Australia has fallen down badly on its job. Possibly, the reply will be that the Government has not the money available to subsidise such a scheme. I point out, however, that over a million pounds was collected from the emergency tax, which most of us understood was introduced to provide work for the unemployed. In my opinion, some

portion of that tax should have been earmarked for assistance to young men such as is being given by New South Wales and Victoria. Even now it is not too late for the Government to do something, and I seriously urge it to tackle this problem. I have been at it for a long time; but mine has been like a voice crying in the wilderness. I hope the Government will give the matter serious consideration, and if it does not, and there is a change of Government after the elections, then I hope the new Government will give these young unemployed the consideration which they should receive and which is long overdue. There is a shortage of skilled tradesmen. Even New Zealand has had to import carpenters to fill the shortage there. I know there is a shortage of skilled tradesmen in this State, and it is the bounden duty of the Government to give our boys a chance to get out of the dead-end into which the depression has forced them.

It will be interesting to see whether the five-day week which the Government has granted its employees will result in more employment in the service. The granting of this concession does seem to indicate that a general election is approaching. At least, that is the impression it conveys to me.

The Chief Secretary: You are prejudiced.

Hon. A. THOMSON: No, I am not. The result of the election will not affect me in the slightest. If, according to the statement in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech, the granting of the five-day week will lead to greater efficiency and better health of the public servants, why stop at the five-day week? Surely, if increased efficiency can be obtained in the five-day week, still greater efficiency can be obtained if the working week is still further reduced.

The Chief Secretary: The public servants are working the same number of hours as previously.

Hon. A. THOMSON: We are always told that the reason for a reduced working week is that long hours increase fatigue and so decrease efficiency. If that argument is sound, the Government should not expect civil servants to work longer hours on five days of the week in order to make up for the Saturday. The question that causes me anxiety is whether the convenience of the public has been considered. What will be deemed essential services, and what will be the position of the field officers whose duties take them into the country? The field

officers and those other public servants who do outside work have a much more arduous job than have the public servants who go to their offices at 9 in the morning and knock off at 5 in the afternoon. What will be the position of those outside workers? Will they benefit by the reduced working week? I would like the Minister, when he replies, to give the House some details of how this innovation will affect people who do business with the Government.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Even the milkman who goes on his rounds will be finding a great reduction in the quantity of milk delivered.

Hon. A. THOMSON: A paragraph in the Speech states that the funds that are available will need to be spent judiciously. Is this an admission that the Government has not in the past been spending its money wisely? Because it is now considered necessary that the funds available should be spent judiciously, I hope it does not mean that they have not been so spent in the past.

Hon. G. Fraser: Mostly spent in the country.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Wherever the money has been spent, let us hope that it has been wisely spent. I congratulate the engineers in charge of the construction of main roads and the men employed by them on the excellent work they are doing. To travel on our main roads a few years ago amounted almost to taking one's life in one's hands, but thanks to the good work being done, the motorist can now see some return for the expenditure of money collected by way of the petrol tax. Recently I travelled over some of the roads in the Eastern States, and I can say that in many instances the work carried out in Western Australia is decidedly superior to that performed in some of the other parts of Australia. Certainly in this direction our money seems to have been judiciously spent.

There are, however, other avenues of public expenditure that do require judicial examination, and may I repeat what I have advocated for 20 years, namely, that we should have a public works committee, the duty of which should be to examine and report to Parliament upon projected undertakings. The State has paid dearly for many blunders of administration. In my opinion the appointment of a public works

committee would be a safeguard not only to the taxpayer but also to the party in power. I listened with a good deal of interest to the speech of Mr. Craig, and particularly that part wherein he stressed the necessity for reducing the cost of transport to the producer. He instanced the Bunbury Harbour, and the difficulties that face the producer in the South-West. A public works committee could assist that part of the South-West by carefully exploring the avenues of inquiry that might help to solve the difficult problem. Such a committee might even suggest that the site of the existing harbour be abandoned, and a new one chosen nearby, in a locality that might eliminate the costly dredging that at present is so necessary.

Bulk handling has been installed at Bunbury, but I cannot congratulate the engineers on the design or lay-out of the silos. I made a special trip to Bunbury to inspect the silos, and was convinced that if a public works committee had been in existence something more modern would have been installed. I saw there a glaring example of an expensive structure being erected without Parliamentary authority, and, so far as I know, those most interested in the use of the silos were not even consulted. Bulk handling was introduced to reduce the cost of transport to overseas markets; but the system that has been installed at Bunbury is not economic, as, in my opinion, it entails unnecessary handling and haulage, which must ultimately be detrimental to the port when up-to-date methods are installed at other ports. While one regrets that bulk handling necessarily reduces labour from a handling point of view, nevertheless if our wheat industry is to compete with other parts of the world, the elimination of every possible transport charge is essential and must be faced. The bullock and horse wagon had to give way to the train and motor, the single furrow plough to the six-furrow and tractor, and it almost seems now as if some tax should be imposed on machinery that has displaced labour.

I wish next to make some reference to the Albany Harbour, which is situated in the province I represent. Owing to the lack of terminal accommodation for wheat at Albany, the farmers on the Nyabing and Ongerup railway are debarred from having

bulk facilities provided at their sidings. This places them at a decided disadvantage with their fellow farmers who have bulk bins installed. We consider it necessary to have reclamation work carried out at Albany so that when the terminals are erected, ships can come alongside and receive the wheat direct from the silos, as is done at all modern ports. I regret that the Treasurer refused to receive three members of the province and the members for Katanning and Albany by way of a deputation to discuss this important question.

The Government has adopted a wrong policy regarding the wheat terminals. It should give consideration to the policy of the Queensland Government, namely, that of assisting the producers by allowing the co-operative growers to erect and control storage bins or silos. Last year the Government in this State introduced a Bill having for its object the establishment of a board—though not of growers—to be appointed by the Minister, that would have power to go on the market and borrow £350,000 for the purpose of building terminals at the ports. The amazing thing is that the bulk-handling trustees have available £300,000 for the construction of terminals, provided the Government give them authority to carry out the work as has been done by the Labour Government of Queensland. That State leads the way in providing facilities for the producers in the direction of orderly marketing of their products. If the Government availed itself of the offer of the trustees to utilise that sum of money for the building of terminals, the interest cost to the State would not amount to one farthing.

Contrasting the attitude adopted by our Ministers, I would like to quote what the Queensland Government has done for the peanut growers. That State produces large quantities of peanuts, and a passage from "The Peanut Industry; a brief outline of its history" is worth quoting—

The plans also make provision for a working-house attached to the storage bins and equipped with the most modern machinery for the cleaning and treatment of peanuts for marketing purposes. The cost of the scheme was estimated at £50,000; thus the Board was faced with the problem of financing the proposition. It was then decided to form the Queensland Peanut Growers' Co-operative Association, Ltd., which by undertaking the erection of the storage facilities and cleaning and treatment plant

would become the holding body for these assets on behalf of the owners, that is, the producers themselves.

The financing of the storage scheme was made possible by means of a levy imposed by the Peanut Board on growers, power having been obtained for the creation of same by virtue of regulations made under the Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts. The rate of levy was ¼d. per lb. on all peanuts delivered to the board, the purposes for which the proceeds of same could be utilised including the provision of storage and treatment facilities. The levy was imposed in the first instance on the 1927 crop; the board entering into an agreement with the association to pay to the latter the amounts thus collected.

In respect to the initial outlay of £50,000 covering the costs of erection, approach was made to the Queensland Government which agreed to guarantee a loan from the Commonwealth Bank of Australia to the association, to the extent of 75 per cent. of the cost of the undertaking, on condition that the association first provided and expended the sum of £12,500, that is the remaining 25 per cent. of the cost. This condition was complied with, an amount of £5,560 15s. 9d. being obtained from the levy imposed on the 1927 season's crop, the balance being obtained by the issue of preference shares in the association.

The point I wish to stress is that the Queensland Government is prepared to guarantee the producers at the Commonwealth Bank to the extent of 75 per cent. of the money that is required to erect the silos. Has that occurred here? No. The Government of this State says, "We want control of the silos; we will find the money and you will pay the charges that we impose." As I have already said, the pool has £300,000 available, and is prepared to carry out the work of erecting silos without Government assistance in any shape or form; but the Government refuses to agree to the proposal. Again, the Queensland Government says to the producers, "This is your concern; it is your responsibility; so go ahead and construct the silos." Comparing the Government of Western Australia with that of Queensland, one feels very much inclined to say that our Government suffers seriously.

I urge the Government to reconsider its decision and, instead of insisting on its board raising £350,000 and adding to our already heavy burden of debt, give our wheatgrowers permission to utilise the £300,000 that is already available for the work. The existing position is lamentable. Originally the Labour Government in this State did everything in its power to prevent

the introduction of bulk handling, and it was only after passive resistance for a long period that a decision was arrived at to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the position. Mr. Angwin was made chairman of that Commission, and it was found that the introduction of bulk handling could not be staved off any longer. The result is that we have bins erected throughout the State, but when prices are falling, the Government should be a little more considerate towards the growers and allow them to have control of their own facilities. Why deny the wheatgrowers a privilege that has been granted to unions?

The Chief Secretary: We have not denied it.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Then I hope the Minister will use his influence in Cabinet and urge the Government to permit the trustees to use the £300,000 that is available for the erection of terminals at Fremantle and Albany. The expenditure of this money, at no cost whatever to the Government, will mean the provision of work for a great number of men.

May I urge the Government to fulfil a promise made by Mr. Willecock when he was Deputy Premier by instructing the Public Works Department at once to investigate and submit a report on the reclamation that considered opinion deems necessary for the proper development of the Albany harbour? Like Mr. Craig, I consider it essential to the prosperity of the State that cheap transport facilities should be provided, for upon such transport depends the successful maintenance of our primary industries. The Western Australian farmer, with his cheap land and modern machinery, does his part. It is up to the Government of any party to ensure that our transport methods do not prove a severe handicap, and, as time is the essence of the contract, I urge the Premier to give serious and immediate attention to this request. Otherwise, it seems that, unless we have a change of Government, the farmers in the Katanning portion of my Province will, lacking the provision by the present Government of a bulk terminal at Albany, be at a distinct disadvantage compared with those that have bulk wheat bins at their sidings.

The Speech mentions the fact that prices for some of our export products are unsatisfactory. That the price of wheat has declined alarmingly is extremely regrettable.

It should be borne in mind that the adverse position of the wheat industry must be reflected in decreased returns to the State as a whole. For the Speech mentions that railway finances last year showed an improvement over the previous year owing to increased revenue "derived principally from wheat, timber and livestock, and the steady flow of traffic to the goldfields." The State has many millions of pounds invested in the wheat industry, but unless the Federal and the State Governments take combined action to afford wheatgrowers the adequate protection that is given to secondary industries, production must seriously decline because farmers cannot be expected to produce wheat at a loss. The worker has the Arbitration Court, which fixes his standard of wages or income. The secondary industries have the tariff to assist them. Increased cost of production incurred by secondary industry is automatically passed on to the public. The farmer, however, having to sell his product in competition on the open markets of the world, cannot pass on his increased costs. He has to take the price ruling on the London market. I deeply regret that the Speech contained no reference to the Government's attitude to the suggested home price for wheat. Let us hope that, as a result of the conference shortly to be held, thanks to Mr. Butler, the Premier of South Australia, a home consumption price for wheat will be fixed.

The Chief Secretary: Would you suggest that that is a State responsibility?

Hon. A. THOMSON: It is partly a State responsibility because such a price can be fixed only in co-operation with the other States and with the assistance of the Commonwealth. Whatever suggestion is made must receive legislative support from Western Australia. Even though the State Government might not feel bound to find the whole of the money for the purpose, the farmers would greatly appreciate some indication from the Government that it is sympathetic towards fixing a price for home consumption. The farmers are not asking for anything unreasonable or unjust.

The Chief Secretary: But do you not consider that that is a Commonwealth rather than a State responsibility?

Hon. A. THOMSON: It is both a State and Federal responsibility. Something should be done. I am glad that Mr.

Troy is to take part in the deliberations, and I reiterate that the fixing of a home consumption price is essential. Means must be devised, either by the Federal Government or by the State Government, to assist this industry which has to meet fierce competition in the world's market. Those that are producing wheat in this country are faced with increased costs in every direction. The Arbitration Court has increased the basic wage, and while I take no exception to men receiving a fair wage, the court's decision has meant an increase in the cost of production. The tariff imposes a further burden. In the Eastern States one body of workmen is threatening to hold up a particular industry. If it is successful, there will be serious repercussions throughout that State. But suppose the farmers of the Commonwealth decided to go on strike and retain their wheat. The consumers would have to import wheat from elsewhere, and in that event they would have to pay more than the London market price. There is no doubt that the Australian consumer has been receiving his wheat from producers who have not enjoyed the conditions that apply to secondary industries throughout Australia.

The question of starting price betting is also conspicuous by its absence from the Speech. The way in which the law is being flouted is an absolute disgrace to the administration. Is the Government prepared to encourage gangster methods similar to those we are led to believe exist in America? A select committee should be appointed to inquire into the apparent connivance of the Police Department in the flagrant breaches of the law that are taking place. If an amendment of the law is necessary, then let the law be amended. Betting shops should be legalised or eliminated. Queensland appears to have dealt effectively with this evil. We in this State have, by legalising State lotteries, afforded the small bettor an opportunity to indulge in a little gamble. The amount of money that passes through the legalised betting shops of South Australia is amazing. Enlightening information on this subject has been published in the "West Australian." South Australia has not a State lottery, and small bettors in this State have opportunities to gamble that are lacking in that State.

Hon. G. Fraser: Once a month.

Hon. A. THOMSON: And that might sometimes be once too often. However,

people will bet, and I have no objection to their doing so, but unquestionably the present system is entirely wrong. If the information I have received is correct, the owners of starting price betting shops contribute to a pool from which the fines imposed by the court are paid.

The Chief Secretary: I do not think so.

Hon. A. THOMSON: We seem to be developing a system similar to that revealed in moving pictures as existing in America, under which the man on top has a box seat, while other men have to face the music. Those men, however, are defended by a lawyer from pooled funds and such fines as are inflicted are paid from the pool. If statements that have been made are correct, a similar method is being adopted in Western Australia, where we have a body of wrongdoers combining to defeat the laws of the land. If that is true, something should be done to nip the evil in the bud. We should have a select committee to inquire why so much laxity apparently exists in the Police Department. There is no secrecy about the matter; these illegal practices are in evidence in many parts of the city. Indulgence in this form of betting could not be more open if the system were legalised as it is in South Australia.

Hon. G. Fraser: You allow the race clubs to charge fees to a bookmaker.

Hon. A. THOMSON: By not licensing these shops the Government is losing revenue, but perhaps more is being made by way of fines. Bookmakers have been legalised by the imposition of a betting tax on every ticket issued, the totalisator has been legalised, and in addition we have the State lotteries.

Hon. G. Fraser: The bookmaker on the course is not legalised.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Something is wrong. Either the Government is not willing to put the law into operation or some other influence is at work to prevent the law from being enforced. I would welcome a select committee of this House to inquire why there is apparently so much laxity. With others, I consider that the Postal Department is culpable. A governmental utility should not be made the medium to assist in the breaking of a States' statutes. I should like inquiries made to ascertain whether the Federal Government has the right to control wireless in the State. The Federal Government derives a large revenue from wire-

less licenses and it permits to be broadcast over the air racing and similar news that aids and abets in the breaking of the law. The Government should obtain an opinion from a constitutional authority as to whether the Federal Government has a legal right to control and collect fees in the State from wireless licenses. There is no gainsaying the fact that the Federal Government, through its Postal Department, is a means of accentuating what some of us consider to be an evil. I repeat that betting shops should be legalised or eliminated. That is a matter of Government policy, and it is a pity that the Government did not indicate its intentions through the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. There is glaring evidence of law-breaking week after week. I should like to be informed how much money is collected in fines, and whether there is a pool from which such fines are paid. The Chief Secretary does not seem to think so. I cannot say whether it is so, but my belief is that the poor unfortunates who are fined from £25 to £40 are not the men who are really conducting the shops.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Why "poor unfortunates"?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Because they are only what might be called stool pigeons being made use of by those who are actually breaking the law.

Hon. G. B. Wood: They are getting a cut out of it.

Hon. G. Fraser: Would you apply the same reasoning to the racecourse?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I wish to refer to some remarks made by Mr. Angelo last evening. The hon. member had verified the correctness of figures quoted by him as to the number of accidents that have taken place in the metropolitan area during the past ten years in connection with motor traffic. Those figures are staggering. In the year ended the 30th June 1938 the number of fatal accidents was 71, that of serious accidents 405, and of minor accidents 4,237. As Mr. Angelo pointed out, fatal accidents do not fill our hospitals—unfortunately they go to another place; but the serious and minor accidents undoubtedly make large demands upon hospital accommodation. Therefore it is time the Government took steps to minimise accidents. [

propose to show briefly what, in my opinion, could be done towards that end.

First of all I consider it absolutely essential that we should fall into line with the Eastern States in the matter of third-party risk—the personal risk. There is on our statute-book a law making it compulsory to insure all employees against accidents under the terms of the Workers' Compensation Act. Thus we protect the worker in his employment. However, it is quite possible that in going to his employment—indeed, this frequently happens—the breadwinner is knocked down by a motor car or motor truck and seriously injured. If the vehicle that causes the accident is covered for third-party risk, the injured person, or the relatives of one who is killed, will have a chance of recovering compensation at law. On the other hand, large numbers of people pay a small deposit on utility trucks or secondhand motor cars and go on the road with them the next day. Such drivers are frequent causes of accidents. They are without substance, and thus great financial hardship results to the injured party or his widow and children. In other States it is a *sine qua non* for the issue of a license in respect of a motor vehicle that the third-party risk shall be covered—I refer to the personal risk, without reference to anything that may happen to the car itself.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: The premium is collected at the same time as the license fee, is it not?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Do you mean a driver's license or the car license?

Hon. A. THOMSON: A vehicle cannot be put on the road unless the third-party risk is covered. The matter could be adjusted with only small increase of cost to the motorist. If one cannot insure against accident to pedestrians, one has no right to put a vehicle on the road. I suggest for the consideration of the Minister administering the Traffic Act that, without any grave depletion of the funds collected in the metropolitan area and in country districts, instead of charging £8 by way of license fee for a car, the authorities charged only £7 and apply the other £1 to an accident fund to be controlled by the Traffic Department or by the State Insurance Office. It may seem as if I am turning a somersault with regard to State insurance, but the

amounts collected would furnish a substantial fund.

Hon. G. Fraser: About £60,000 a year.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I believe it would amount to more if trucks and other vehicles were included. However, even £60,000 would be a substantial amount to meet compensation for injured persons. In South Australia and Queensland no motor vehicle is allowed on the road without the third-party risk being covered. In view of the very large number of accidents, fatal, serious and minor, the time is long overdue for our Government to introduce such a measure as I suggest. I have mentioned the matter previously; and as other States have done or are about to do what I advocate, the same course should be adopted here. At the recent Road Boards Conference a proposal was submitted for defining main arteries of traffic. It was suggested that all vehicles coming out of side streets should stop for vehicles travelling on main arteries. I myself suffered an accident through a lunatic shooting out of a side street. In swerving I capsized. I have seen many motorists shoot out of side streets most recklessly. Better control is essential. It would cost only a small amount of money to put up signs requiring any driver coming out of a side street to slow up. My suggestion applies not only to the metropolitan area but also to country districts. Just recently, when travelling to the city from Katanning, I was on the rise of a hill and a man shot out, certainly travelling faster than I was. Had I not had good brake control, there would have been a catastrophe. He must have come out of the side street at the rate of 40 or 50 miles an hour.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Is not that how the late chief of the traffic police was killed?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes. I commend to the earnest consideration of the traffic police, and also of the Minister in control, the making of a definite code of streets as indicated. Small notices could be put up on the side. Anyhow, the Government make plenty of money out of motor licenses, and can well afford to put up clear signs that anyone coming out of a side street must slow up.

Hon. G. Fraser: In the metropolitan area there have been very few accidents.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am referring to the congested parts.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Your suggestion was turned down on the advice of Mr. Rattray.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Mr. Rattray said that if it were carried out, it would mean the slowing-up of traffic.

Member: Absurd!

Hon. A. THOMSON: The safety of the public is of more concern to us than the speed of traffic. I believe in the old motto, "Safety first." In the course of my speech I have criticised the Government where I considered myself to be entitled to do so, and I have offered a few suggestions which I hope may prove useful. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan) [7.42]: I wish to convey to you, Mr. President, my congratulations on your unopposed return to this House and on your unopposed re-election to the position of President. I desire to refer to a loss which the Chamber has suffered since the close of last session in the death of the hon. Mr. Elliott. My acquaintance with that gentleman dates only from his election to this Chamber, but very few men have impressed me more by their sincerity. I greatly regret the loss of his services to the State. If I may be pardoned for doing so, I will refer to the loss which not only this Parliament but also the State of Western Australia sustained through the death of Mr. S. W. Munsie. I had known Mr. Munsie since he first entered the Parliament of Western Australia. There is a saying that one has to live with a person in order to know him. It was through becoming closely acquainted with Mr. Munsie at the Gold Bonus Exposition that I appreciated his worth to Western Australia. I did not see eye to eye with the deceased gentleman in politics, but I believe in giving credit where it is due. From my experience of life, and particularly from my Parliamentary experience, I would say that no more sincere Minister than Mr. Munsie ever served this State on either side of politics. My association with him became close when he first accepted the portfolio of the Health Department. It may surprise some hon. members to learn that one of the first of his acts as Minister was the cause of my resignation and that of other members from the Fremantle Hospital Board. That is why I feel especially bound to say that Mr.

Munsie's services to Western Australia deserve all that has been said in praise of them. I am glad to add my quota of praise because I knew his worth. I welcome the two new members, Mr. W. R. Hall and Mr. Dimmitt, on their election. Mr. Dimmitt and I have been closely associated in business for more than 20 years, and my knowledge of him assures me that he will become a very useful member. I hope he will be amongst us for many years.

I desire to offer a few remarks on the criticism levelled against some of the legislation passed by Parliament last session and against the actions of this Chamber in particular. Most of the bad legislation—and all will admit there is quite a lot of it—is due to its being rushed through at the end of the session. Often more Bills are dealt with in the closing days than in half the session. Members agree to clauses and to amendments without having the requisite knowledge of the facts. This has been the experience ever since I have been a member of this House, a period of six years. Every session it has been the same, irrespective of the party in power. I, with other members, have been called upon to answer quite a lot of criticism hurled at Parliament and that is my reason for saying that during the present session, when I have any remarks to make on a Bill, I shall make them at the earliest possible opportunity, so that the Leader of the House will have no opportunity to hit back at me when, at the end of the session, I vote against every measure—as I intend to do—that has been unduly held up by the Government or by the Leader of the House. I appreciate that, to some extent, the responsibility for avoiding delay rests with members generally. Often a Bill is held over and then, in the last week, it is rushed through with results of which we are only too well aware. A piece of legislation that has received as much criticism as any is the Bread Act.

The Honorary Minister: Only from a very small number of people.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Even if that is so, those people are entitled to be heard. Probably the small number of people have a greater knowledge of what is required than have the masses, and we should certainly lend an attentive ear to their complaints. I sincerely hope that there will be

an opportunity this session to amend some of the provisions of the Act.

The Honorary Minister: The Bread Act has proved a great success.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: There is quite a lot of opposition to that opinion. I supported the Bill because I considered it was necessary and would lead to improved conditions, but it seems that had some of the provisions received greater consideration, they would not have been passed. With most other members, I have been asked to assist in securing the disallowance of a number of regulations gazetted under the Native Administration Act. I hope there will be an opportunity to consider those regulations later on. The Chief Secretary nods his head affirmatively. Therefore I shall touch on the question only briefly.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I thought the idea was to substitute new regulations for those that have been gazetted.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I cannot answer for the Chief Secretary, but all the assurance I desire is that we shall be afforded an opportunity to discuss the regulations and disallow those that are considered to be not in the best interests of the natives. I now have an assurance to that effect from the Chief Secretary. Judging by the opposition that has been expressed, some of the regulations appear to be a little too drastic. I have much sympathy with the Chief Secretary in his work of administering the Act. Nobody could have been more sincere, or could have worked harder to secure an improvement of the conditions of those unfortunate people. I give the Chief Secretary full credit for all he has done. Nobody could have worked with greater zeal to secure the operation of laws that would benefit the unfortunate aborigines. The pure aboriginal is almost becoming extinct; a greater menace is the half-caste and the quarter-caste. Of course we should bear in mind that we have deprived the blacks of their country.

Hon. V. Hamersley: And made a better one of it.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Perhaps so, but we should ensure reasonable conditions for those people. Action should be taken to check the increase of the half-caste population.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: How would you do it?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I am not prepared to tell the hon. member here, but he can guess. We should give civilised natives as much freedom as possible, and should provide incentives for them to become more useful citizens.

The Chief Secretary: What do you mean by civilised natives?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: The half-castes and quarter-castes are much more civilised than are the aborigines and should be given such freedom as will encourage them to become useful citizens. They should not be prevented from obtaining satisfactory employment; nor should we surround their employment with impossible conditions. A suggestion has been made that a board should be appointed to assist in the administration of the Act. The suggestion certainly appeals to me. The Commissioner has been given exceedingly wide powers, and though most of us agree that he is an experienced man and most conscientious in the discharge of his duties, we must realise that it is almost impossible for one man to give satisfaction. The Commissioner has too great a load to bear and I think that the appointment of an advisory board would prove advantageous.

The next question on which I desire to touch is that so ably discussed by Mr. Thomson, namely, youth employment. I had prepared figures much along the lines submitted by the hon. member this evening, but I shall not weary the House by repeating them. One of our most serious problems is that of youth employment. I agree with Mr. Thomson that the Government has done very little, if anything, towards improving the position. If I except the appointment of Mr. Wolff as a Commissioner, I can safely say that the Government has done absolutely nothing for youth employment. Unlike Mr. Thomson, I can congratulate Mr. Wolff upon the thoroughness of the inquiry he made, and the usefulness of the suggestions he submitted. But the Government has done nothing to give effect to his findings. Nothing has been done to carry out some of the suggestions that would have helped the unfortunate youths of to-day. From time to time we hear references to the lost legion; we are told of the unfortunate plight of lads of 18 to 24, but some of us have had personal experience of it. Only to-day as fine a lad as I have seen

for months entered my factory and begged and prayed for an opportunity to learn some part of the work. He said, "I have been hunted from pillar to post. I have not had an opportunity to learn a trade. If I can get such an opportunity, it is all I desire. I would be prepared to work at any trade if only I were given a chance, but it seems that I was born at the wrong time." There are hundreds and thousands of lads in a similar position, and nothing is being done for them.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: All of us have had similar experience.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Judging by the time taken by the Government to decide how to spend some of the money raised by the Youth and Motherhood Appeal, I am afraid it will be many moons before anything is done, unless there occurs, as some of us hope, a change of Government after the next elections.

The Honorary Minister: You cannot blame the Government for that; the funds are in the hands of trustees.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: But I can blame the Government for having done nothing to grapple with this problem. The suggestion has been made that behind the Government's inactivity may be a fear of youth employment proving a means of displacing adult workers to the end of securing cheaper production. I sincerely hope that the Government is not influenced by any idea of that kind. Evidently something has prevented the Government from taking action. What leads me to that opinion is the action of the Government in taking over the work of the Boys' Employment League and giving it to a department, notwithstanding the wonderful work done by the league from its inception. In five years the league was able to fill 9,460 positions at practically no cost to the Government. Such an achievement is almost incredible. One officer was loaned from the Education Department for this work, and his salary, plus the use of an office, telephone and stationery, represented the total cost of placing that number of unemployed youths during the five years the league was in existence. The number does not include replacements; they were all genuine, fresh registrations of youths placed in employment. I asked the Chief Secretary a question a few days ago, and the reply I received showed the tremendous falling off that has taken place since the Gov-

ernment assumed control of the work. The question I asked was:—

Since the taking over by the Government of the work of placing youths in employment previously carried out by the Boys' Employment League, what were (a) the number of applications received, (b) the number of youths placed in positions in both the metropolitan area and the country, (c) the rates of wages paid? 2, What is, or are, the name or names of the officer or officers allotted to this work, and what other positions, if any, do they fill?

The Chief Secretary replied:—

1, (a) 539; (b) 246 in metropolitan area, 90 in the country; of the remainder 178 youths have not re-applied, and presumably have obtained employment, leaving 25 unplaced; (c) where an industry is covered by an award of the Arbitration Court the award rate is paid; in cases where there is no award the wages range from 10s. to 30s. per week; for country work the wages range from 10s. to 30s. per week plus keep. 2, Mr. J. C. A. Hodgson, an officer of the Department of Employment.

I desired to ascertain also whether the officer was engaged full-time or not, but that part of the question was not answered. I do not know whether he has any other position. Let me show the effect of this falling off in employment upon the State. The answer to the question made apparent that there has been a falling off. The record of the league, when positions were much harder to fill than they are to-day, was an average of 127 per month, or approximately 1,600 per annum. The placements since the work has been carried out by the department have been 66 per month—a falling off of 59 per month—or 708 per annum. If we take the average of the jobs as being worth 24s. to 26s. per week, including keep for the country jobs, not allowing for increases or promotions, the loss in wages to the community is over £42,000 per annum, and there is also the factor of the living standard being reduced in the homes of the unemployed lads. In addition, the loss of employment and the lack of registration probably lead to additional cases of delinquency, and this would have a bad effect on growing youths.

The Chief Secretary: Are you suggesting there is a number of positions that have not been filled?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I suggest that the department is not doing the work nearly so effectively as the Boys' Employment League was doing it, at practically no cost to the

Government. It would perhaps not be correct to say that the league was more sincere in its work than is the Government, but there was more following up of cases on the part of the league. Apart from the paid official, it was a labour of love on the part of the committee that did such excellent work over a period of five years. To take this work from the league when it was so successful was wrong.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Why was the work taken over by the Government?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Perhaps the Chief Secretary will be able to enlighten the hon. member on that point. In view of the number of unemployed lads to be seen in the streets of Perth, the question arises whether they are registering, or are desisting from registering on account of the fewer jobs that are offering and the fewer placements that are being effected. I had intended to refer to the assistance that is being given by other Governments in the Commonwealth, but will refrain from doing so as this aspect has already been ably dealt with by Mr. Thomson.

I am a firm believer in the apprenticeship system, and support the finding of Mr. Justice Wolff that the control of apprentices should be removed from the Arbitration Court. By such means much better results would be obtained, and the court would be relieved of that work. Subsidised apprenticeship was referred to by Mr. Thomson for youths between 19 and 25. That also has my wholehearted support. It is very gratifying to see members of our women's organisations, of all shades of political opinion, taking such a keen interest in helping the lads in this scheme. I was glad to note that the Minister for Employment, in reply to a deputation from women's organisations recently, said that a careful investigation of the scheme would be made. I sincerely hope that will be done soon, as there is urgent need for it. Technical training has received much attention at the hands of the Commissioner. I can only repeat my views on that subject, expressed when I have previously dealt with it. Notwithstanding the excellent work done by the Education Department, I feel that there is still room for vast expansion. The schools are overcrowded. I would at all times support an increase in the Vote for this part of our education system, even at the expense of higher education. A lot of money has been spent uselessly in the training of so

many students for the professions. When they have been trained many of them have left these shores. Reference was made to the departure of Mr. Pittman. Most of the brilliant students who are trained at our University at the expense of the State are allowed to depart to other parts of the Commonwealth or other parts of the world, when they should be retained here so that their services may be employed in the interests of the State that trained them.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: That applies also to the officers of the Agricultural Department.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Yes. Not sufficient training is given in respect to agriculture. I am not depreciating secondary industries when I say that this State is naturally more suited for primary than for secondary industries. At all times people seem to be anxious that youths should be taught a trade. The youths are already protected by Arbitration Court awards. Some of them are given training in colleges so that they may go on the land, but there is ample room for much more training of the kind. Another matter referred to was the raising of the school age to 16. That proposal has my support. I would make it a condition, however, that the additional time was devoted to advanced technical training, consonant with the natural bent of the youths, ascertained after due investigation. I have repeatedly said that it is useless to try to make a blacksmith out of a butcher. That is what is being attempted in many instances. If the lads could be classified when at school and then passed on for technical training in the trade most suited to them, we would have an even better type of artisan than we have to-day. That is a recommendation of Mr. Justice Wolff, and one that should receive attention from the Government. My experience, particularly in manufacturing, is that when two lads are applying for a position the one having the slightest technical training is always selected in preference to the other.

I disagree with the committee of experts that recommended the retention of the site of the present technical school and the erection of a new building there for the extension of technical training. Since I have had anything to do with technical training—and that extends over many years—I have carefully considered what would be the most suitable site. I have come to the conclusion

that the Government would be ill-advised to decide definitely upon the erection of a new building on the present site. My opinion as a business man is that the site should be sold at present values, and that sufficient money could then be obtained for a new and more central site. The capital derived from the sale would also enable the Government to erect buildings for technical training that would suffice for the next 20 or 30 years. That would be a much better proposition than to continue on at the present site. It is suggested that the present site is a very convenient one—the most convenient available in the city. I point out that those who are interested in technical training live to the north, west and east, though some may live to the south. A much better site would be on the northern side of the railway line—nearer for those who would make most use of technical school facilities.

Reference has been made to the dearth of positions for youths wishing to embark upon industrial occupations. Until such time as we can fully develop our secondary industries, that situation is likely to recur frequently. As I recently said, primary production in this State absorbs very few lads who are seeking employment after leaving school, whereas many try to enter secondary industries, of which we have so few. In the circumstances, I am afraid that the youth problem will be a serious one for Western Australia for many years to come.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Do you think we will ever have many secondary industries in this State?

The Honorary Minister: We should have a lot more than we have.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: We would have a lot more if people were more locally minded. I am not thinking of one industry only when I say that if the people supported our local concerns, we would have many more of them and those already in existence would be more extensive than they are. I do not blame the present Government for the situation. I have had considerable experience in that regard, and Mr. Dimmitt will bear me out when I say that Governments, and particularly the present Government, have always extended preference to locally-made goods. Whenever goods required are available or can be made locally, departmental officers give preference to the Western Australian article. It is the people themselves who are at fault. Let members consider

the details of imports for the year ended the 30th June last. They show that instead of reducing our imports from overseas and from the Eastern States, we increased the volume of trade compared with that of the previous financial year. The details show that for that financial year the total imports from the Eastern States were valued at £12,939,671, an increase of over £600,000 above the value of the total imports for the preceding year. The gross value of our imports was £20,931,000, so that, roughly, £7,900,000 worth of goods were imported from overseas. When we consider our exports we find that we despatched to the Eastern States goods valued at only £3,000,000. That affords an indication of our huge adverse trade balance. When I am asked, therefore, whether we shall ever have many more secondary industries in this State, I am able to reply that it can only be so when our people become locally-minded with regard to their purchases and when our population is materially increased. We suffer through lack of population. In our present circumstances we have not the same opportunities that are enjoyed by the manufacturers in the Eastern States. Our output is so small that the cost of production is considerably more than that of manufacturers in the Eastern States. That is greatly to our disadvantage. Until we secure improvements in the two main directions referred to, we can never make such progress in the establishment of the secondary industries as we desire.

The Honorary Minister: The business people must be more enterprising too.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Perhaps the Honorary Minister will tell me where they can be more enterprising. Without mentioning any name, I know of one concern that has spent £20,000 in the provision of an up-to-date factory. Is that not enterprise? That factory was established to cater for trade that is now going out of the State. I think every hon. member knows to what I refer. The loss of that trade represents £750,000 every year to this State. It is the money spent on motor bodies that are manufactured in the Eastern States and used in Western Australia. We should not forget that much of the difficulty could be overcome if the Government gave the lead in some directions. In these circumstances, I think the Honorary Minister was a little unfair when he suggested that our manufacturers were unenterprising. Where could we have more

enterprising concerns than our tobacco, biscuit and chocolate factories? Those three concerns alone are exporting a large percentage of their production.

Hon. G. Fraser: I think the Honorary Minister referred to the retailers, who should be given a lesson on selling local goods.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: If he referred correctly to the people whom he should blame, he would refer to the purchasers, the people who spend the money over the counter. Let them ask for locally-made goods and their requirements will be met.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must ask hon. members not to interject but to allow Mr. Bolton to proceed.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I will support any movement that will lend added support to the younger farming generation, which subject was referred to by Mr. Thomson. We should encourage the junior farmers' clubs, which have excellent supporters in men like Mr. Craig, who is President of the Royal Agricultural Society, and other members who are doing excellent work.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: The Government is not extending any financial support as the Government of New South Wales does.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Perhaps when these clubs are a little stronger, they will make their weight felt and secure some financial support from the Government. The only other matter regarding the report of Mr. Justice Wolff to which I shall refer relates to the establishment of a Bureau of Industry and Economic Research. Needless to say, I shall strongly support any such move, for I believe that something of the sort has been required for many years. I hope the Government will see that the bureau is established at any early date and that the object will be, not only to help in the establishment of industries, but to assist those already in existence. I trust that the Government will not see in this move an inducement to enter further into State trading concerns. I would be sorry to think it would take advantage of information so obtained in order to embark upon any venture of that description, and I certainly hope it will not do so.

Dealing briefly with industrial matters as affecting the Arbitration Court, I shall not speak at length because I notice from the Lieut.-Governor's Speech that the Govern-

ment proposes to amend the Industrial Arbitration Act this session and that will provide an opportunity to discuss such matters. I suggest, however, that the Government's action in the recent Colliery coal mining dispute was the most discreditable and dangerous happening in the industrial world that I have ever known. The President of the Arbitration Court went so far as to protest against the unlawful manner in which the Minister had brushed aside the law, as, in my opinion, he did. Little wonder that unions act as they do at times, and take the law into their own hands when awards do not suit them. Staunch supporter as I always have been, and still am, of arbitration, even my faith received a rude shock at the happening to which I have referred. The very persons expected to uphold the law discredited and over-rode the tribunal that they had set up, merely to suit their own ends. In this respect the Government subjected the Arbitration Court to its greatest indignity. The delays of the Arbitration Court in dealing with matters, which have caused as much of the industrial unrest as any other occurrence, have been due to the Government's inaction in neglecting to do much earlier what they did when they appointed an additional judge. The appointment of Mr. Justice Wolff as Deputy President of the Arbitration Court will considerably relieve the congestion. While I support the appointment of an additional judge to undertake arbitration work, I think the day when there was need for two lay members of the Arbitration Court has gone. Their presence on the bench now represents not only a waste of time but of money. In the early days of our arbitration and conciliation laws when the Arbitration Court was first formed, I was definitely in agreement with the appointment of two lay members of the court to assist the President, but to-day I view the matter in an entirely different light. The President of the court is an excellent man in his job. He has made himself conversant with as many industries as is possible for one man. Although at times I disagree with some of his decisions, that is merely natural. At present I regard the lay members of the court as quite useless, and I sincerely hope that when the Government introduces a Bill to amend the Act, provision will be made for discarding the lay members. There seemed to be almost a disinclination recently to re-appoint them.

I do not know whether there was anything behind that, but I believe if they were not re-appointed, it would meet with the approval of a majority in the industrial world, and I am not too sure that it would not meet with the approval of the unions, too. The need for the additional information and experience that was so apparent in the early days of the Arbitration Court is absent now, and the President of the court is sufficiently well versed in industrial matters to handle the business alone. There is one other matter on which I desire to express an opinion. I strongly commend the Premier's action in refusing to allow part of the Esplanade to be used for the erection of a town hall and municipal offices. Not only do I suggest that the site is unsuitable, but, as a city representative and one who is as proud of the beauties of Perth and its surroundings as any other man in the State, I will fight to the last ditch to prevent any of the open spaces, even a square yard, being taken away from this beautiful city.

Much has been said regarding the price of wheat and the position of the farmers. I would like to compliment Mr. Wood on his excellent speech and the interesting information that he gave to the House last night. I feel I would be wanting in my duty as a representative of the people if I failed to offer at least some remarks on this subject, because I have the almost unique experience of being both a primary and secondary producer.

The Chief Secretary: Have you been successful in both?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I will leave the world to judge that. I am proud of my achievements in both spheres, and that is something.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I was in sympathy with Mr. Wood yesterday evening when he said he wanted his Nationalist friends to hear what he had to say regarding the wheat industry.

Hon. H. Tuckey: He was a bit doubtful about you.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I do not think so.

Hon. V. Hamersley: You are one of the sympathetic Nationalists.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I hope I am and always will be sympathetic towards the farming community. God knows, they need not only a little sympathy, but help.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: But the farmers must not ask for too much.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: After all, they can only get a certain amount, and must be satisfied with a fair deal. I think the more reasonable farmers are men like Mr. Wood and those with whom he is associated. They, like myself, are satisfied if we get about 10s. a bag for our wheat. At that price, a man can make farming pay.

Hon. V. Hamersley: That is all they are asking for.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Yes, in some quarters. If the farmers do not ask for more than that, I believe they have a chance of getting it. The question has been asked and debated by many people whether this is a State or a Federal matter. Mr. Thomson, I think, suggested it was both. I also suggest it is both, but primarily it is a Federal matter. Before we can get the assistance we need, it must be made a State matter. The State must help and I believe that if the community, not necessarily the farmers only—because, after all, and even my friend Mr. Wood will pardon me for saying this, the farmers are always up against it, always have a grouch and are always wanting something—I say, if the community get behind this movement, we shall have a golden opportunity of inducing the Commonwealth to do something. I was struck by a report in this morning's "West Australian" regarding the wheat position in South Australia. I think the Government should act on the lines set out in that report. It does not matter which party is in power; someone has to do something to help the farming community, and I think if the business people get behind the Government and the Federal Government is convinced that we are in earnest in our desire to help the farmers, then it will come to our aid. I would not go so far as to say that we should stabilise the wheat industry over a period. It would be madness for us to ask for that at the present time; but something must be done. Wheat to-day is 2s. 6½d. a bushel. Last year, the average price of our export wheat was 4s. 4½d. per bushel. Imagine the difference this reduction in price will make to the State—2s. 6½d. a bushel as against 4s. 4½d. a bushel. The value of the wheat exported from this State last year

was £4,794,158 and the value of the flour exported, £802,000, making a total of over £5,596,000. If this latter figure is cut down by almost 50 per cent., as it seems likely to be, what will it mean to the State? How shall we exist? What earthly chance have we of managing on those figures? None whatever, and I repeat that if the Federal Government can only be induced to assist the farmers, so that a reasonable price, say 3s. 4d. a bushel or 10s. per bag for wheat can be fixed, then the industry, will have some chance to exist.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: When speaking of the selling price of wheat, it is interesting to note the cost of production. I shall quote some figures, and I think members will agree with me that the farming community, in asking for the fixation of the price I have mentioned, will not be asking 1s. more than they are entitled to. The cost of wheat production in the Australian States for the year 1934-35—it would not vary much to-day, and I am proud to say our State has the lowest production cost—is 3s. 3½d. per bushel. In Queensland, which produces but little wheat, the cost was 3s. 5d. per bushel; in New South Wales and South Australia, it was 3s. 6d., while in Victoria it was 3s. 8½d. Therefore, if the price is fixed at 3s. 4d. a bushel, it is certainly not too much. It would have this effect, and in my opinion it would be of great advantage to the State—it should have been brought about long ago—that it would put off the land those men who will never be able to make wheat pay at any price, not even if they were farming for a hundred years. Those incompetents are a menace to the industry. The farmers who farm on sound, safe lines would then have a chance of bringing the industry back to the state in which we would all like to see it. I make this suggestion in order to assist the Government. It would be an excellent idea for the business community of Perth to get together on lines similar to those followed in South Australia. As I said a few minutes ago, a report appeared in this morning's "West Australian" under the heading "Home Wheat Price. South Australian Move. 'Traders Behind Government'." That is what we want; we want the traders behind the Government. We do not want men fighting amongst themselves, any more than we want different political sections fighting amongst

themselves. Wheat is something in which all are interested. It does not matter whether one is a grower of wheat or not, he must be interested in the wheat industry. Without this industry, none of the other industries is of much use to us, and unless we get together on the lines I have suggested, we shall be left lamenting.

Member: The success of the primary industries means the success of the secondary industries.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Yes, and that can be brought about in no other manner. The report referred to reads—

The Premier (Mr. Butler) announced to-day, after a conference with representatives of flour millers and wheat merchants, that these groups were standing behind the Government in its endeavour to obtain for farmers a payable price of about 3s. 8d. a bushel at ports, averaging 3s. 4d. a bushel at country sidings, or 10s. a bag rate at siding. Mr. Butler said that traders had promised to give every possible assistance, both to the State and the Commonwealth Governments. They were definitely of the opinion that something should be done. The whole problem necessitated the Commonwealth raising the necessary money and there were various avenues open to the Commonwealth for the equitable distribution of the financial assistance required without burdening taxpayers or consumers.

I suggest that if something on those lines were done in our own State, it would materially strengthen the hands of the Government, and if the matter could be discussed quickly it would materially strengthen the hands of the Minister for Lands, who, I understand, is to be our representative at the Premiers' Conference next week, when this matter will be dealt with.

Member: The Chamber of Commerce will be behind such a proposal.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I was not aware of that. It shows that sometimes great minds think alike!

Hon. G. B. Wood: I mentioned it last night.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I am sorry I missed that point in your speech. It does not matter as long as action is taken, and taken soon. The wheat position has been discussed at great length and probably will be discussed further by some authorities. I do not know that I can pose as an authority, but I do know what it costs to grow a bushel of wheat. I have grown it under very favourable and very unfavourable conditions.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: You are in a very favourable district.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Yes. I am in the hon. member's district. There are one or two other matters I desire to mention briefly. I do not want to weary the House, but the matters on which I have spoken already are such that I feel I can offer some suggestions or advice. I have tried not to be too critical. There are many points on which, naturally, I cannot agree with the policy of the Government, but I think the Government will admit that I have given reasonable support to the measures brought forward when I have considered them to be in the best interests of the State, and I will continue to do so. I wish to refer briefly to the financial position. It is remarkable how each Government in the last session of a Parliament before an election can nearly always balance the budget. It has happened again this time, and I compliment the Government on it. I sincerely hope that when the next returns are published, we shall not find that something has been covered up, forgotten or dropped. I would like to think it is because we have a new Under Treasurer.

Hon. G. Fraser: It is dinkum!

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: Yes, although perhaps that expression is not quite Parliamentary.

Hon. G. Fraser: You do not suggest it is not right.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I am not making any suggestion. I leave that to the hon. member. With regard to taxation and the proposal to combine the income tax with the financial emergency tax, it is difficult to say whether or not I can approve of the proposal until I know the method by which the Government intends to deal with it. If it is suggested that the hospital tax is to be dropped from a certain number of taxpayers and tacked on to others, that will not meet with my approval. However, it is certainly time that we abandoned the title "financial emergency tax," and imposed that tax on the lines suggested. So far as I can understand the Government's intentions, I rather favour extending the payments. I consider it is quite a good idea and should meet with the approval of a large number of the taxpayers. I notice also that mention is made of the proposal to introduce legislation to deal with work-

ers' compensation. We have had that before us, I think, in nearly every session of Parliament, and I trust that on this occasion the Government will submit a measure that will be more satisfactory than some that have been put before us in the past. Workers' compensation has been a very sore point with many industries in this State; I do not intend to go into figures because the figures that I have quoted on previous occasions must still be fresh in the minds of members. Those figures showed that industries are far worse off in this State than they are in the other States. How we are to continue carrying the burden that we have at present I am unable to say. Most of the industries are up against it and I hope the Government will give that aspect of the position every consideration. The cost of production in this State is excessively high as compared with the figures elsewhere. I am glad to see that at last the Government intends to proceed with the work of building a new hospital. It is to be complimented on the decision. I would not like to say in this respect that the undertaking is being carried out because of the approach of a general election. We all know that a new hospital is very necessary, though I agree with some of the remarks made by Mr. Thomson that to a large extent the Perth Hospital is an institution not only for the metropolitan area but for many country people as well. Mr. Thomson suggested that if £6,000 were wanted for a hospital at Katanning, the Government would probably be prepared to offer half that amount on condition that the people themselves subscribed the other half. The hon. member should have suggested that the Lotteries Commission would provide half the cost. My point is that it is not the Government that subscribes the other half; it is the unfortunate taxpayers who have to find the money. Many of them find it by subscribing to the Charities Consultations and they do that in preference to investing it with starting-price bookmakers. Really, the people who are financing the hospitals are the members of the community, and I repeat that it is not the Government that finds the money because most of it is given by the Lotteries Commission. Thus, the Government is not entitled to the credit that it claims for contributing towards the provision of hospitals

in the country. I was very interested when listening to the remarks of Mr. Angelo last evening on the subject of the embargo placed on Yampi Sound iron ore. The only comment I wish to offer is that it is very difficult for me to get away from the feeling that there was something behind the movement, something about which we do not know anything, notwithstanding the denials that we have had. Anyway, I contend it is the duty of the Commonwealth Government to reimburse the State to the extent of the expenditure in which it has been involved. It is deplorable that just when we are about to get a new industry going, an industry that would have been of considerable value to the State, and particularly to the development of the North, which needs to be opened up, the Federal Government should come along and interfere in the manner it did. I only hope that justice will be meted out to us. I have touched upon most of the points to which I intended to refer and can only say in conclusion that I hope the Government will bring forward some of the measures that have been outlined in the Speech as early as possible, so that we may not have that unseemly wrangling at the end of the session to which we have been accustomed in the past, at any rate ever since I have been a member of this House. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Wittenoom, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 17th August, 1938.

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

QUESTION—PICTURE SHOWS.

Sixpenny Admission Programmes.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER asked the Premier,—In the event of withdrawal by representatives of American picture distributors of supplies of films for sixpenny admissions in Western Australian cinemas, is it his intention to take action to—(a) preserve the privileges of the lower-paid members of the community who attend these screenings; (b) protect the capital invested by the West Australian proprietors of the theatres concerned; (c) protect the livelihood of the large number of employees who would be affected by such withdrawal?

The PREMIER replied: Representations are being made on this matter to the Government by the Motion Picture Exhibitors' Association. When these are received they will receive the same prompt consideration that was accorded by this Government when a similar position arose on a previous occasion.

QUESTION—SEWERAGE, STATE SCHOOLS.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is the installation of sewerage in State school premises further advanced in the Claremont electorate (Claremont, Swanbourne, and North Cottesloe) than in other metropolitan electorates? 2, Is stormwater drainage, levelling and surfacing of school grounds in this area receiving attention? 3, If so, at which schools, and at what approximate cost? 4, Have improvements similar to those referred to in question No. 2 been carried out in other suburbs? 5, If lack of finance is preventing such works being attended to, will he seek the co-operation of