

people advertise but have not got the goods; but that seems a funny way of spending money. I think the House is probably tired of listening to me, and I am tired of talking to the House.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: You have not mentioned ships.

Mr. BERRY: In that respect I wish to congratulate the Government on the effort that has been put forward and on what has been achieved. I think 10 out of 14 vessels have already been built and have gone away. Most pleasing to me is the fact that I have met several people who have told me that these little ships made at Fremantle have done most excellent work in the Solomon Islands. That is the finest tribute that could be paid to the Premier and his Cabinet. These people are quite convinced that the ships are worth-while. We, in our carping criticism—to use the phrase of the Leader of the Opposition—say they cost too much. They probably did; but I suggest that everything costs too much in Australia, and when it comes to a question of competition with other countries for the trade of which I have so often spoken here with countries not so very far away from us, we will have to look to that point.

I suggest that the bombing and devastation taking place in the Far East has probably denuded the whole of that part of the world of junks and small wooden ships. What is wrong with our coming in on that trade? We are producing little ships at the Causeway—as the member for Victoria Park said just now—and I recently saw the amazing sight of a wooden vessel being towed through the streets on a trailer. I should imagine that vessel was 15 or 20 tons. I know there is a sale for that type of boat in the Far East, and there will be a greater need for these vessels there because of the devastation which has taken place. I understand that already India has made inquiries about our wooden boats fitted with power engines. That industry can be developed and go northward from here. I trust that with regard to the next two ships that are being built we shall tell the Army we are sorry but that we want them for the North-West; though I should imagine that two vessels for that portion of the State would be a mere flea-bite.

On motion by Mr. Styants, debate adjourned.

## COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

### *Council's Message.*

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

*House adjourned at 8.47 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Thursday, 9th August, 1945.*

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

### QUESTION.

#### COLLIE COAL.

##### *As to Gasification.*

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS (for Hon. H. Seddon) asked the Chief Secretary:

1, What did the analyses of the gases obtained in the gasification of Collie Coal disclose as to the percentage of the various components—(a) for the rich gas; (b) for the low gas?

2, By whom were the analyses made?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

	%
1, (a) Carbon dioxide .. ..	3.9
Oxygen .. ..	0.9
Unsaturated compounds .. ..	0.1
Carbon monoxide .. ..	22.9
Methane .. ..	4.0
Hydrogen .. ..	11.2
Nitrogen (by difference) .. ..	57.0
(b) Carbon dioxide .. ..	2.0
Oxygen .. ..	1.1
Unsaturated compounds .. ..	not determined
Carbon monoxide .. ..	41.5
Methane .. ..	4.2
Hydrogen .. ..	35.8
Nitrogen (by difference) .. ..	15.5

2, Government Mineralogist, Analyst and Chemist.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.***Seventh Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. A. L. LOTON** (South-East) [4.35]: I would first like to refer to the necessity for the rehabilitation of the rural industry. No section of the people has suffered more during the war than the agricultural community. In the early years of the war farmers, their sons and skilled farm workers were enlisted into the Forces regardless of the food production that would be necessary in the years to follow. Then the drift citywards began. City life had an appeal with its better working hours, big wages and amenities that many country people had not heard of. The drift continued. The proposed award for rural workers will have a detrimental effect on the whole industry. In the past employer and employee have, in many cases, worked in the closest harmony year after year. If the new award is enforced we will find that the employee will simply work his award hours per week, and then finish.

In both the pastoral and farming industries very much of the work is of a seasonal nature so that the regular employment of workers will cease. Men will be employed mainly for the rush periods. Some means will have to be devised to find employment for these men during the off seasons. I cannot see any other way out of it because of the high rates imposed. We have, during the war, gained some idea of what high rates mean, and of what the effect of the Harvester Award will be. It is impossible for the industry to pay such rates, and we shall go from bad to worse. When Japan entered the war Nauru Island soon came under its domination, and Australia's position as a producer of foodstuffs was seriously threatened. Superphosphate is the lifeblood of the industry in this State. I cannot understand why, when the Pacific campaign was started, one of the first moves was not to re-take Nauru Island. I do not claim to be a war strategist, but I cannot understand why that island was not re-taken. Instead of that, we have been importing phosphatic rock from Africa over longer sea lanes, and it is a rock of poorer quality.

As we hope to settle a large number of returned men on the land it will be necessary for some of the amenities of the city

to be brought within reach of the country people. Adequate water supplies, electricity and telephone facilities should be available to every country dweller. That can be done and, I think, it will be done before very long. We have proposals to spend huge sums of money on the unification of railways and a big water scheme from Collie. That money might be utilised to better advantage by making the country more attractive before starting on those schemes. We must have population before we can hope to make a success of any of these ventures. With population, success will naturally follow. Western Australia seems to be lagging behind South Australia in its preparations for land settlement. Recently in our neighbouring State the Government acquired 24,000 acres in Eyre's Peninsula and has plans for the development of 275,000 acres on Kangaroo Island and 45,000 acres in the south-eastern portion of the State. In South Australia the scheme seems to be well under way, but I am still awaiting details of land settlement proposals in this State. The other day a question was asked in this House to ascertain whether the papers relating to that matter could be laid on the Table. Perhaps after the next Premiers' Conference we shall be able to hear something definite.

If it is our desire to trade with foreign countries and with our sister Dominions it will be necessary for us to supply them with raw materials. This portion of the Commonwealth is a producer of raw materials. We have the space and the climate, although, unfortunately, in many parts we have not the necessary water supplies. In a year such as the present, with its heavy rainfall, huge quantities could be stored. We have heard of the great productivity of the North-West, and I refer in particular to the Carnarvon district. I believe the productive capacity of the northern parts of this State is tremendous. Materials are available there in unlimited quantities, and I am sure that if we go about it in the right way we shall witness great progress in that respect. We must not be selfish in our methods and we cannot afford to say to other countries that we will supply certain products only if they supply others that we require. We must make raw materials available to them.

During the course of his speech on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply Mr. Thomson spoke about educational requirements, and I endorse all that he said. In the rehabilitation of our rural areas education will play a very prominent part. The young men who are returning from oversea in order to go on the land will be particularly interested in ascertaining what educational facilities will be available. I noticed from a report in the Press the other day that at the next Premiers' Conference the Commonwealth Government is to be asked for a grant of £10,000,000 for the provision of educational facilities in the various States. I trust that Western Australia will be given a liberal share in the allocation of those funds and that any money so obtained will not jeopardise the vote provided by the State Government for educational purposes. We certainly must have more high schools with boarding facilities as part and parcel of the institution. We must have larger primary schools and the provision of buses to convey the children to and from school daily. The establishment of domestic science and manual training centres is also necessary. Most decidedly, if we can provide millions in time of war for the purposes of destruction, we can find millions in peacetime to educate the people. Today the cry of the country districts is: "Educate or perish."

**HON. C. B. WILLIAMS** (South) [4.44]: I had no intention of speaking at this stage of the debate, but it seems that members are in no hurry to participate. I take great pleasure in the knowledge that a Labour Government has been elected to power in Great Britain or, should I say, in England. After all, it is unfortunately not Great Britain in these days. That, however, is no fault of the descendants of the people of England—or Great Britain as it formerly was. We have seen how the people in various parts of the British Empire rallied to the banner—in Australia, Canada, South Africa and the various Dependencies. The same applied to America. As a matter of fact, we are all descendants, more or less, from the British race, and it was certainly America that came to our assistance in the period of our greatest danger.

The Prime Minister of England at the time, Mr. Churchill, made a definite statement on that point. I read the report in "The West Australian," which does not throw many bouquets at the Labour Party. However, that paper published a report in which the Prime Minister was credited with the statement that for the moment Australia had to be forgotten until the bigger undertakings in Europe were cleared up, after which Britain would come to the aid of the Commonwealth. That was to be done after the war in Europe had been concluded. Thank goodness, the Prime Minister of Australia at the time did not wait for that to occur, but turned to America and said, "We want assistance at once." We were rendered that assistance immediately. It is hard for me to say it, but it is true. After all, Great Britain could not carry the burden of all the fighting in Europe and elsewhere as well. It does not matter who were the politicians responsible for the state of affairs that developed. The fact remains that we secured assistance from America, and I care not who claims otherwise.

Americans themselves are more or less descendants of the British race and, at any rate, they speak the British language. They may cut across words, and their vernacular is sharper than our own. The fact remains that we can understand them just as we can understand the person who is born in the north of Queensland. The war has definitely gone in our favour and this may be due largely to the fact that the American people are so versatile. They seem to be a peculiar breed in some respects, but they certainly have it in their favour that where there is a gully to be traversed it is bridged very quickly. Australia can learn much from America in that respect. Here if we want the price fixed for a pair of boots the proposal has to go to Canberra, and perhaps the price may be fixed in a matter of weeks or of months. The Americans certainly cut right across the red tape idea.

Australia has been very free from any threat of war and in Western Australia particularly we have always had enough to eat and have not had to go short of many articles, except that we could not spend so much money on a good suit of clothes and so forth. If I may digress from my main

theme for a moment, I would like to endorse what Mr. E. H. H. Hall said yesterday regarding the report submitted by the House Committee. To you, Mr. President, as chairman of the House Committee, I convey my appreciation of the report. I have been a member for over 17 years and the one presented was the first I have ever seen. It was very illuminating. It goes to show that, notwithstanding there is a shortage of tea, we all know where to go in order to get it. We go to Parliament House. The number of meals served has been increased, as has the quantity of chocolates sold.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: And bottles!

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I am not supposed to reply to interjections, but that is quite true. That reminds me that if members of this Chamber had traded more with the House before the war, our quota of bottles would have been much greater. I have not the report of the House Committee before me, but I understand—I speak subject to correction—that the consumption of tea has increased by 5,000 per cent. It is pleasing to know that we are showing some profit. The new House Committee members which has been appointed will hold office for only 12 months. I would not wish to see them in office longer if they did not do their job properly. We should do the right thing in that case and elect a new committee. I am not referring to you, Sir, because you happen always to be a member of the committee, whether we like it or not. You are the chairman of the committee and we have no opportunity to oust you. We hope you will do the work in the proper spirit. I see no reason why the House Committee should pay £300 into the Treasury of the State.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: That was what was paid into the Treasury, according to the balance sheet.

Hon. W. J. Mann: It will help the surplus.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Interjections throw me off my balance. Then, what about the wonderful carpet we bought when the Duke of Gloucester arrived in Western Australia; we spent something like £500 on it. We—not the taxpayer—paid that sum. That is what hurts! The taxpayer thinks

we are a wicked lot; he thinks we get free meals, free beer, free tea. We get nothing of the sort. We even provide furniture for Parliament House; the members of Parliament provide it. We provide a nice room for strangers at the other end of the building, but I ask what amenities have we at this end of Parliament House? If I occupy the strangers' room to write letters, other people must keep out. We certainly have a beer garden, a real beer garden. In my own electorate, we have beer gardens at Coolgardie, Boulder and Kalgoorlie. We should have a photograph taken of the beer garden in this building to show what the Legislative Council of this State gets in the way of amenities from the House Committee. We have to sit in a draughty corridor and perhaps catch pneumonia. No wonder the elderly members of the House have been passing away lately. On a wet cold day such as today that is where we must entertain our friends. I hope before long that position of affairs will be remedied.

As far as the Government is concerned, I am definitely glad a change has been made in the Ministry. After all, youth must have its way. I do not mean to be in any way offensive to the elderly members of Parliament; but Hon. P. Collier, a previous Labour Leader, was 64 or 65 years old when he resigned from office, and we still have members in the Ministry nearly 70 years old. I am glad to see that the new Leader of the Party has moved the members of the Government around a little. I am pleased that he paid the compliment to the newly elected Minister, Mr. Marshall, of placing him in charge of two of the most important portfolios. Mr. Marshall was a miner. He represents a mining constituency and is conversant with the mining industry. The ex-Minister for Mines worked in the mines some 45 or 46 years ago; but mining today is very different from what it was 46 years ago. I am pleased that Mr. Marshall has been appointed to the position because, as I said, he thoroughly understands the industry and is familiar with mining localities.

One member of the Labour Party, Hon. E. M. Heenan, when moving the adoption of the Address-in-reply said—and in doing so he was following in the footsteps of other loud-voiced people—that the mining industry could absorb 20,000 men at any time. That is sheer nonsense. There is a report in

today's issue of "The West Australian" of a deputation that waited on the Prime Minister in order to secure priorities for the mining industry. I will state the reason in a moment or two, but for any member of the Labour Party, or for any Goldfields member, to say that the industry will absorb 20,000 men immediately after the war is ridiculous and he is not fit to hold his position. In round figures, some 15,000 men were employed in the industry before the war. Wiluna is closing down; the second largest mining field in the State is definitely closing down. How many men were employed there? What was the population of Wiluna? The new Minister for Mines knows. A mine has closed down in Coolgardie; it will never be opened again, although at present men are getting a sustenance allowance there. The Lancefield and Gladiator mines have closed down and will not re-open.

What good is 4s. 6d. an ounce for gold? How much will it help a mining company to continue operations? When the ex-Minister for Mines talks as he does, it is time he was out of his job, and any member who backs him up should also be out of his job. One thing to be said for the mining industry is that it will be an avenue for work and will yield good returns, but where is the work to be had? It will first be necessary to return to the mines the machinery which has been taken away from them. We should not forget that the mine owners have been paid a subsidy for keeping their mines out of production, in the same way as the wheat farmer was paid a subsidy for areas which he did not crop. In my electorate, Mt. Palmer is closed down; I understand four or five men are engaged there and the company is getting the subsidy, but the mine will never be opened again. It is finished.

I know that Mr. Marshall, being a direct representative of the mining industry, will understand mining conditions and what may or may not happen in a mining township; but if any member of this Government or any responsible person in the State says that the mining industry will take another 10,000 men the moment the war is over, he is telling definite lies. It is said that Wiluna will be shifted, holus bolus, to the north end of Kalgoorlie, but how long will that take? The labour necessary to do it quickly is not available and it will be at least five years before those concerned can get the north end of Kal-

goorlie developed to a stage where it will be possible to say whether it will be profitable to go on with it. I do not doubt that it will be successful, but I question whether this country ever employed more than 20,000 men in the mines. I am open to correction on that, but mining today is as different from mining 45 or 48 years ago as is the harvesting of wheat with a scythe from the methods used today.

The Lake View and Star mine in its prime did not employ more than 200 men on the surface, yet it took over other companies employing 2,500 to 2,600 men. One can walk up to the Chaffers plant now and see hardly any men about. The same thing applies to the Horseshoe, the Lake View and other mines. I think the mining methods of today will be improved when the war is over. Today the industry will not be able to employ more than 50 per cent. of the number of men who were engaged 45 years ago. There is no need to do so, owing to the great improvements in the plant, machines and electrical equipment. I disagree with the ex-Minister when he says that there will be 20,000 men employed in the mines. Mr. Heenan got out of it by saying he had heard that stated, but he should not have said it, because he was born and reared on the Goldfields. He should not have said that, any more than should Mr. Panton, who left mining 45 or 47 years ago.

We should not be given that sort of bulldozing stuff. Western Australia is going to have a hard struggle to decide where to put its men when the war finishes, and hostilities may terminate at any time now. I agree that a great many men will go back to mining, but I do not think the A.W.U. would agree to the suggestion by the Chamber of Mines that men should be forced to go out-back and work in the mines. They said that mining men should be released from the Army, as appears in "The West Australian" today, and that they were going to ask that they be forced to go out-back to the mines. The trade unions were represented at that conference by Mr. Oliver, secretary of the A.W.U. at Boulder, and by Mr. Moir.

That brings me back to another argument of the ex-Minister for Mines. A conference was held in Kalgoorlie about a month ago, but not a single member of Parlia-

ment was invited to it. My friend, Mr. W. R. Hall, by virtue of his office as chairman of the Kalgoorlie Road Board, was there, though the Minister for Mines objected to his being present until Mr. Hall's position was pointed out. As I say, members of Parliament did not receive invitations to attend, and those of us who know mining from A to Z, and who have been in the forefront of the industrial movement, were absolutely ignored. Members can see in today's issue of "The West Australian" where the same conference agreed on the setting up of a rehabilitation committee. I sent "The Kalgoorlie Miner" a wire, which cost me 8s., but that paper refused to publish it, and probably saved me a lot of trouble, though what my telegram contained was the truth, namely, that there was not one man at that conference, outside the representatives of the Chamber of Mines and my friend, Mr. Hall, who knew anything at all about mining.

The officers of the Mines Department are all clerks, and I doubt whether they would know a mine from a vineyard. The men who really do know mining work in this State are those who are engaged at the School of Mines. They are the experts. If members look at the salary list for Western Australia they will see how much those men are paid. We have men in the Mines Department whom I have known since they were lads, and, since we got rid of Mr. Calanchini, who, incidentally, I claim was guilty of graft in association with de Bernales and others, they have still followed in his footsteps regarding the departmental policy to be pursued. The men who do the real work with regard to mining in this country are the men at the School of Mines at Kalgoorlie, but they are all subject to men down here, who are only clerks. That has been the case not only under this Government but under former Governments.

The men at the School of Mines have done the work which made mining possible in Wiluna for a start, and that probably includes all the low-grade shows in this country. Some of them have passed on now, and to them I pay my respects—to Mr. Clarke, and others—but they were under the same clerks in the Mines Department. There is only one man, to my knowledge, in the Mines Department, who knows anything about mining, and his knowledge is limited. I will not mention his

name, but members have read his history lately. I am glad that the new Premier has had the commonsense to appoint as Minister for Mines somebody who knows something about mining. Incidentally, I voted for him, and I expect him to do the job. I know he will do it. Unfortunately, he has also had placed on his shoulders the burden of the Department of Railways, but if members read his speech in today's issue of "The West Australian," I think they will agree that he was very frank and very much to the point, when he said that if mining went out in this country, our railways to Laverton and to Wiluna would go. It must be remembered that while the mines are working they are, at the same time, helping the pastoralists of this country.

I hope Mr. Marshall will be backed up in what he said by the solid opinion of people on the Goldfields. We are pleased to have, as Minister for Mines, a man who knows the difficulties of mining and the economy of this State. I do not bother about economies at all, but I know that we have been spending £1,000,000 or so per day on war, and that we can go on spending it. There would be very little in Western Australia without mining, as mining keeps the farmers going. In Mr. Roche's electorate, and down that way, people have a wonderful market for their produce in Kalgoorlie. We get that produce up from Denmark and I think there is a special truck run to carry it. I think there are some super-optimists with regard to mining. I will say nothing about the mines that may be found, but I agree that prospectors should be subsidised. They should be kept at work, just as a share-farmer is kept at work. A share-farmer is not paid wages, but is given an interest. We do not want wages men to do this sort of work, because in that way you get only the poorest sort of service.

Referring to the question answered yesterday by the Chief Secretary in relation to water supplies, that is where we are handicapped. In recent years I have lived in the metropolitan area where I get 45,000 gallons of water annually for £7. I will not endeavour to compute what that water supply would have cost per year at Norseman, but I think it would be about £40. The Chief Secretary answered honestly regarding the price of water and

the cost of supplying it. I am not in a position, even now, to argue with him that the Mundaring Weir supplies water all along the track, but if anybody in the farming areas wishes to link up with the pipeline he can do so. In some places the Government charges a compulsory rating, but what a wonderful thing it is to have the water available! That water scheme goes 375 miles to Kalgoorlie, and from Coolgardie it goes another 100 miles south along the railway which runs from Coolgardie to Esperance, a distance of roughly 275 miles.

With Wiluna declining, Norseman will be the second mining town in Western Australia, and it is therefore one of the towns of which I can speak with some optimism, as it will go ahead. Coming now to the price which we have to pay for water, I agree that, as the result of pressure and deputations, the present Minister for Works, has reduced the price of water at Norseman. I do not want to fall out with my farming friends, but as the railways carry superphosphate nearly at a loss and wheat at a loss—

Hon. H. L. Roche: What loss do they make on wheat?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I have to go by reports in the Press and by information given in Parliament. They are never contradicted by the farmers except that they want it done cheaper.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Do you say they are never satisfied?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: They never will be satisfied. When I think of all the pioneering work the farmers have done, and the activities they are engaged in now, I can but express my appreciation of their efforts. A resident of the metropolitan area gets an allowance of 45,000 gallons of water for a rate of £7, and then pays only 1s. per 1,000 excess provided the account is paid before November, though a charge of only 1s. 3d. per 1,000 for excess is made if the consumer wishes to refrain a little longer from paying. The people of Norseman, however, have to pay a very high price for water; I believe it is about 9s. per 1,000. Do not members think that the residents of Norseman are entitled to some consideration? Norseman is a nice town situated roughly 500 miles by rail from Perth, but the residents get no concessions when they want to come to the city.

True, many of our farmers are isolated and are doing a wonderful job for the State. The miners at Norseman, also, are doing a wonderful job. There is no better soil in the State than that at Norseman. It will grow anything, but the rainfall is lacking. The people there could grow wonderful vegetables if only they had water at a reasonable cost. They would not then have to obtain their supplies of vegetables from Denmark. The member for Albany objects to wheat from that zone being railed to Bunbury. Why should the people of Norseman have to use vegetables grown at Denmark? It is a scandal.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Vegetables grow naturally there.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Yes, Denmark has a rainfall of 30 or 40 inches. If we had a rainfall of 14 inches, Denmark could go broke so far as Norseman was concerned. Consequently, I cannot see why we should be blamed if we are socialistic or parochial. I do not know why the people of the Goldfields, who keep the Labour Party in power, cannot get more consideration than they are receiving at present. We hear a lot of talk about socialism in connection with the Federal elections, and even in this House. I have made up my mind about that. I have already said that this will be my last term in Parliament. If I last till the end of the term, I shall be 58 years of age and shall then finish, for reasons known to members. However, I am getting away from the point, which is that the farmer is enjoying an exceptionally good deal as compared with the man in the outback country.

We pay farmers compensation for not growing wheat; we pay them compensation when they get burnt out, and we pay them compensation when they get flooded out. When the Lancefield mine closed down—and the same can be said of the Triton—no compensation was paid to the poor miners who had homes there and had to leave them, but we will be expecting them to return to those parts when the war is over. The man that really pioneers this State is the man that goes out back, the man that goes out where he has to carry a water bag with him. I am aware that this had to be done, too, in some of the farming districts. However, when members suggest

that farmers are on a bad wicket, I cannot agree with them.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What were you going to tell us about socialism?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I am coming to that now. The miners are a body of men far removed from socialism. I entered the industry as a lad in Bendigo and worked in a mine there for five years. The miners are the men who have made trade unionism possible. I notice that Mr. Mann is looking at me in surprise. I admit that the typographical union was one of the first and is the only union, apart from the organisations of the gold and coal-miners, that showed any courage. We miners pioneered the fortnight's annual holiday on full pay in this State, thanks to the good judgment of the late Mr. Justice Burnside, and then other unions obtained the benefit.

Now let me speak about socialism. Representatives of the combined building trades union held a meeting about a couple of months ago. When employment in that industry is slack, there is nothing to prevent the employees from taking work in a mine, but there is no chance of a miner engaging in the building trade. Yet the miner has as much or more ability and brains than has the builder. The miner has to work in dungeons 2,000 or 3,000 feet below the surface in semi-darkness, while employees in the building trade merely work to plans that some other fellow has prepared for them. These men in the building trade resolved that it was very wrong for a working man in Perth to get a home for less than £1,200. They are opposed to cheap homes for working men. I wish I could remember the motto over the Trades Hall in Perth, but for the moment it has slipped my memory. They are opposed to a working man having a home costing £400 or £500.

When I was a young fellow on the Goldfields, we had to put up a camp to live in. If we could get a block of land, we put up a one-roomed hession camp and whitewashed it inside and out, and, as conditions improved, we added to it. That was our home and a good home it was, too. These skilled trade unionists in the building trade, however, will not allow more than one apprentice to four or five journeymen to learn their trades, and consequently, in times of scarcity like the present, we have Italians building houses for us. Italians also go into the

country and work for the farmers at £1 a week, and they also enter the mining industry and knock 33 per cent. off their lives. I concede that capable men working in the farming industry can demand what pay they like. I have always fought for my class and for the workers who sent me to Parliament when I had no desire to come here. If this is unionists' idea of socialism, I am convinced they are wrong. Apparently trade unionists are going to hold their fellows to a species of blackmail and insist upon their having a home worth £1,200 or £1,500, whereas I could build a house tomorrow for £400 or £500 and would be out of debt in at most six or eight years' time. Those people, however, want the working man to pay about 5s. a week off the purchase price of the house and to continue paying for the next 30 or 40 years. If that is socialism or trade unionism, then I know nothing about it, and what is more I do not want to know anything about it.

I do know that there are some uncouth hogs amongst the tramway employees. The Labour Party lost the Victoria Park seat because the tramway men refused to treat women having children with even decent civility. I suppose that 95 per cent. of the people who use the trams—apart from members of Parliament who get free rides—are working men, and the tramway men—and to some extent the railway men—must realise that these utilities are not run for their own benefit. So I say that a lot of people who think as I do and who believe in socialism will probably have to alter their ideas. I do not want to see the Russian ideal adopted; there are a lot of Russian idealists amongst the tramway men. It is really an insult to the people that so little improvement has been made on the trams to cater for the needs of the women. A couple of extra hooks were put on the trams to take prams, but I have seen women wait while five, six or seven trams passed them. That is wrong.

In Kalgoorlie and Boulder we have capitalistic trams, but passengers receive more consideration there. When the front of a Kalgoorlie tram is filled with prams and go-carts, the driver closes it and, at the next stop, the back of the tram may be filled with prams. Yet that is a capitalistic concern. The tramway men in Perth make the excuse that it would be dangerous to put prams on



the front of a car. If that is so, should not the same danger exist in Kalgoorlie? Obviously it should. The Fremantle trams show a profit, which is remarkable, seeing that they are only small conveyances. I say definitely that the tramway men and railway men must show more consideration for patrons. I have seen people go to the stationmaster at Mt. Lawley for a ticket and, because he was so uncouth, they got on the train without a ticket and then, on arriving at the destination and offering to pay their fare, were charged double. If anyone would tell me that that is socialism, then I do not know what socialism is. The railway officers blamed me for something that was turned down by Parliament a session or two ago.

I state definitely that there is in this country no greater Labour man in his beliefs than I. That is not vanity or conceit. I have been at it since I was 15 years of age. But I say that if the building trades union of this country is going to tell fellow workers that they cannot have a home for anything under £1,200, there will be an utter dissolution of the working class movement. The basic wage in Perth is approximately £5 per week. How is a worker on £5 a week going to buy a £1,200 home? Where will he get the deposit for it or the money for a block of land? If he were charged no interest at all, but only the ordinary rent, it would take him 24 years to pay for the house. By that time his children would be married; and if he died, and his widow survived him, she would have to find out from some trustee company how much she had. After all the suffering endured, and after rearing a family, she would have to find out what was her equity.

About the combined building trades unions in Perth I make no bones, or about the tramway men either. I repeat that Labour lost the last Victorian Park by-election because of the uncouthness of the tramway men to the public generally. The tramway men submitted one of their number for election. I say nothing against him; I would not know him if I saw him; but there is as much chance of a tramway man being elected to Parliament as there is of my working for Mr. Roche on his farm—and that is none! I have expressed myself in no uncertain way. Unfortunately, we get the blame. Before I finish I want to congratulate the Council. I also want to say something else. Perhaps

I ought not to say it. You, Sir, may take it the wrong way. What I have in mind is that we did something yesterday that was democratic, something that the other House has not done, and something that I hope will occur again: We elected our committees. I am not interested in serving on committees. My health would not stand my being appointed even to the Library Committee, which never meets; but I do think that all members of this House should have an opportunity to learn the routine of Parliament by serving on committees.

There is something else. I suppose I had better say it here; it is useless saying it outside if I do not say it in this Chamber. I think that you, Sir, made a mistake in appointing the same men as temporary Chairmen of Committees. Like me, Mr. Seddon is not a healthy man; Mr. Fraser is in the Air Force; and Mr. Hamersley is not a young man. Mr. Cornell, I am sorry to say, is very ill. If all the temporary Chairmen of Committees are away, who is to take their place? Mr. Loton or somebody else ought to be broken in to be Chairman of Committees. Anybody should be able to take your place, Sir, at a moment's notice. Every member of this House should be able to fit in to every job in this House. I have always thought that, and I always shall. It is not a question of who gets the emoluments. The point is that we are all elected by the people, and we are said to be reviewers of the legislation of this State.

To the credit of the Council it can be said that nothing goes through unless it is very thoroughly reviewed; and it is not passed at all if the Council does not like it! My point is that we should have somebody who can take your place, Sir, when you go electioneering. We should not have the same men in the temporary appointments. I quite agree that the President and the Chairman of Committees must occupy those offices for the period allotted, but I contend that everyone should be able to fit into any job. This is claimed to be a non-Party House, though, as I have said before, I do not agree with that. But there could be no harm in putting Mr. Parker or Mr. Baxter in the Chair. Certainly it is wrong to elect the same men to the committees all the time. Let us all learn the work. I have been here 17 years. I was at one time president of one of the biggest unions in the State; and for many years it was often necessary

to fight one's way out. Up to date that has not been necessary in this Chamber. Yet apparently I am not capable of taking the Chair in the Legislative Council, and of presiding over the nice-mannered gentlemen in this House!

Hon. W. J. Mann: We did not know your capabilities.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I did not know my own until I came here. In conclusion, I wish members well. I have not spoken for a long time, but if I am here after the next election I will have another go. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. L. B. Bolton, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.30 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 9th August, 1945.*

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### STATE LOAN INDEBTEDNESS.

*As to Average Rate of Interest.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Premier:

1, What is the present average rate of interest paid on the loan indebtedness of the State Government?

2, What was the average rate of interest payable in respect of the Agricultural Bank and the transferred activities controlled by the Commissioners of that Bank in respect of loan money for which the Bank was responsible as at the 30th day of June, 1945?

The PREMIER replied:

- 1, £3 16s. 8d.%, plus exchange 10s. 3d.
- Total, £4 6s. 11d.%
- 2, £4 7s. 0d.%

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

*As to Proposed Charges in South-West.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Works:

1, Has any estimate been arrived at as to the charges that will be made for electric current for domestic power and industrial purposes, respectively, if and when the South-West Electric Power Scheme becomes operative?

2, If so, what are the estimated charges?

3, Will they be uniform, or will they vary in respect of different districts?

4, If so, what are the estimated variations?

The MINISTER replied:

1, 2, 3 and 4, All of these matters are receiving consideration and will be decided prior to the necessary legislation being introduced during the current session of Parliament.

#### STATE SCHOOLS.

*As to Providing Modern Desks.*

Mr. LESLIE asked the Minister for Education:

1, How many State schools are not yet equipped with modern dual desks?

2, How many of these schools have an enrolment of fourteen scholars and more?

3, Does he concur in the desirability of replacing, as speedily as possible, the existing obsolete furniture, particularly desks and seats, with modern types?

4, Are dual desks now being manufactured at the State Implement Works and, if so, how long, at the present rate of output, will it take to equip all State schools?

5, Have any contracts been placed, or have attempts been made to place contracts for these desks with private manufacturers?

6, If not, why not?

The MINISTER replied:

1, 93.

2, 17.

3, Yes.

4, Dual desks are being manufactured at the State Engineering Works, but the output is restricted by the necessity for the