

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have only just joined the executive and have not yet attended a meeting. Mr. Latham is president of the Society and I would be surprised to learn that the Charities Commission does not assist. We talk about our home life and the necessity to do all we can to assist mothers to look after their children, and I think that women who battle like that for their children should have their efforts substantially assisted by the State. I have a letter from the Upper Chapman Road Board telling me of the work it has done with its Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade, and asking me to bring to the notice of the Government the necessity for a subsidy. That also is a necessary work and I commend the appeal to the Government. I am sorry if my remarks have been lengthy, but I felt that I had to say what I have. It is with pleasure that I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

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

*House adjourned at 6.4 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Tuesday, 6th August, 1946.*

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

## QUESTIONS.

### PERTH HOSPITAL.

#### *As to Estimated and Actual Costs.*

Mr. McDONALD asked the Minister for Health:

1, What was the estimate of the cost of the new Perth Public Hospital, furniture and equipment at the time the Government authorised its construction?

2, What is the expenditure to date on the hospital?

3, What is now estimated to be the total cost of the hospital building and equipment when completed and ready for use?

The MINISTER replied:

1, £765,000.

2, £505,594.

3, Since the estimate was prepared in 1938, numerous changes have occurred in medical practice and hospital administration, policy and requirements, which will necessitate the complete re-casting of proposals for those sections of the hospital on which construction has not yet commenced, in the light of requirements at the time the buildings are to be constructed.

Reductions in working hours have resulted in a considerable increase in nursing staff, and quarters will now have to be far larger than originally proposed. The extent of quarters which will ultimately be required cannot be computed until it is known what nurses will be required for the unconstructed sections of the hospital referred to above.

Since the estimate was prepared in 1938, the area of the main hospital building has been increased approximately one-third to provide for an intermediate ward section, and additional accommodation in some sections.

These facts make it impossible to assess the ultimate cost of the hospital.

All that can be said at the moment is that due to the items set out above, and the fact that building costs have increased very materially since 1938, the final cost of the hospital must obviously be considerably in excess of the original estimate.

## ROAD BOARDS.

*As to Inspection of Minutes.*

Mr. RODOREDA asked the Minister for Works:

1, Is a ratepayer in a road board district entitled to inspect the minutes of the road board's meetings?

2, If the answer is "yes," what procedure can be adopted by a ratepayer who has been refused permission to inspect?

The MINISTER replied:

1, Yes, under the provisions of section 142 of the Road Districts Act.

2, If a ratepayer has been refused permission to inspect the minute book, his best procedure would be to advise the Public Works Department, who would ascertain the reason from the board.

If the reason submitted by the board is not satisfactory to the Minister, he could cause an inquiry to be made under section 364 of the Act.

## RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.

*As to Provision of Houses.*

Mr. McLARTY asked the Minister for Railways:

1, In view of the fact that many railway employees are unable to obtain houses, could he state whether the Commissioner is making any provision for the erection of houses for employees?

2, If so, can he indicate towns concerned?

The MINISTER replied:

1, Yes; from an amount of £10,000 recently made available by the Treasury as the first stage of a programme of construction of railway houses.

2, Not before the survey now in progress is completed.

## SCHOOL BUS SERVICES.

*As to Condition of Routes.*

Mr. McLARTY asked the Minister for Education:

1, Is he aware that a number of school bus routes are in a particularly bad state?

2, Has he made any provision through the Commissioner for Main Roads for financial assistance to be given to road boards in which these roads are situated?

3, If not, will he do so?

The MINISTER replied:

1, A number of country roads are in a bad state and some of these are used by school buses.

2 and 3, While the construction and maintenance of roads is not a matter for the Education Department, the Department suggests that any local authority unable to deal satisfactorily with the roads in its district should present, in order of priority, its urgent requirements to the Commissioner for Main Roads for his consideration.

## INTERSTATE SHIPPING.

*As to Liaison Officers and Delays.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Works:

1, Who are the liaison officers appointed by the Government in Melbourne and Sydney to assist in obtaining transport and shipping space for essential requirements for this State?

2, When were they respectively appointed?

3, How much cargo designed for Western Australia is still held up in the Eastern States by comparison with the 8,000 tons which were left on the wharves according to the June report of the Council for Development of Industries?

4, What steps are being taken rapidly to improve this position?

The MINISTER replied: 1 and 2, Melbourne: Mr. R. H. Miles, appointed 1/1/46; Sydney: Mr. R. F. Wakely, appointed 1/4/46. The first appointments were Mr. Andrews (Melbourne), February, 1942, and Mr. R. G. Ashton (Sydney), January, 1943.

3, It is not known how much cargo booked for Western Australia is awaiting shipment at all Eastern States ports.

4, The W.A. Shipping Priorities Advisory Committee is continually in touch with the liaison officers for the purpose of trying to have as much freight as possible shipped to Western Australia. Special representations are always made when advice is received of goods being urgently required in this State. The shipment of goods in these days is largely decided by the shipping companies, and their ability to ship is limited by the number and size of the vessels under their control.

**FINANCIAL EMERGENCY ACT.***As to Interest Rates on Mortgages.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Lands:

1, What will be the position in regard to interest rates on mortgages hitherto protected by the Financial Emergency Act if portion of that Act concerned is not further renewed this year?

2, Will it be lawful for the mortgagees to demand from the mortgagors, if the Act is not renewed, interest at the original high rates?

3, If so, is the Government satisfied that there will be no difficulty in fresh loans being raised at current rates of interest to pay off the indebtedness on such mortgages and that no restrictions to this course exist, or, if the Government is not satisfied of this, will favourable consideration be given to a further extension of this particular measure?

The MINISTER replied:

1, 2 and 3, All aspects are being inquired into and an announcement will be made in the near future.

**AGRICULTURAL TRACTORS.***As to Local Manufacture.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Works:

1, Is it correct that a Victorian company has investigated conditions in Western Australia with a view to the establishment of a factory for the manufacture of agricultural tractors?

2, If so, what type of tractor is involved, and has a decision been reached as to opening the factory in question in this State?

3, If so, when is the factory likely to open, and is there any information as to the annual number of tractors that will be turned out?

The MINISTER replied:

1, 2 and 3, This matter is still the subject of negotiation as between the Commonwealth and State Governments and the firm concerned.

**WATER SUPPLIES.***As to Gnowangerup Scheme.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

1, Have investigations been completed in respect of a proposed water supply for the town of Gnowangerup?

2, If so, when is an estimate and report expected to be available for consideration by the local authority?

3, If the investigations are not completed, when is it anticipated that they will be complete?

The MINISTER replied:

1, Yes.

2, Estimate and report are now being reviewed by the Director of Works.

3, Answered by 1.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.***Fifth Day.*

Debate resumed from the 1st August.

MR. READ (Victoria Park) [4.37]: I will not take up the time of the House for very long, as I feel that I have not yet the Parliamentary ability to speak for two or three hours on very little in general, nor will I take members, as did the member for Perth, from Paris round the world to Canberra.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Did he get back to Perth?

Mr. READ: He ultimately got back to Perth. I wish to give a few random thoughts on the Speech of the Lieut.-Governor, Sir James Mitchell, but first, from the floor of this House, I desire to pay a tribute to Sister Kate, whose death occurred last week, and to record the deep appreciation of our citizens of the wonderful social work done by this great lady, down the years, on behalf of the orphans and the distressed young of our State. I wish to record the loss felt by all at her passing, and to say that our loss, which is a national one, turns our thoughts to a contemplation of the grand achievements of Sister Kate. It was very aptly put by Mr. Courtney in some lines, in last Sunday's issue of "The Sunday

Times," the first four of which run as follows:—

In all the things that we are moved to say

Of you, of all the thoughts there rises one

That softens saddened minds and hearts today

When we recall the kindly deeds you've done.

Sister Kate came to Western Australia some 45 years ago, having brought with her from England 20 orphans. She settled with those children and brought them up as good citizens of Western Australia. Down the years her institution received many hundreds of Western Australian children. It did not matter whether they were children of aliens or aborigines, or whether they were white or dark or any colour between, they received kindly nurture at Sister Kate's Home and were cared for as if all were equal. Those children were brought up to be great and good citizens of the State. The services of many of them were offered in the defence of their country and some of them distinguished themselves in that service. As exemplifying the love and care Sister Kate gave to the children, I may mention that she always slept in a dormitory surrounded by five or six cots or beds. Western Australia is the richer for her sojourn here and we are the poorer for her death.

Reference is made in the Speech to the Commonwealth Unemployment and Sickness Benefit Act. Some alteration in the disbursement of that assistance should be considered. I have in mind young men who are drawing unemployment relief benefits—youths who do not consider going back to work. I know something of such youths, aged from perhaps 22 to 25. They have their deferred pay, possibly £200 or £300, in the bank and they draw the unemployment relief payments. I asked two of them whether I could not get them a job; I thought I could get them jobs at Cannington, six miles away. Their reaction was, "No, we do not require a job. We are living with Mum and Dad and the payment we get keeps us in what we need to go about the town." Their needs would be their cigarettes, their glass of beer and their pictures. I consider that the money they receive should be paid to older unemployed men in order that they might have a little extra on which to bring up their families.

If the means test were applied to such youths I do not think it would be out of place, but as regards the means test for any-

thing else, I simply hate it because it is quite unfair under our economic system. A boy goes to work at 14 years of age and toils on through his life with perhaps two weeks' holiday in the year. He brings up a family, and is able to save but a few hundreds of pounds. When he reaches the retiring age, he applies for an old-age pension. That man has denied himself throughout his life in order to provide in some measure for his old age and, because of that, he is precluded from receiving the old-age pension. Many of these men have denied themselves holidays, pictures and other amusements, and have saved sufficient money to buy a motorcar against the day when they could take things easy and enjoy themselves. They might possibly have £100 in the bank to meet contingencies such as sickness and clothing, and during a lifetime of careful living they have acquired a freehold home. Those people are not entitled to be recipients of the old-age pension until they disburse some of their savings. In such cases I consider that the means test should not apply.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: A man can own a house and motorcar and still get the pension.

Mr. READ: I was gratified to learn that there are only 1,180 unemployed persons in the State.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Registered unemployed.

Mr. READ: Yes. I had an idea that there were very many more, judging by the number of applications made to me, so I must come to the conclusion that most of the unemployed live in my electorate. Many of these men could be put to useful work. The extension of the sewerage system should be put in hand as early as possible for the people of Victoria Park. If that were done, many of those men now unemployed would be provided with useful work. They would be earning wages, and the work done would pay for itself because the interest and sinking fund charges have to be met by the taxpayer for whom the work is done. It would not be such a very expensive matter for the Government. Perhaps it would necessitate the importation from the Eastern States of sewerage connections. In Victoria Park deep sewerage goes past many hundreds of houses, and all that would be necessary to put this work in hand would be to connect up the premises with the sewerage main.

One member mentioned the work done by the Workers' Homes Board and referred to the shortage of houses. He was rather disappointed that the board had not granted permission for many families consisting of only two people, or perhaps three, to have homes built similar to those being built for larger families. I am rather disappointed that the board has done the very thing he requires to be done. I know of houses in the electorate of the member for Canning—at least four of them—with only two or three people in each one; and those buildings could have housed double the number. The administration of the Workers' Homes Board is, I think, sometimes open to criticism. Along the Canning Highway between the Causeway and Canning Bridge, there are four large-sized garages, and no stretch of imagination could envisage the board giving preference to anybody to build another one. Yet a new garage has just been built by permission of the Workers' Homes Board and the bricks, woodwork and other material in that building would have been sufficient to erect two homes to house 12 people.

According to the Press, the number of accidents on our roads has increased greatly during the last 12 months. We are told that in July, 12 people were killed and 56 injured, and that there was a total of 527 accidents. We also learn that the Commissioner of Police is putting more men into the service and hopes thus to minimise traffic accidents. It would be a good idea for pointsmen and traffic police to take a note of careless driving by individual drivers, even though no accident resulted. When I was going to Claremont a week ago and travelling along the Stirling Highway, I witnessed what might have been a serious accident, as a result of a wrong sign being given. Coming to an intersection, the driver of a car gave the turning sign. The driver of a car behind moved out to pass. What the first driver intended to give was the stopping sign. The result was that bumper to bumper there was nearly an accident. If these things were noted by the traffic police and a warning given to such careless drivers, the number of accidents would be reduced. I had in mind the serving of a notice worded something like this: "Warning the driver of car No. — on the following date—. You were observed driving in a careless manner, contravening a certain traffic section. This

notice will be submitted to the magistrate should you come before the Traffic Court in the future." If such notices were sent out, I am sure they would have a deterring effect on careless drivers. I know that would be the result with me. I would be very careful after receiving a notification of that kind, because I would know what would happen to me if I subsequently appeared before the Traffic Court.

Much has been said in the newspapers about accidents. The carelessness of the driving public has been magnified, but actually drivers as a whole have been blamed for the carelessness of a few. I venture to say that not more than 20 per cent. of the drivers on the road are careless and that the others are in all instances very careful. That is the percentage that the police give, as a matter of fact. Twice a day, in the morning and in the evening, there is a constant stream of traffic over the narrow Causeway. There one can see stationary and moving trams, moving cars, horse-drawn vehicles and so on. This traffic, moving in either direction, has to put up with the inconvenience occasioned by hundreds of people on bicycles. These cyclists obey no rule of the road. They pass moving motors on the wrong side. They cross from one side of the bridge to the other. They pass on the wrong side between moving trams and moving motors. In all the circumstances, while there are a lot of accidents on the Causeway it is a wonderful thing, and a tribute to the careful driving of motorists that the number is not much greater.

I notice that the Commissioner of Police has augmented the Police Force by enrolling an additional 50 or more men. He boasted that most of these men were 6ft. in height. I do not know that big, slow, bovine individuals are the best type for any service.

The Minister for Lands: Who said that 6ft. men were slow, anyhow?

Mr. READ: In all services in the older countries over the last 50 years all sound and active men have been considered equal, irrespective of height, whether it be for the Police Force, or the Military or the Fire Brigade. These men have all had equal preference. I should think that what we need are alert, agile, active, smart, intelligent men to join an organisation like the Police Force—a type like, say, the Minister for Education.

I would like to say something now about the Licensing Court. After many years devoted to acquiring sufficient petrol, I had occasion to travel to Manjimup. There were four people in the car and when we got to Bridgetown we went to the four hotels. We went to the Bridgetown Hotel, the Freemasons Hotel, the Terminus Hotel, and one other, and were told that there was no accommodation. This occurred on a Saturday evening—the 9th January last. A fortnight prior to that time a carnival had been held at Bridgetown and all the visitors had returned to Perth. I maintain that there was plenty of accommodation at Bridgetown for us. However, I think that the hotel people have not been catering for the travelling public, and have not been functioning for the purpose for which they have been granted a license, but have been concentrating on their bar trade. While these country hotels and wayside inns have received a lesser amount of stock to sell, the beer that should have been sold as bottled beer has, in all cases, been supplied and sold in glasses. Therefore, instead of concentrating on what they receive their license for, that is the accommodation of the travelling public, they have just run the bar trade on a get-rich-quick principle at the expense of the comfort of the travelling public. The excuses that have been given are that there has been a shortage of help in every direction.

Licensees say that they cannot get hands to cater for the people. But I know that if inquiries were made it would be shown that these establishments have lately had more people on their payroll than they had before the war. So, something requires looking into. I am telling the Minister this because either the Licensing Act wants amending or its provisions should be enforced. The Minister controlling the Act has very little opportunity of knowing the disabilities of the travelling public. If a health inspector or an inspector of any kind goes to a country hotel, in the course of his job, he is received by the licensee in the following manner: "Well, Bob, how are you? Did you have a good trip? What would you like to drink? Do not bother about your motor-car. We will have that put into the garage for you, and your bags will be taken for you to the best room." Now, the Minister could not get a severe report from that inspector. Again, a Minister does not have

first-hand knowledge of the conduct of these hotels because he travels around the country like a prince.

The Minister for Lands: You're telling me!

Mr. Cross: Is not that the job of the Licensing Court?

Mr. READ: The Minister who travels is provided with all necessary amenities and accommodation at the taxpayer's expense.

The Minister for Lands: And mostly at the request of members.

Mr. READ: I now wish to deal with the Tourist Bureau—the State Publicity and Tourist Office. We had a very good Government Printer. He was a man of personality, ability and had the necessary technical knowledge for the job that he was doing. But he was shifted from there to be the chief of the Tourist Office. If the remuneration he received as Government Printer was not as much as that attaching to the tourist department, it should have been raised and he should have been given those emoluments where he was because he was a good Government Printer and in the right place. But he was transferred to the Tourist Office to which he brought no knowledge of tourist business. The Government Printing Office is a most important governmental undertaking. Yet this man was taken from it and transferred to the Tourist Office, and will have to acquire the necessary knowledge appertaining to his new duties. So there we have two departments which might have been in charge of different men. We had a man in England, a secretary to an Agent General, who had been ten years in that country. He had a knowledge of all the Australian States and was conversant with the ways of the Continent and also of New Zealand. We had other applicants, I have no doubt, who would have been better fitted for that job. I say that without belittling in any way the ability of the man who got the position, but who should have been left where his expert knowledge was of use to the State.

I have a note here headed, "Java; the Dutch," and it is to the effect that efforts are being made to obtain markets for our commodities in the Near East. Do not

members think that a knowledge of our efforts should be conveyed to the water-side workers in Sydney? It might help.

The Minister for Lands: What has Sydney got to do with our side?

Mr. Fox: It is very amusing to hear you fellows who sit in an office, and who have never done a decent day's work in your life, talking about people who do.

Mr. Mann: Come on to a farm!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. READ: I come now to a portion of this report which touches me deeply. The small arms munitions factory at Welshpool has been converted so as to increase the number of our industrial undertakings. We will ultimately be giving employment to thousands of Western Australian workers out there. The Perth City Council has zoned a large area there entirely for factory purposes. It is served for heavy transport by the railways, for the travelling public and the artisans, to and from their work, by the tram service, and, in addition there are excellent roads and bus services in all directions. The Minister is to be congratulated on this. He has started something that, in the years to come, will be a monument to the industrial activity of this State.

Notice is given here that we are about to put in hand a campaign against tuberculosis. The number of T.B. cases has increased in this State until, I believe, there are about 2,000. I think 173 people die of T.B. in Western Australia each year. The money that will be spent in x-raying cases in their early stages will militate against the continuation of this dread disease. If the cases are taken early they are capable of treatment and of ultimate complete cure. Around the metropolitan area there are at present T.B. cases that cannot be accommodated in the hospitals on account of there being no beds available. I have had many interviews with the public health authorities to see if some T.B. cases, in distressed circumstances, could be admitted and treated in our hospitals. I frequently see Sister Birmingham who has on her lists 14 or 15 cases which should go to hospital for treatment, but no accommodation is available. I strongly urge the Minister to have either more beds made available at the Perth Hospital, or to provide more accommodation at

Wooroloo, even if it is only temporary. Of course he should, in addition, endeavour to get more staff. By doing so we would, before bringing to fruition the splendid schemes that he has in mind, be able to treat these people.

The medical side of this question will, I think, eventually be dealt with by the Commonwealth Government with the result that everything in connection with it will, I am glad to think, be free. I had a friend in St. John of God Hospital, and when visiting him I heard, on many occasions, what was said by other patients. It is distressing to hear in this country, with our standard of living, of the worry that is caused to our people by sickness. In the ward where I visited there is a permanent screen around each bed for which the patients pay 16s. extra per week. One day I overheard, from a bed about two away from where I was sitting with my friend, a lady say, "It is a remarkable thing! I paid £11 for an x-ray treatment. How I managed it, God only knows, because I have not been able to scrape up £11 for years to take the kids for a holiday!" She also said, "I have to pay 30s. a week to a woman to pop in and mind the kids. When the doctor comes round, I am going to ask him to let me out tomorrow instead of on Saturday so that some of that expense may be avoided." That serves to illustrate the suffering that is experienced by so many of our people, and what free x-ray and medical services will mean to these unfortunates.

I have a matter to place before the Minister for Education. I refer to the question of books for children attending the various State schools. When a child leaves one class and is promoted to another, it is a costly matter for the mother because of the new books that have to be purchased. It involves an expenditure of 19s. 6d. or 19s. 9d. for books. It seems to me that that could be avoided—it will be many years before we shall be in a position to supply books to children without any cost to them—if the Minister would institute a method by which standard types of books could be used in the various classes at all schools. If that were done, then the book used by a child in one class could be passed on to another child who was being promoted from a lower form. Perhaps a library could be established in the school from which these books could be drawn.

The Minister for Education: That is the position now.

Mr. READ: No, it is not.

The Minister for Education: I say it is.

Mr. READ: I do not like to contradict the Minister, but I understand that there are various types of books in use. I have a list, which includes those by Whitecombe, the Golden Treasury, the Oxford, the Collins series, Carroll's books and then those published by the Government itself. In other States I understand they have standardised the books used in schools in the various classes, and those books only are used by the children. On the other hand, in Western Australia when a child is promoted from one class to another he has to get new books for the higher standard. There is no method by which books can be passed on to him and thus the additional expense avoided. I understand that the Minister is worried only about the standard of class efficiency throughout the schools. In order to make the efficiency higher in his class, a teacher is allowed to use any of the books he may desire.

The Minister for Education: Yes, but not to require the children to get them. The teacher may use them if he likes.

Mr. READ: I was told by a man that at the Rivervale school one class has had five different teachers since Christmas. He complained of the extra expense that this involved because the new teacher required different books to be obtained. I think this could be avoided very simply by the establishment of libraries in the schools from which books could be provided, and this would be a great help, particularly to parents with large families.

The Minister for Education: I can assure the hon. member that that aspect has been given very careful attention.

Mr. READ: I thank the Minister very much for his information. I read a report in the Press a few days ago regarding some remarks by Mr. H. J. Mortlock. He said that he had landed here 50 years ago and that Perth was quite different then from what it is now. Naturally that would be so. He remarked that in those days all the various taxes that people have to pay now were non-existent and he added, "We were simple people in those days." We know that taxes had to be imposed. In order to secure

the advancement of the State money had to be found for various purposes and so the people were taxed. Thus Parliament was enabled to undertake various public works and other activities.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: And high Customs duties had to be paid on goods from the Eastern States.

Mr. READ: Yes, that is so. In those days they were simple people; in these days we are too complex. We have gone to the other extreme and now we rely too much on boards and committees and Government departments. In these days, we are hemmed in by all sorts of rules and regulations—and it will continue to be so. I notice from His Excellency's Speech that Bills are to be introduced this session to create more boards with which we shall have to contend. In my pigeon-hole at Parliament House I found a pamphlet bearing the titles: "The Nation's Forum of the Air"; "What Conditions Should Govern the Sale of Books to the Public." I have not read it, but here we find evidence of the tendency again. Everyone in authority, from Ministers of the Crown, members of Parliament and down to the least of us, all seem to be thinking about what conditions should be imposed with regard to various activities.

Those who have to do business today have to contend with boards, the members of which are perhaps not altogether acceptable. I appreciate that we must continue to have these bodies in control—in this democratic country of ours! It has to be admitted, however, that the management of the various bodies is not always of the best. During the war period, practically everything was subject to some form of control. One of the most difficult matters in that regard was transport. If it became necessary to do anything in connection with transport, one had to go to the Barracks to consult an official and by him be referred to another officer located in Hay-street. That officer provided a form that had to be filled in, and then one would be referred to another branch located in the Treasury Buildings. After the requisite documents had been signed before a Justice of the Peace, one would be referred by the Treasury Buildings official back to the officer at the Barracks, and then, if one were lucky, the article required would be liberated for supply. All that remained for one to do at that stage



was to hunt all round town in an endeavour to buy what was required. All that imposed tremendous stress and strain on those who were endeavouring to conduct their businesses on sound lines.

Mr. J. Hegney: But you were dealing with one board.

Mr. READ: Yes, but it had its ramifications—both State and Federal—all over the city. However we realise that we have those Government-controlled boards and, while I am not complaining specifically about that, I do think we could have more sound management of them. If the Government would invoke the assistance of business men to help it to run these bodies, business would be expedited and carried on in a more methodical manner. That would apply whether it concerned the Egg Board, the pig board—

The Minister for Lands: Or the Milk Board.

Mr. READ: Quite so.

Mr. J. Hegney: And there is the board that you are concerned in.

Mr. READ: And there might be something in that, too. The members of the various boards are chosen by the different businesses, societies or industries in which people are interested. For instance, there is the Egg Board. The primary producers have two representatives on that board.

The Minister for Lands: They will be a couple of old fowls!

Mr. READ: The Governor appoints representatives of the retailers and the consumers, and, because of his power, he can also appoint two or three other individuals and the chairman, too.

Mr. J. Hegney: What do you propose?

Mr. READ: I propose that we should have a new board, one that could be described as a super board, a key board or a selection board. The board I have in mind would comprise a number of sound businessmen who could be called to the assistance of the Government.

Mr. Needham: Why do you want another board?

Mr. READ: We have the other boards, but we want them to be run decently. In Western Australia there are some large businesses that are conducted very successfully despite high taxation, high wages and

the provision of amenities of all descriptions. In spite of all those imposts, or because of them, the businesses are being run successfully and that success is gauged by the high taxation the concerns have to pay.

Mr. Rodoreda: And the high prices they charge for their goods.

Mr. READ: Success has been achieved by those businesses because of the careful selection of those who manage them—the manager, the sub-manager and the office staff. Applications from all and sundry are received from people anxious to gain positions on the staff of such a business, and the men already chosen by careful selection are able to assess the qualifications of the applicants and to appoint the best men. If, therefore, we had a small committee of expert businessmen, that body would be able to assist the Government by investigating the qualifications of various people and recommending suitable ones for appointment on boards or committees, and even nominating men with the necessary qualifications and inviting them to apply for the various positions available. If some such method were adopted, boards that were created would be run more effectively.

The Minister for Education: Do you not believe in the producers electing their own representatives?

The Minister for Lands: The hon. member will not hear that interjection.

Mr. READ: I notice that we are to have a new causeway. I am glad that my advocacy of that project over a period has born fruit.

Mr. J. Hegney: We were urging that long before you came here.

Mr. READ: The provision of that structure will alleviate the congestion at the existing bottleneck at the present Causeway, which has to serve not only all the residents on the southern side of the river but three-quarters of the rural inhabitants of the State, those who wish to come to Perth by road or leave it by road. I feel sure that we will have a bridge of which we can be justly proud and which will be an ornament to the city, a bridge equal to those that every other capital city in Australia boasts of.

Mr. J. Hegney: Like the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Mr. READ: No, like the Storey Bridge in Brisbane. I am looking forward to being present in the near future at the ceremony when our Premier will lay the foundation stone of the new causeway.

Mr. Mann: In 50 years' time.

**MR. WITHERS** (Bunbury) [5.32]: My speech on this occasion will not be of very lengthy duration and I hope it will not prove to be too tedious.

Hon. J. C. Willcock interjected.

Mr. WITHERS: The member for Victoria Park did not go round the world. I am really keeping a promise to fill a gap. The preparation for my speech is contained on two sheets of the small pad which I am holding, so it will not be very long. This will be my last session, definitely, and I do not intend to leave Parliament without having a last shot at our harbour. I see in the Speech on this occasion that this matter has progressed so far as the purchase of some implement to be used for deepening the harbour. I do not wish to leave this subject until the Estimates are brought down; but I should have liked to have before me the report of the Outports Commission before making my comments. I have the chairman of that Commission on my right; possibly he has something up his sleeve that will be a pleasant surprise or shock to the people of Bunbury, such as the recommendation for the expenditure of a large sum of money to do the right thing by the Bunbury harbour.

The Minister for Lands: He may not even mention the Bunbury harbour. That would be a bigger shock!

Mr. WITHERS: He might not, but it would be very ungenerous if he did not do so. During the whole period that I have represented Bunbury, this has been the foremost question for the advancement and development of the South-West portion of the State. I have never been parochial in my representation of Bunbury. I had occasion to introduce a deputation to the member for Geraldton, while he was Premier, in 1940.

The Minister for Lands: You mentioned Albany on that day.

Mr. WITHERS: That was one of the most representative deputations from the South-West that ever waited upon a Premier or a Minister. On that occasion I stressed the point that I was not advocating harbour improvements for Bunbury; I had with me representatives from the whole of the South-Western district, including Manjimup and Boyup Brook and even near Busselton. They all came with the sole object of presenting a case for the absolute necessity of making Bunbury the outport to absorb the products of the expanding industries in the South-West. That expansion was taking place even during the war and no doubt it will increase as time goes on.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: They were all in earnest.

Mr. WITHERS: They were very much in earnest. I was extremely proud of the deputation and I regretted that we were then in the throes of war. The Premier, whilst sympathetic, said that during that period it was not possible to give effect to our wishes. Nevertheless, there was the desire then to do so and I believe there is the desire to do so today. I hope that when the Outports Commission's report is presented we shall find that Bunbury will be able to say, "At last. At last!" That is as far as I can go for the time being in this matter.

Related to this is the question of the railway. First, I desire to thank our present Minister for Railways for the action he has taken during the short time he has held that office. If he continues this good work he will achieve a desirable alteration in our railway system. The duplication of the line from East Perth to Rivervale is long overdue; in fact, this should have been done when the line was duplicated to Arncliffe. It is some few years ago since a new bridge was built across the river to replace the old Bunbury Bridge, and that was the time when the duplication should have taken place. It is at this point that there has been a bottleneck for many years. Strange to say, there is another bottleneck between Bunbury and Picton of about four miles. I do not share the fear expressed by some Bunbury people that one effect of the duplication of the line will be to divert trade from Bunbury to Fremantle. That will not be the effect at all; the effect will be to give quicker transport.

We have today certain industries in the South-West. We have our coal, which takes up a considerable part of the railway service between Brunswick Junction and Armadale and thence to Fremantle. We have the superphosphate works at Picton; and while the vessels are unloading phosphatic rock and sulphur at Bunbury the engines are running with trains all day long. It is fortunate that this traffic does not interfere with the ordinary running of goods trains and passenger trains. The volume of passenger traffic is increasing day by day and we only require another industry such as the super. works to create an absolute deadlock unless we have a duplication of the line. This is nothing new. I put it up to the member for Geraldton when he was Minister for Railways many years ago. I have put it up to nearly every Commissioner of Railways since I have been a member of the House, but they were never able to see the justification for it. I do not know whether they do so today. Nevertheless, I worked on the railways and have seen five trains held up at Picton because we could not get through to Bunbury on account of the bottleneck.

Mr. Mann: That is the short-sighted policy of the Railway Department.

The Premier: You know that is not right.

Mr. WITHERS: That leads me to this point, which I hope the Minister for Railways will follow up. I want him to get away from the short-sighted policy of allowing Western Australia to remain the Cinderella State of the Commonwealth if we do not participate in the scheme for the unification of railway gauges. I was pleased to note from a reply of the Minister to a question asked of him that the matter was not yet finalised; because if we are left out of the scheme we shall certainly remain the Cinderella State and shall probably be cut off from the Eastern States altogether. In order to progress we must keep pace with the Eastern States. We once passed through a period that I, and other members as well, hope will not recur. If we can get other works of the magnitude of some we have already we shall have employment for a large number of people for a considerable period to come. When all is said and done, employment is the backbone of a country, in addition to the farmer.

Mr. Mann: Hear, hear!

Mr. WITHERS: We do need continuity of employment. We also need population, as was pointed out the other night by the member for Kalgoorlie; but when we get it, what are we to do with it? The people must have employment. But this has nothing to do with the particular question I am dealing with, namely railways. I want the Minister to follow this question up and not worry about the expenditure that will be involved in the duplication of the lines. The time has come when the Minister controlling our railways should not be burdened with the control of other departments. The Leader of the Opposition dealt with the question of railways and transport the other night. I agree with him that there should be a transport Minister. He would have a full-time job in dealing with road, rail, water and other transport.

Mr. Doney: You are quoting from our programme now.

Mr. WITHERS: I am putting my addendum to it and I hope it will make the programme of some value. That is the position and that is what we require. I have nothing against the present Commissioner of Railways, but I have had something against some of our past Commissioners, who I think did not stand up to their job. In the past we have not always put the best of our railway men into administrative positions. If a man showed administrative ability and disagreed with those in authority he did not get the promotion which he deserved and consequently our railways suffered. I have said in this House before that I could put my hands on railway men that could have lost some of the men in administrative positions; but these latter men had got into a groove and so secured their appointments in course of time. I hope the present Minister for Railways will be able to give them a bump and get them out of the rut.

Mr. Mann: Hear, hear!

Mr. WITHERS: If the present Minister continues on his present course, he will get the applause of this House and give satisfaction to the people of the State.

I wish to touch upon another matter, the wool position in Western Australia. I have had some experience during the past two or three years in the processing of wool. During a visit to Albany about three months ago I had the pleasure of again inspecting

the Albany Woollen Mills. Before that, I was much concerned about a company in which I am interested at Bunbury. This company was being short-supplied with woollen yarn because the tops were not coming forward from the Eastern States. It seemed strange to me that the Albany mill had to buy the tops in the Eastern States, to be spun into yarn in this State in our own factory. Whilst I was at the mills, Mr. Martin, who is in charge of the department concerned, told me this: "Now that we have the wool appraisalment in Albany you can see the difference that it makes." He then pointed out along one side of the big sheds a spot where a few bales were stored. He added, "That is all that is left of our imported wool, but that over there—some hundreds of bales—is this State's. That is the difference that appraisalment has made to Albany. Before the appraisalment was made here we could buy the tops cheaper from the Eastern States than we could buy them from men in the Albany district." I hope that when auction sales again take place the same thing will apply, so that we shall be able to use Western Australian wool in the manufacture of the finished article of fabric that is sent oversea.

It is astounding the small quantity of wool that is used by womenfolk and men in Western Australia in undergarments. We have a better trade in Victoria and South Australia for our pure wool garments than we have in Western Australia, and we have at present a very big demand for our manufactured articles in Denmark. Unfortunately we are hampered by the regulations that have been imposed. We have been sending so much out of the country that the authorities are now tightening up and saying, "You are only allowed to export a certain amount." We have the finished article made from wool grown on the sheep's back in Western Australia, treated in the Albany woollen mills, knitted into fabric, and cut into garments in Western Australia. When it is desired to send the manufactured article out of the country it is stated to be against the regulations. We can send pure wool, say, to Japan, and get it back in made-up form without there being any harm in the trade. Some encouragement must be given to people who are processing an article that is produced in the country. We have the wool and other primary products and it

should be the object of the State and the Commonwealth Governments to see that we make as much progress as possible with our raw material before it is allowed to leave the country. This is my experience in a small way.

I hope in future we shall find that we are not sending so much of our raw material away, but are sending it out in the form of processed articles manufactured in Western Australia from our own materials. I am concerned on behalf of my successor with regard to the Electoral Act. That Act has been amended on many occasions but there is one part of it which is quite unsatisfactory to me. I refer to postal voting. I should like to quote my experience at the last election when 24 votes were sent from the Chief Electoral Office in Perth, on the day of the election, to Bunbury. According to the Act all votes have to be in the hands of the returning officer at the time of the closing of the poll. On that occasion the 24 votes left Perth by the 2 o'clock train and were due to arrive at Bunbury at 7.25, in time for the closing of the poll. They did not, in fact, arrive until five minutes past eight, and the 24 votes were rejected because they were not in the hands of the returning officer by 8 p.m.

Mr. Read: They may have been for the other fellow.

Mr. WITHERS: I had a look at them. There were enough votes to have in some instances completely changed the result of the election.

Mr. Seward: If the train had been on time could the mail have been sorted and the votes delivered in 35 minutes?

Mr. WITHERS: If the train had been on time the votes would have been collected at the post office before 8 o'clock. That is always done at Bunbury.

Mr. Seward: There was not much time left.

Mr. WITHERS: No. The Act could be amended to provide that the votes were acceptable if sent on the train that was due to arrive before the closing of the poll. That would overcome the difficulty.

The Minister for Lands: If they arrived at 8.30 they would not arrive in time for the closing of the poll.

Mr. WITHERS: It depends on when the train is due to arrive. It might not arrive till 8 o'clock or 9 o'clock, but the Act could be amended to provide that the votes could not be rejected if they were sent on the train that was due to arrive in time. I would prefer to see the Act amended along the lines of the Federal Act. We shall be having a Federal election in the next couple of months, and people will be going to the different electoral offices in various parts of the State to record their votes. If a man is in Kalgoorlie on election day and desires to record a vote for the district of Bunbury he can do so. That is all right. In March we shall probably be having the State election. Some people will be away from their homes at that time. A man in Kalgoorlie may desire to record a vote on behalf of someone in Bunbury and will then be told that he cannot do so. That is the difference between the Federal and State Acts. It would be much fairer to amend the State Act to conform with the Federal legislation. No one in Western Australia can record a vote on the day of the election unless he is in the right electorate. The subject is well worthy of consideration.

Mr. Rodoreda: About 60 per cent. of the outback people do not get a vote under the Federal system.

Mr. Seward: Our system is much more simple than is the Federal one.

Mr. WITHERS: Under the Federal system it is possible for a person to vote at any polling booth for any part of the State. There is another Act about which I am greatly concerned, namely the Municipalities Act. The Minister for Works was asked by the member for Roebourne what could be done if certain things happened under the Road Board Act, and the Minister for Works replied to him. The Government is all-powerful so far as the Road Board Act is concerned, but in the case of the Municipalities Act, we lose all power and pass it on to the municipality. I do not know to whom it is possible to appeal under the Municipalities Act, either to Parliament, the Minister or anyone else in connection with certain things that happen in municipal affairs. Last year I brought up the question of people who were given votes at a municipal election to which they were not entitled. I applied to the Department of the Minister for Works and was told that the matter had

nothing to do with it. I then asked where I should go for the information I required and was directed to the Electoral Office, which stated that the matter had nothing to do with it. In my opinion there had been a distinct breach of the Municipalities Act. The only way to overcome a difficulty of that sort is for one to go to a solicitor and put up £50 so that the court may be moved to bring the municipality to justice. As ratepayers we have no appeal to the Minister or to anyone else because we have passed on the authority to the municipality.

Another weakness in the Act has been taken advantage of during the last two years to the detriment of the taxpayers. I refer to the deliberative and casting vote of the mayor of a municipality. That may be all right when only minor matters are being dealt with. It may, however, be that considerable sums of money are involved, say in the purchase of several trucks or in the purchase of a comptometer costing £900. A man got out of a sick bed in order to attend a meeting of the council at which there were seven out of nine members present. Four of the members were opposed to the deal going through and three were in favour of it. The mayor gave his deliberative vote which created a tie, and then gave his casting vote against the majority who originally were against the proposition.

The Minister for Lands: Very undemocratic!

Mr. WITHERS: That is where democracy gets us. That sort of thing has happened three or four times in Bunbury. The mayor has given his deliberative vote on something which he wants the council to put through, thus making a tie—if there had been five councillors voting against a proposal and four only in favour of it—he could then give the casting vote in order to get his own way. The majority that was established in the first case should have been quite sufficient for any reasonable man. Something should be done to prevent a person from playing with Acts of Parliament in that manner.

I have been in this House for 23 years. During that period and for years before that, indeed ever since Parliament House was built, members of Parliament have suffered a great deal of inconvenience. The building was never completed. Those who thought out the original design had a broad vision, but they could only

go a certain distance and never since have they gone any further. Members of this Parliament have not the facilities and amenities in the building to which they are entitled for the work they do. I think that applies particularly to country members because they are more inconvenienced than are metropolitan members who usually have a home to go to.

Whilst we have been continuing on in this manner, sparing ourselves for the benefit of the people because "if we do this we will be unpopular or if we do something else the people will say something," we have been measured up by our own yardstick by the community in general. We have never had the courage to say to the people "there is some responsibility and some dignity in being a member of Parliament." If we bring ourselves to the level that we have reached over the period I have mentioned we are not going to command the respect of the electors that we should possess. I say this for the benefit of those who come after me. I shall not be here myself. I am fed up to the neck with politics and I do not care who knows it! Some endeavour should be made to overcome the difficulty I have stressed. All we hear is "money, money, money." For the work they do and the time they put into it members of Parliament are entitled to some consideration, some vision as to their amenities and comforts. For the last four years, but for the fact of having some of my own family living in the metropolitan area there were times when I could not get a bed.

Before the war I was able to get a small flat and carry on with that until Christmas time. Since those days I have had to go from one hotel to another and frequently could not get a bed for more than one night at a time. I was informed at one hotel that it had to provide for 40 Americans whether they were using the accommodation or not because it had been paid for. But for my family I do not know where I would have obtained accommodation. I know that people going to the country are frequently told they cannot be taken in at hotels. This is the position in which members of Parliament coming from outside the metropolitan area have found themselves during the last four or five years. There should be some accommodation and proper amenities for those who come here to do the people's work. If they have not those amenities they

will not command the respect of the people that is their due. There is dignity attached to the job of member of Parliament, and if we do not uphold it I do not know who will.

There is also the question of tourists. In Cave House we have one of the most attractive places in Western Australia. The hotel there is crowded to overflowing and was crowded all through the war. How many people who go there bother to visit the caves? When people have seen the caves and the surroundings for the first time there is not much left to attract them, but they continue to go there. There is, of course, the attraction of the Cave House accommodation, the quietness of the place and the treatment that is meted out to people who go there.

The Minister for Lands: A lot of nice girls go down there.

Mr. WITHERS: I have always stood up for Cave House. There is room in the South-West for a half-a-dozen such places, even in localities where there are no caves. I could take members to parts of the South-West that equal and even surpass anything surrounding Cave House. Within 20 miles of Bunbury there are some of the most beautiful spots that one could wish to see, and those are the places on which the tourist officer should concentrate, if we wish to bring the people of other countries and other States to see the beauty of our State. In such places they could be taken into the valleys to shoot rabbits and other game, and we could have miniature golf courses, and so on. At present people go to Cave House for the quietness and to be well catered for.

With two or three more places such as that in the South-West those areas could be made very attractive, and the Government would get back the expenditure in every direction. I do not think the Government should worry about everything having to go by rail, because some of our best country is well off the railways. If we can get to those places by road and can see that licenses are granted for motor transport, we will get revenue from the motor transport. Figures have been given by the Royal Automobile Association, proving the value of the motor trade to Australia, and I do not think we should forget that value. We must not be only railway-

minded. I wish to see the railways brought up to a modern standard where people will be attracted to patronise and appreciate them more than is the case today, but we still must not despise the road user. We should put down bitumen roads leading into the beautiful outback areas of the State. We have Araluen—

Hon J. C. Willecock: And the Murchison River.

Mr. WITHERS: I could tell the member for Geraldton of two or three areas along the Ferguson that are as beautiful as that around Cave House. I was going to speak on the matter of housing, but "housie" is an illegal game, and I will leave the question of housing to others. I could say a great deal on it.

Mr. Doney: Why not? The time is appropriate.

Mr. WITHERS: I will content myself with what I have said in my last speech to members on the Address-in-reply. I wish to say that though I have not been enamoured with Parliament, over the period I have been here, and have not been a lover of the job, I have stuck to it as manfully as I could and have made many happy associations. I have the greatest regard for all members of Parliament on both sides of the House, and have as good friends on the other side as I have on this side. I have appreciated the hours I have spent here, over a considerable period of time and though I may be sorry to leave the environs of the House, I am not sorry that I am leaving Parliament.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: I move—  
That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

**MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER** (Subiaco) [6.6] I have a cold and I am afraid my voice will not carry; however, I have put myself in this position and must accept it. When listening to the Lieut.-Governor's Speech I was struck by the fact that the Bills on betting and vermin control were almost bracketed. Consciously or unconsciously the Government has declared that both those things are pests. I think the Christian community of this State will be glad to help the Government in every way

to get rid of those two pests, but I warn the Government that if it wishes to get rid of one and legalise the other it will be riding for a fall at the next election.

The Christian community of the State is small, but every member of this House knows that it is one of the best organised bodies in the State, and the majority of its members are absolutely against the legalising of S.P. betting. If members do not believe that, I would ask them to do the gentlemanly thing and at the next election make it a plank of the Government platform and openly say "We are going to legalise S.P. betting." Then, if the Government is returned with a great majority, it will know that it has the will of the people behind it, and will be doing something legitimate; but to bring down a Bill such as is proposed, in the last session of the Parliament is, I think, a great mistake. We all know that if the Government legalises a crime—and S.P. betting has over many years been declared by the Government to be a crime—it will act as a boomerang. My experience is that where countries have legalised any vice the lawless activities are extended until the whole fabric of decent civilisation is broken down. I await the Bill with interest, and trust that the Government will be wise and will not be led astray.

The Minister for Lands: We have a "wise" man to lead us.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I hope all the members of the Government will be wise and will not be led astray by a few rich men who wax fat on the pennies of the poor.

The Minister for Lands: Has the member for Subiaco an alternative?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I cannot hear the Minister; I have too bad a cold. I was further struck by the fact that the Government intends to bring down legislation to stabilise certain industries. As the member for Victoria Park said, this suggests more boards of control, more policing and bureaucracy, and more made jobs instead of real jobs. When the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe was dealing with the motion now before the House I did not agree with the attitude he adopted as to from whence the money was to come to stabilise and subsidise these industries. The

same old worn-out argument was used, that if the Government can find money for war it can find money for peacetime purposes. That tune has been played far too long to the gallery.

Mr. Graham: Why cannot the money be found?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I was really surprised that such an able debater and such an intelligent man as the hon. member should have used that argument. The answer to that stupid statement is that in war we must defend ourselves, our families, our homes and our country, and we lend our savings to the utmost of our ability, but there comes a time when there is a limit to our resources and we can no longer lend. Then the Government issues notes and pledges our honour to credit the notes that have been issued on the strength of the future production of the nation. I do not agree with the hon. member's philosophy, that the Government can get money out of a hat, and with the continuous strikes and unrest that we have I think the repayment of our war debts has a grim future. I have handled thousands of Government bonds that were not worth the paper on which they were printed, because the Government that issued them had the same false idea that money could come out of a printing machine.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: The member for Subiaco is not doing the country a service, in deprecating Government bonds.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I am speaking of the philosophy that money can be got out of a hat. I believe that any Government that thinks it can get money in peace, just as it can get it in war, is doing something that is not for the good of the country. The Governments that issued the bonds of which I have spoken had the same false idea that money could be got out of a printing machine. Real money comes from production of goods, and hard work. In my opinion it would take Australia 50 years, with production at full blast, to get back to a comfortable financial position. Further, the hon. member mentioned that Australia had 1,000,000 square miles of arid land, with less than 10 inches of rainfall, that is uninhabitable, and suggested that intending migrants should come to our cities and factories, rather than go to that uninviting country. Surely such a policy

would be suicidal to Australia, and especially to Western Australia, which is essentially a primary producing country with wool, wheat and minerals.

The answer to the statement about the arid land can be made in a few words. It is water, dams and wells. Many of the older members present may have seen the arid land of North Africa or Arabia, and may have gone back years afterwards and have seen the fruitful tracts of what used to be desert, with gardens capable of supporting many thousands of people. It is making the land productive that matters, not subsidising schemes for manufactures. It is the job of the Government to govern, and not to trade or to attempt to stabilise industry. I believe that subsidies and stabilisation mean boards of control, in which the Government must necessarily have a stake. People are deluded into believing that stabilisation means orderly marketing, under which the consumer will pay less for his goods, while the producer will get more.

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

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I was saying that the people are deluded into believing that stabilisation means orderly marketing with the consumer paying less for his goods and the producer getting more. In my opinion, stabilisation with subsidies means corruption, bureaucracy and eventually nationalisation, which statement I shall endeavour to prove. Such controls have formed in the minds of many of the public a fixed conviction that black marketing is not wrong and in the minds of many producers that cute packing is not a crime. Many people who are generally accepted as law-abiding citizens feel no compunction in defying the law because their British instincts rebel against this control. They regard the law as the proverbial ass—ridiculous, undemocratic and unjust. One cannot blame these law-breaking citizens. Every case of want differs. Each person thinks that his case is just and the most pressing, and one is given priority over another by various control bodies.

Who judges the justice of each case? In many instances, the judge is the office boy. When an applicant cannot get any further than the office boy, this boy is faced with a set of rules laid down very



often by men who know little or nothing of the produce or the department which they control. In the department controlling meat, there was a tailor who knew nothing about meat, except that he ate it, and the proprietor of cheap chain stores mainly dealing in underwear and cheap trinkets, now known as King Cole, headed the list for important appointments. To control underwear we had an actress, and one of our most famous musicians, whose life from his teens had been given to music, had an appointment in rubber control. I doubt whether he knew a tyre from a tube.

One could keep on for hours quoting such absurd appointments made either on a political bias or in favour of one section of the community, to keep someone quiet, or to help a friend in need. I am aware that most of these control departments have been inaugurated by the Commonwealth, and I mention this as an example not to be followed. Farmers were often appointed controllers in districts where they owned farms; such men controlled priorities in securing labour or machinery. I am not prepared to judge of their impartiality, but I can definitely say that the consensus of opinion was that such men had but few difficulties on their own farms or those of their friends in securing labour and machinery. When mothers with children or citizens with dependants, wanted extra food or other necessities, or farmers wanted machinery or other material to carry on their farms, they defied the law and obtained what they wanted by any manner of means, mostly through backsheesh, which was not considered a crime.

In the wholesaler, the importer, the exporter, the grower and the consumer, the same mentality existed. It is obvious today that if any Government endeavoured to tighten up upon the system that has been created, it would be overthrown. If any Government sought to dismiss the huge number of non-producing employees, great unrest and even rebellion might occur. At present, the system has created an almost overwhelming number of non-producing employees. Those who listened to the Canberra broadcast today will have heard that one-quarter of the employed people are State or Commonwealth employed. To cut the tentacles of this bureaucratic octopus which now threatens to suck the lifeblood

of the nation is a problem that faces an honest Government, and if the country is to be saved from Communist and Fascist control, it must have a Government willing to tackle the issue. The Commonwealth Government knows full well that it has reached the cross-roads.

The Minister for Lands: We have heard that story before.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The Commonwealth realises that it must obtain further control if it is to reach its goal, which is complete control and nationalisation, but rather than do it openly, the Commonwealth has decided to put the onus upon the people by means of a referendum.

Mr. Triat: That is not democratic, of course!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The Commonwealth Government dare not put the question in plain words that the people can understand, such as, "Are you in favour of nationalisation of all means of production and industry?" So it camouflages the issue and asks the citizens whether they are in favour of orderly marketing. This sounds so meek and righteous, though the Commonwealth knows full well that the people have not studied the subject and that the result of a "yes" vote would be nationalisation and regimentation of the people, mind, body and soul. The power of the present control, if exercised, could take away a man's living. According to the newspaper the other day, Lipton was charged with an offence against the Tea Board. Here we have a statement by Mr. Chifley, telegraphed from Melbourne on the 28th July last, in which he really threatens the people. He said, on the 28th July, that he believed in arbitration, but that unless the people voted for the referendum in favour of his proposals he would not be able to do much for the people. He also said about orderly marketing that if the people did not vote for it he could do very little for the primary producer. A man who threatens in order to get votes is not worth the salt he eats or the water he drinks, if he drinks it. The Australian has accepted the principle of stabilisation without realising that such a plan would gradually lead to the nationalisation of all industries. So long as the man in the street has sufficient for food, shelter and amusement for him-

self and his family he is more or less content to leave legislation and the responsibility for his welfare to those he elected to govern.

Debaters will argue with some justification that orderly marketing, which amounts to control of production, to license or de-license, boards with powers to restrict production, to increase prices, to obtain subsidies, to curtail imports, compulsorily to acquire land and industries, to zone or de-zone, has produced some seemingly temporary benefits. Some of our Australian products have, through control, been successfully placed upon the world markets, mainly upon the British. But at what a price! First I refer to sugar and butter. I am quite sure that the ordinary taxpayer has no idea of the cost which he has indirectly paid in stabilising these two products, and I am further convinced that when the system of sugar and butter control was introduced the taxpayer did not dream that this indirect tax burden would be perpetually upon his shoulders. The Commonwealth Parliament has given the sugar industry the absolute protection of an embargo against imports, as well as an Australian price, and the Government also accepted the responsibility of policing the retail price for sugar. In other words, this Federal protection allows the sugar miller to compete with sugar-growers throughout the world at the Australian consumers' expense.

Mr. Triat: You are reading too quickly.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: And at the discretion of the board. This is the point I want to make, as to who shall or who shall not grow sugar.

The Minister for Lands: I believe you are a freetrader!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Does the Minister talk as much at home?

Mr. Cross: Mind you do not lose your place!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Labourers in the canefields and sugar refineries in other countries are mostly, as members know, coolies, whose wages are infinitesimal compared with the Australians' and whose standard of living is of the lowest. Yet we have competed successfully with those people, but at what a cost! We stabilise our industry and compete against coolies

through subsidies, devaluing and inflating our currency.

The Premier: Do you think the subsidy for butter to dairy farmers is a bad thing?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I would not give subsidies or have quotas.

Mr. Cross: Tell that to the farmers.

Mr. Abbott: That is exactly what the hon. member is doing.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think the farmers will agree to that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: We have prohibited the coloured man from entering the country and we have prohibited him under a system which must react against us some time or other. I do not wish for a moment to put up a plea for the coloured man—I can safely leave that to the wharves—my few words are to bring before the notice of members the rights of the Australian citizen. I cannot here give the total amount paid by the consumer in Australia for sugar in excess of the world price since control. I have not got it.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: The cost was higher during the war years.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I can safely say this. The figures are taken from the department. From 1925 to 1945 Australians paid no less a sum than £120,000,000 for home-consumed sugar in excess of the amount they would have paid for the same article just outside Australia.

Mr. Cross: Who wrote that speech?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The member for Canning did not. That is not the whole story. Here I would like to answer the member for Geraldton. The amount did include five years when sugar on the world's parity was almost the same price as our Australian sugar, or may be, higher. In 20 years we paid out £120,000,000, so that that interjection hardly helps because it reduces the years from 20 to 15. Nor is that the whole story of sugar. The board is highly paid. I think the last Premier, or last ex-Premier, of Queensland retired from his Premiership to accept a position on the Sugar Board at £1,500 a year for a fixed number of years. Further, as many members are aware, large numbers of Europeans come to work

in the canefields—or did so before the war—and returned to their country, principally Italy, with a good cheque in their pockets. How they managed it I do not know. Moreover, the land which is licensed to grow sugar has a valuation of probably £200 an acre; the same class of land alongside in some instances can be had for 10s. an acre. Why? Members can think it out for themselves, but I would like them to remember the reason.

My opinion is that a small board controls the power to restrict or expand sugar-growing. The board has recently declared that owing to increasing world production of sugar at a price much less than our production and to the small growth of the Australian population—that is, the people who pay the cost—it would be unwise to license further acres for canegrowing. It is obvious, of course, that if more sugar were produced the loss would be added to the price of sugar which the Australian now pays. The board realises that to raise this already inflated price would waken the sleeping Australian and therefore it decides to limit the production of sugar, thus increasing the number of men out of employment in this country. Again, should we endeavour to grow beet sugar, which I think we could do in many parts of Australia, as I believe the climate would be suitable for it, the growers would of course compete with the cane monopoly. I venture to say that any enterprising growers of beet sugar would soon be out of business. I would like to read a few words from a book that has been sponsored by 150 of the greatest people—economists, professors, and others—in England. The reason I want to read this extract is to show that those people do not believe in monopolies or boards. They say—

We are consequently of the opinion that it would not be in the public interest to confer on the generality of industries the power to constitute themselves monopolies. Exactly what constitutes a monopoly is not easy to define, but for the purposes of this discussion we can single out three monopoly powers. The first is the power to impose on the constituent firms of an industry a limitation or restriction of the volume of their production or sales. The second is to prescribe minimum prices below which sales may not be made. The third is the power to limit or prohibit new entrants to the industry. . . . There is no economic justification for even a moderate restriction of production if it is to be applied to industry

in general. We cannot consume more by producing a great deal less or a little bit less. We can only consume more by producing more. In order to defend the community against any danger of a widespread policy of restriction, we come back to the proposition that restrictive monopoly, whether moderate or excessive, can only be justified as an exception.

Mr. Fox: The member for West Perth please take notice!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I have referred to the amount paid out on sugar. Let me now speak of butter. The price of butter is kept at a high level in Australia so that a certain quantity can be sold abroad at world prices. That is common knowledge. However, with butter, we do not compete with coolies or black labour, but with Danes and Norwegians and Swedes, and others from the Baltic States, and even Russia. Perhaps my friends will not like my saying this, but our butter has never been as good in quality as the Danish.

Mr. Cross: I have never heard you say one good word for Western Australia in your life.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I am speaking from the point of view of the country in which I lived for many years. Our butter has never been as good in quality as the Danish, and it has often been mixed by English importers with the Danish product, so that it could secure a good market. England, which had built up reciprocal trade with her continental neighbours, fared badly in switching to Australia for considerable purchases of butter. Britain had no natural assets apart from coal and had to depend on the sale of manufactured goods in exchange for much of her neighbours' products. When those countries protested, as they did, against decreased butter exports to Britain—the protests came mostly from Denmark—in order that there might be an increase in Australian imports, Empire preference silenced the foreign critics. Britain was the world's largest importer of foodstuffs, and northern countries could not afford to offend Britain and so they accepted the situation. Now America has taken a firm stand against Empire preference and we may find it more difficult to compete in the world's markets.

Britain will find it harder under the Bretton Woods Agreement, which means that in 1947 Britain will scrap the monetary controls which now require countries selling goods to England to spend their earnings on British products. Access to markets will be given to the United States, in the sterling area, which includes the British Empire with the exception of Canada and Newfoundland and Egypt and the Middle East, and I think about 18 other countries in which Britain also has a two-way trade. Countries which were commercially tied to Britain accounted for 55 per cent. of the world imports, and nearly half of the world's exports. So members will see that Britain did sacrifice in signing the Bretton Woods Agreement a good deal of this trade, really in order to win the war. She was forced to accept the agreement. Before the war Britain did not depend on us for trade so much as we depended on Britain. She was by far our largest customer.

To continue my argument, the amount paid in the difference between the export and local price of butter by the Australian consumer from 1926 to 1946 is roughly £50,000,000. I am saying roughly, because I went to the department and secured the figures, but it would have taken a long time to obtain guaranteed figures. That is to say, that amount has been paid for the 20 years in excess of what we would have paid if we had bought the same butter outside Australia. There again, there were five years of war in which world parity was high, and the number of years in which this money was paid could be estimated at 15.

The Premier: You think it would have been a good thing for Australia not to develop our industries by subsidies?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I think so.

The Premier: You think it would have been?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I do.

The Premier: There would not have been much Sussex or Murray-Wellington!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Definitely subsidies lead to nationalisation.

The Premier: I would like to hear a speech by the member for Murray-Wellington on this subject.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I would not mind listening either. In addition to this,

from 1932 to 1945 no less than £81,000,000 has been paid in subsidies for the relief of primary producers. This does not include the basic wage refund and many other subsidies on industry on which the primary producers depended.

The Premier: I think the main trouble with subsidies is that they are transferred to land values. Apart from that they have been a great stimulus to Australian production.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: As I said at the beginning, if we made the land fit for the migrant instead of using subsidies, and then brought people here, that would be a better way to populate Australia. In 1944 we produced less butter than in any one year during the preceding ten years, but we changed the system of subsidies. All processed milk or other products with butterfat content were included in the subsidy which was paid irrespective of quantity.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: We had the worst drought in history in 1944.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I wish to show that a monopoly in butter can smash any allied industry notwithstanding its usefulness to the public. A few years ago we had a local firm producing margarine. It was excellent for cooking, it was cheap, and incidentally it could be manufactured with all the vitamins necessary for health. Being cheap, it was not used sparingly. It was also proved during a debate on margarine that imported articles were not necessary for its production. There was a perfectly good law against selling margarine as butter, which was passed 53 years ago and adequately protected the dairy farmer. But it was not sufficient for the butter monopolists. Margarine had to be squashed at any price, and therefore this House passed a Bill that limited the production of margarine to an infinitesimal amount, thereby penalising the poorer consumer and taking from the children a perfectly good fat that would have been valuable during the war.

I come now to the slaughter of our dairy cattle. This is also due to muddled control, and will go down in history as one of the greatest crimes of muddled control. Many of our dairy farm labourers were called up for war service—not to go to a war zone, but to swell the Service bureaucracy which

starved the farmers of labour and the Fighting Services—our own men and those of Britain—of a necessary food. Today Australia has lost no less than 554,190 dairy milking cows, over 100,000 calves and many heifers. It will take Australia five years to get back to the pre-war level. I therefore again emphasise the fact that it is not the restriction of industries that serves the community but their extension. I now come to the matter of eggs. We have produced more eggs this year than last but they have been almost unprocurable by the ordinary consumer, except on a black market which is very extensive. I realise that some eggs have gone to Britain and Europe, but not in sufficient quantities to warrant our children and young mothers being without eggs as they have been.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: They have a quota.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I have said before in the House that although a man and wife and two children might have a quota of nine eggs they would not be likely to get the nine unless they had a good retail account with the grocer. I know of young people who were without eggs, and have been almost entirely so throughout the winter. The Controller dictates that all eggs must be sent to a depot, and they must be sent, not by the farmers but by a collector. This position is due to a Bill that we passed last session. This licensed collector is a Government nominee and has the right to decide when the eggs are to be collected. He may be too busy to collect them while they are still fresh. No doubt if complaints are loud enough the service will be enlarged by the appointment of a supervisor over the collector and then another supervisor over the supervisor. As hours of labour are reduced—and they will be—and wages are increased to meet the cost of living—as they will be—so eggs will increase in price and the vicious circle of wages and costs chasing each other will continue.

A Press report of the 21st June last states that the newly formed egg control would be responsible for the stabilisation and maintenance of the highest possible egg price on a uniform basis throughout Australia, and that the control would be enabled to eliminate price cutting and the inter-State dumping of surpluses. Now, where do the surpluses go? They simply

go into egg pulp, or on the black market. If inter-State dumping is not to be allowed surely it is wrong to allow eggs from the north to be sent to the south, because the north is as far distant from the south as are the Eastern States from Western Australia. The consumer has no rights in regard to eggs. He must either pay or become a rogue. When the Collie strike interfered with the electricity thousands of dozens of eggs went bad in cold storage. Those that survived this devil's kitchen were candled and sold to the public as fresh eggs. I can here tell the Minister that the stench from the egg pulping plant was so great as to be a disgrace to Perth. Had there been no Egg Board the grower would have sold his eggs direct. Refrigeration would not have been necessary.

The Minister for Education: But there was not an Egg Board.

The Minister for Lands: You are thinking of the Onion Board.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: All I know is that I was there and saw the eggs.

The Minister for Education: But there was no Egg Board.

The Premier: You are thinking of the member for Claremont's board for the roosters.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Well, even if there was no egg board there was egg control; they had to send their eggs in to be candled.

The Minister for Education: There was no board obliging them to do that.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The eggs had to be candled and if they had not to be sent there the grower would have sold them direct, and refrigeration would not have mattered. In addition the community would have benefited by securing cheaper and fresher eggs. We all know that since we have had this egg control, eggs have been 3d. a dozen dearer, and now that we have this collector they will be dearer still. The member for Pingelly asked if Mr. Baron Hay was on this board and the Minister, when replying, said that he was not and I have to take the Minister's word. But he did not tell us that Mr. Baron Hay goes to nearly every meeting. What he does there I do not know. The Minister told us of the enormous amount of money

—almost £250,000—that the board had accumulated during its short life. What right has it to acquire money that should belong to the consumer through cheaper eggs? I do not want to weary the House but I wish to tell members that the same muddling has applied to milk. There is a board which is composed of a few men, the majority of whom are commercially interested. These people have the right to zone, to grant licenses, to delicense and to fix quotas. The fact is that the board under the present control can put out of business, at a moment, any person that it wants to.

The Premier: You would oppose the Milk Board's operations.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Yes, unless some women are appointed to it. Owing to the board's regulations thousands of gallons of milk are thrown away annually. I have told the House that repeatedly.

The Premier: We do not believe it.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: No provision is made to deal with the milk in a glut period, and there must be glut periods if a producer has to work on a quota during the lean period. In many cases it does not pay the producer to cart his surplus milk to a depot where he will receive 9d. or 10d. a gallon because the costs of cartage, plus labour, may be more than he would receive.

Mr. McLarty: Say it on the Milk Bill.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I will not; I will say it now! Therefore, a producer in the glut period may not have a license to sell his surplus milk in the metropolitan area, which may be outside his zone. Further, a vendor may wish to bring his milk long distances in an approved tanker, which is hygienic, but may not be able to obtain permission to do so because he would be in competition with existing transport—the railways. Therefore the city must have milk that is 50 or 70 hours old.

The Premier: That is not right.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I know of one vendor in the metropolitan area who has had a tanker for 18 months, but cannot get a license to use it on the roads.

The Premier: But the milk would not be 50 to 70 hours old under present conditions.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The milk is at least 50 hours old, and I can take the Minister to many of the depots, where they will tell him that that is the truth.

The Premier: I do not think it is true, nevertheless.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I have often told the House that there are few communities where the children are as undernourished as they are in Perth. We drink less milk than in any other State, because the parents cannot afford it. With five in the family it would cost 16s. 4d. per week for milk at the rate of a pint each per day.

The Minister for Education: In one suburb over half of 600 children were above normal size.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: As to size and weight, many of them are sub-normal.

The Minister for Lands: They were born in your Government's time.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I can take the Minister to see children whose condition would make him feel ashamed. Another thing to which I object is the brown bottles in which milk is sold. The milk may have been pasteurised, but it is dirty and one cannot see the dirt through the bottles. A wise Government would have concentrated on cleaning up the herds—many parents are afraid to give the milk to their children—rather than have wasted its substance in subsidies. I have quoted Professor Harvey Sutton repeatedly, and members may have seen recently, in the "Daily News," a paragraph which said that no less than 50 per cent. of the recruits for the Navy were turned down because of malformation of their bones, considered by the doctors to have been due to insufficient nourishment when they were young.

Bread zoning has been accepted by consumers because of the war, but it has been farcical. It may surprise members to know that if I obeyed the law I would not be allowed to cut slices of bread and sell them, with soup, to children in schools outside Subiaco. The bakers in Subiaco serve Nedlands and the bakers of West Perth serve Subiaco. If one does not like the bread one is getting one cannot change to another baker.

The Minister for Lands: The Master Bakers' Association decided that.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Coming now to apples and pears, thousands of tons of those fruits have rotted on the ground, owing to the control, and orchardists have been unperturbed, because they have received a subsidy.

Mr. J. Hegney: What about the price of pears last year?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Orchardists were not allowed to give their fruit away when it could not be exported, and about £4,000,000 was paid by the public in subsidies through the Apple and Pear Board. Millions of apples were dug into the ground, and the price of apples went much higher than it was before the control. Apples that used to be 2d. or 3d. per lb. before the control are and have been during the control 5d. and 7d. per lb. In many instances today the grower cannot get cases. A new case costs 1s. 4d., but a second-hand case in excellent condition can be got from any grocer for 3d. I now come to the textile industry. A subsidy is given so that the price of imported suit lengths should compare favourably with the Australian article, and not inconvenience the man who prefers imported goods.

The Minister for Lands: My tailor quoted me 25 guineas for a suit for next week.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The compulsory restriction of wheatgrowing in Western Australia was, in my opinion, a sign of control madness. It costs the Government £500,000 at a time when the world is starving for wheat. To guarantee a fixed price and to expect the difference between the world price and the fixed price to remain for more than a few years in favour of our farmers is wishful thinking. I have given the example of sugar, produced abroad, increasing to a price at which we cannot compete, and the same will probably soon apply to wheat. We will have the enormous granaries of Russia with which to compete. After the last war Russia dumped wheat throughout the world. No doubt we have a tariff to prevent the dumping of outside wheat in Australia. The price is in favour of the farmer at present, and may not be so again until the next war, but he is not allowed to take advantage of it. They say it will be settled in five years, but I think the farmer will be settled also; he may be paid in inflated currency. Our note issue has more than doubled since 1942 and it

has been said by the Government Statistician that, owing to difficulties in relation to fertilisers, machinery and labour, the wheat-growers may be unable to reach full production for 1946-47.

Mr. Cross: Have you nothing to say about State politics in your speech?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: When the Government revises the scheme in three years, as it is supposed to do, I wonder whether the farmers can trust it to do anything but add more controls. Mr. Teasdale said that an assault has been made on the principle that the produce of the farm belongs unquestionably to the farmer.

The Minister for Lands: Most of it belongs to the banks.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: One would agree with Mr. Teasdale if the farmers had not accepted all sorts of subsidies. If one listened to the Canberra broadcasts one found that almost every Labour speaker was glad to approve of boards of control and stabilisation, especially for wheat, because they distinctly inferred it would lead to nationalisation. I am afraid the litigation will be extensive because, when the Bill becomes an Act, many farms may change hands and it would be difficult to adjust the proportions between the good seasons and bad seasons, and if a farmer dies his estate cannot be finalised for five years. I do not think there is any need for the so-called stabilisation. In reply to the Premier, if the hardships of the farmer are due to an act of Nature, such as a drought or flood, an insurance system should be instituted and paid by the State to meet the difficulty. The farmer must realise that the community is no more dependent upon him than he is on the community, not only for the goods that he sells, but for the labour which produces them. If the farmer adheres to Mr. Teasdale's principle—

Mr. J. Hegney: The farmers' representatives will not like listening to that.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: If the farmer adheres to Mr. Teasdale's principle that the product of the farm belongs to the farmer, he should stand on his own feet. If the farmer took his legitimate profits when prices were high, and restricted sowing when prices were low, the laws of supply and demand would operate.

The Minister for Education: Do you think we should increase the freight on super and take away the subsidy now being paid?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I have been advised by my farmer friends to disregard that interjection. Now I come to potatoes. Today, good, bad or indifferent potatoes are packed in one bag and sold by the producer. Grading of potatoes I believe, is not compulsory. An allowance is made for dirt in the bag, but very often the dirt is pounds more than the allowance made and the purchaser does not know of this until he has bought the sack. Before wartime, under what is called orderly marketing, which the State now proposes to extend, buyers knew the good packers and conscientious growers and were prepared to pay a good price to such men. Now the good and the bad growers stand an equal chance and therefore the standard of potatoes today is very much lower.

The licensing of potato-growers' crops has led to favouritism and corruption. I know of a case where the license of a returned soldier was recently cancelled. His property is adjacent to that of a member of this Parliament, but so indignant were the sons—also returned soldiers—of that member that they wrote to the board protesting. The license was still refused by the board, and then these young men offered to relinquish a like area of potato land which had been licensed to them if the other soldier's license was restored. The exchange was permitted, but this means that production is being deliberately prohibited. Why should a license be given and then taken away and then given again? The man was evidently satisfactory as a grower or else the license would not have been returned. Does this mean that another and more favoured man gets the privilege, or does it mean other forms of corruption?

The Minister for Education: That is a lot of nonsense.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I know of many cases where £5 or £50 can undo these locked gates to production, not only in relation to potatoes but also every form of production. Potatoes have been at a fixed price during the war, but if any consumer believes that that has been the true price, he is misled, because a subsidy of no less

than £2,700,000 was paid last year to the potato-growers, and it was paid by the consumers. Since the ceiling price fixed for some vegetables has been lifted, seasonal vegetables and fruits have been cheaper, while unseasonal lines have been much dearer. That is as it should be.

I could continue by dealing with onion boards, soya beans boards, flax boards, meat control, where the Minister has decided to have the right of veto on the board's decisions, and various other things, but I have said sufficient to show where Australia is drifting. Mr. Scully has definitely stated that when the Government grants a subsidy, it takes an interest in the land of that particular farmer, or whatever it is that is being subsidised. We were the first country to attempt to socialise. We instituted control of butter and sugar; we bought a line of ships for £8,000,000 and sold them for £2,000,000.

The Minister for Lands: Who sold them?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: We could not compete with private enterprise. We started fish shops and butchers' shops, which were filthy with flies and putrid. We started workers' homes, and when the worker changed his address, the houses were left empty and derelict. But the Devil never lets go. We started again, but this time worked through private enterprise, giving subsidies and promising stabilisation. To a certain extent the scheme has worked, but at a tremendous cost to the people.

The Premier: Would you move a motion to abolish the subsidies to the primary industries?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: After I have finished my speech, I intend to go home.

The Premier: But later in the session?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I will think about it. The scheme has worked to one end and that is absolute control. The cost of subsidies during the year 1944-45 was approximately £28,165,000 equal to 4s. in the pound to the individual taxpayer. Dairying took £7,500,000, wheat £3,120,000, apples and pears £725,000, potatoes £2,750,000. Primary producers also reaped benefit from subsidies paid as follows:—superphosphate, £2,750,000; nitrate of soda, £270,000; jute, £1,000,000; stock feeders share in a subsidy



of £800,000 for fodder; wholemilk, £1,000,000; other subsidies grouped with no specific details, £5,000,000.

The Minister for Education: I have an idea that you asked for a subsidy for your free milk scheme.

[*Mr. Rodoreda took the Chair.*]

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: The cost of recouping employers for a rise in the basic wage, which increase they were not permitted to pass on the consumers, was £1,000,000, and a further £2,250,000 was paid as a subsidy of 1s. 2d. per pound on tea. The 4s. in the pound of our subsidy taxation does not include the millions I have quoted as paid by the people on butter and sugar when paying the retail price or other indirect taxation. Without a financial investigation, it would be impossible to arrive at correct figures on subsidies brought about by Government interference and control. Officials inform me that figures have been so juggled and muddled that we can only obtain a mere outline of the truth of our real debts. Although subsidies to keep down the cost of living for 1945-46 represented one-fifth of our income tax, the tax for those subsidies for 1946-47 will increase from £28,165,000 to £33,000,000. This will mean an extra 9d. in the pound on our income tax so that next year we will pay almost one-quarter of our income tax in subsidies tax.

The Premier: The amount granted to the dairying industry, £8,000,000, seems large.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Subsidies and grants are given with one hand and taken away through the medium of taxation with the other hand, a taxation under which even the poorest worker or pensioner pays in increased prices, which must continue to increase if we are to compete on a world's market where internal currencies and hours of labour are unequal. When these subsidies and grants reach saturation point, which they will do, the next generation will have to bear the burden and they, like many other people today who are becoming wise to this false economy, will cease work. Citizens will revolt against providing salaries for boards of control and a policing bureaucracy of parasites who do not produce but live upon the work of others. The consum-

ing public will revolt against the cost of living. There will be only one way out, and that is nationalisation and control of all means of production. When this takes place regimentation of labour is the natural corollary to make nationalisation work. Men will be called upon to labour where the Government dictates. When I was last in Germany, in 1935, a girl student who wanted a university education had to work on a farm under a farmer for 2d. a day for six months before she could qualify to go to the university. Germany, Russia, Italy and Japan built up their war equipment on the very method of finance which we are adopting today, selling goods abroad under legitimate cost, securing labour by disciplinary means and subsidising industry with inflated money so that they might carry on.

The fact is that if we continue as we are going a soulless, ruthless communism will march on to victory through our so-called democracy, which will have made the battle easy through evolution rather than revolution, through many control-boards and subsidies. Our Commonwealth Government is not blind, neither is the State Government. They know where the system is leading. In my opinion it is a deliberate attack upon democracy. Many of our lads died, and many will suffer for the rest of their lives, for what they considered freedom. But the proposed questions on the referendum paper, Nos. 2 and 3, which are founded upon Fascist and Communist principles, will deny us the freedom for which those lads fought, and doom our next generation to serfdom.

**MR. WILLMOTT** (Sussex) [8.32]: I wish to say a few words on the Speech.

Mr. Cross: Tell us whether you agree with the member for Subiaco.

Mr. WILLMOTT: First, I desire to support the previous speakers in the condolences extended by them to Sir James and Lady Mitchell in their very sad bereavement. The first paragraph of the Speech with which I wish to deal is as follows:—

Western Australia has the capacity to produce vast quantities of the food which the world so urgently needs. By increasing production we can make a substantial contribution to relieving the starvation and misery which confront millions of our fellow men. The

Government is endeavouring to promote the maximum production of food in the shortest possible time.

That is what I think the Government is not doing. The position, as I see it, is that not only the State Government but the Commonwealth Government seems to be holding up production. I quite agree that we can increase our production; but the Government's method at the present time has the effect of reducing it. The Government is not trying to settle our lands. Many of our returned soldiers are trying to secure land at present, but they are not meeting with success. When I return to my electorate at the week-end, returned soldier after returned soldier comes and tells me, "I have applied for such and such a block. Why cannot I get it?" I then go to the Lands Department and receive the general reply that the Commonwealth seems to be holding the matter up. We have the land and surely to goodness we can settle our returned boys on it. It is our job to do so.

Why wait for full assistance from the Commonwealth Government? That Government seems to be holding up this State, so far as I can see. Nor are the returned soldiers alone in their complaints. Other settlers are endeavouring to improve and enlarge their properties. I know of one such settler who has about 100 acres and who is trying to secure an extra 30 acres adjoining it. I have been working on this case now for 18 months. When I interview the authorities I am told, "We have not an inspector to inspect the land; we have not a surveyor to survey it." Why is that so? Men are being released from the Army and surely many of them must be looking for this kind of work. Surely we can put on extra men!

The Minister for Lands: I will put on all the surveyors you can turn up for me.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I know we are short of surveyors. Is the position with respect to them the same as it is with our veterinary surgeons, who are leaving for the Eastern States to get better salaries?

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Why have we not got surveyors?

The Minister for Lands: Because they are working their lives out surveying land for soldier settlement.

Mr. WILLMOTT: They certainly are not surveying land in my electorate, where a big area has been marked off for soldier settlement.

The Minister for Lands: Who marked it off?

Mr. WILLMOTT: It has not been surveyed. I am glad to note that the Forests Department has now started a sleeper mill on that area and is cutting some of the timber on it. Beyond that nothing seems to be done to try to settle our soldiers in that area. I hope the Government will do all it possibly can to expedite settlement. I wish to point out to the Minister for Agriculture, although he may already have been informed of it, that we shall in the next two or three years be facing a very serious position if something is not done to reduce the number of heifers being sent away from the South-West for vealers. In the last month, an average of 100 to 200 heifers and steers per week have left the South-West. Approximately 40 per cent. of the number are heifers.

The Minister for Education: Are they of good quality?

Mr. WILLMOTT: They all come from grade herds in the district belonging to settlers who are making a living out of dairying. The argument is that those settlers are getting a better price for the heifers and steers as vealers. It is up to the Government to pay a subsidy, notwithstanding what we have heard about subsidies, to those farmers to enable them to keep the heifers. I feel quite certain that in the next 18 months or two years, when the farms are ready for our returned men, dairy stock will not be available for them. The same thing will happen to beef. We shall have no beef left in the South-West with all these poddies being sent away. A truckload of them leaves the South-West once a week. The truck is a double-decker and holds approximately 100 head. Sometimes there are two trucks per week. The first lot consisted of 3½ trucks, carrying about 350 head of calves.

The Minister for Education: Are you sure they are going for beef? We bought 500 the other day.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I am pleased to hear it. I did not think the Government bought them from our district. I know a lot were bought last year, 600 odd, which were sent to Wokalup. When speaking to the Address-

in-reply last session I told the Government how pleased I was that it was getting dairy stock ready for our returned men when they came to settle on the land. It is all first-class stuff. Now a lot of first-class stuff is being slaughtered, and I hope the Minister for Agriculture will look into the point and see whether the figures I have given are anywhere near the mark. I think he will find they are. If it is happening, I suggest that the Government pay a subsidy to those farmers to enable them to keep their heifers. What the farmers are getting for the vealers can easily be found out. They say they are getting a better price for them than if they reared them for another six or seven months and sold them as young heifers for dairy cattle.

The Premier: We might subsidise them from the subsidy we take off butterfat, as suggested by the member for Subiaco.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Everybody is not in favour of that.

Mr. McDonald: When everybody subsidises everybody else we will all be happy; and we are getting towards that.

Mr. WILLMOTT: The matter has been giving me grave concern recently. I have spoken to many farmers who have been sending vealers away—not only heifers but steers. There will be nothing left but cull cows if this continues and I hope the Minister for Agriculture will go into the matter. One paragraph in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech states that—

One of the most acute and difficult war-caused problems facing the Government is the grave housing shortage.

We are all aware of that. But it appears to me that every effort is not being made to build more houses. The war has been over for some time but the position is getting worse, if anything. I have been to the Workers' Homes Board in an endeavour to obtain permits for unfortunate people who have no roof over their heads. I know one man who was away on service and he and his wife and daughter have only a two-roomed shack and the roof is leaking badly. He could not get a permit. That has been the position for eight months. I am glad to say that he has been put on priority No. 1, though goodness knows what that means. I am not too sure. The Minister for Education told me the other day that the area school at Margaret River was to be classed

as a priority No. 1. He said, when addressing one of the schools, that an area school would be built some time next year.

The Minister for Education: I did not say it would be; I said I hoped it would be.

Mr. WILLMOTT: That is worse still. If that is the case, I am going to chase my shelter sheds for Forest Grove! I have been trying to get shelter sheds for 60 children attending the Forest Grove school but the Minister for Education would not agree to that. To a certain extent I am with him, because he promised that there would be an area school in the South-West at Margaret River. The necessary land has been bought, but unless that building is started very shortly we shall need shelter sheds for the children at Forest Grove. We have been experiencing great trouble at the Busselton school. At present a whole class is being taught in one of the rooms at the Council Chambers because there is no accommodation at the school itself. The reason is the establishment of the Domestic Science centre which took over the manual training building, and one of the classes had to go to a room in the Council Chambers. That is wrong. Before I left yesterday morning, a whole class was marching from the school to the Council Chambers and all the children were carrying something. It does not seem right to me to see children, in a civilised country like this, carrying gear down the street; and I appeal to the Minister for Education to try to do something. I was at the department this morning and it was pointed out to me that the Principal Architect was drawing plans. But when is the work going to be done?

Mr. J. Hegney: How many children attend the Busselton School?

Mr. WILLMOTT: About 230! Members will know that we have buses bringing children from smaller schools into the main school at Busselton. But the roads are in a shocking condition after the heavy winter. The local road board does not seem to be able to keep the roads in proper repair. I notice that the member for Murray-Wellington had a question on the notice paper today dealing with the same thing, and I am going to ask the Minister for Education to take the matter up with the

Main Roads Department in an endeavour to improve the roads over which the school buses are travelling.

The Minister for Education: Is that quite fair? Buses have been operating in that district for years—not school buses, but other buses—and yet as soon as we provide a school bus there is a request for a subsidy for roads.

Mr. WILLMOTT: There is a difference between carting cream over the roads in Busselton and carting children. For children the roads should be in perfect condition and if the local governing bodies cannot keep the roads in perfect condition the Government should assist them.

Mr. Styants: Subsidise them!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Sussex will address the Chair.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I am trying to. The road boards are improving their machinery so that they can provide better roads. Certainly the roads over which these children travel should be in good order. I understand that only last week one bus could not go to a certain centre to pick up children with the result that for a week or 10 days 12 youngsters were unable to attend school. I believe that other arrangements have been made now. I admit that we have had a very heavy winter and that is why the roads are in such a bad condition; but it is only right that some assistance should be given to these local governing bodies to enable them to put the roads in better shape. I was speaking about land settlement and the Speech mentions that approximately 300 men are employed in the preparation of farms for the War Service Land Settlement Scheme. The main dairy farm project includes 225 farms, and allotment is expected to commence at an early date.

*[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]*

Mr. J. Hegney: That is only part of it.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I hope it is! If this is to be the whole issue, where will our settlement be? There will be none at all. The Minister for Lands has supplied a decent sized bulldozer to my corner of the South-West and it is doing a good job. I

only wish it had been there earlier. We still need many more men there if we are to get this land cleared in anything like time. As things are going now, I cannot visualise any settlement starting under three years; that is apart from settlement on the old group settlement holdings that have been vacant for some time and which have been cleaned up and re-seeded. But even so, it will be another 12 months before settlers can go on to those properties because, I understand, under the agreement with the Commonwealth, people are not allowed to go on to those properties until they are productive. While I agree with that I think that settlers could be put on them in a small way as otherwise we will not get the land settled for a long time.

Another question I wish to raise is that of tourists. I am given to understand—and I know it is true—that tenders are being called for a bus service from Bunbury to Cave House for the tourist traffic. I wish the Minister for Railways and Transport was present because that is definitely wrong. What we really want is a fast train from Bunbury to Busselton. That would overcome the existing difficulties. It is wrong to put on a bus to cater for the tourist traffic from Bunbury to Cave House, and I understand that the tenders called deal purely with the tourist traffic. Any ordinary civilian, or resident of Busselton, has to travel in the train all the way, whereas the others can leave the train at Bunbury and go by fast bus to Cave House. That is wrong and I do not think that the Minister realises what is happening. I hope he will look into the matter. Why not have just a bus service from Busselton to Cave House? I am not running down Bunbury which is part of the South-West and is entitled to its rights.

Mr. Styants: They are only 45lb. rails from Boyanup to Busselton.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I was going to say to the Minister for Railways that a far better proposition would be to improve the rail track than to inaugurate a bus service from Bunbury to Cave House purely for tourist traffic. From Boyanup to Busselton it is only a light gauge railway and the trains are not allowed to do fast speeds. There is a fast train service from Busselton to Flinders Bay on Saturdays. That is quite a good train, but once it gets to Margaret

River it cannot travel fast because the rails are very light between Margaret River and Flinders Bay. A better proposition than this bus service would be for the Government to renew the rails from Boyanup south. We have a fast service now, on one day a week, to Nannup.

I recently travelled from Perth to Nannup and we could have run ahead of schedule. At certain times we actually were ahead of schedule, but then we had to pull up for quite a while. At one station we waited for about 20 minutes and when I asked why I was told that it was because we were ahead of time. When we arrived at Nannup I reckoned up the times and came to the conclusion that, providing the rails were all right, another three-quarters of an hour could be cut off from the time table. The Government should try to improve these rails. I just want to mention the water schemes for the lower wheat belt areas. In the South-West we have districts where we can collect water, and if it is possible to send it up into the lower wheat belt areas we should do so. We have in those areas good land which only needs water. If we could get only sufficient water there for the civilians and the stock, it would be a great benefit and would, I feel certain, be a payable proposition for the whole State.

On motion by Mr. Telfer, debate adjourned.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

### *Balancing of State's 1945-46 Budget.*

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gasecoyne): With your permission, Sir, I would like to make the following statement:—Late this afternoon I received a telegram, despatched from Canberra, which I think will interest the House as it is of vital importance to Western Australia. The telegram is as follows:—

Cabinet today approved payment under section 6 States Grant (Income Tax Reimbursement) Act 1912 amount recommended by Grants Commission in respect of your State, namely £912,559 (Stop) Arrangements being made for early payment. (Signed) Prime Minister.

I thought it appropriate to make the announcement in this Chamber on that matter which is so important to Western Australia.

As has been mentioned in the House, the claim was made, by this State, to the Grants Commission, acting under Section 6 of the Taxation Reimbursement Act. What it means is that that sum will balance the budget of last year for Western Australia without any loan borrowings, and therefore without a very lengthy charge on the taxpayers of the State. I thought the matter of sufficient importance to ask privilege to make the statement.

*House adjourned at 9 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Wednesday, 7th August, 1946.*

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

## QUESTION.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

#### *As to Plural Voting at Elections.*

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary:

As regards plural voting at Legislative Council elections, will the Minister inform the House as to the number of electors who have more than one vote, and the number of such votes, and for which provinces?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

To obtain the information requested would entail an exhaustive search by two clerks of the whole of the State electoral index, containing approximately 380,000 cards, and it is estimated would take from 10 to 14 days.

In addition, the Electoral Department staff is full engaged on preparatory work on the Legislative Assembly rolls, and to make