

# Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 21st August, 1940.

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

## QUESTION—MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT.

### *Payments to Owner-Drivers of Trucks.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Works: 1, Have the amounts paid to owner-drivers of trucks employed by the Main Roads Department been increased this year. If so, when and by what amounts? 2, What are the rates now paid? 3, If these rates show no increase is it intended to make any increase in view of higher prices for petrol, oils, tyres, etc.? 4, Does (a) the present rate or (b) the proposed increased rate provide the basic wage after truck maintenance and depreciation costs have been allowed for?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes; as from 1st January, 1940, increase of 10 per cent. on the hire portion of the payment has been allowed. 2, Various, depending upon truck capacity and location of work. 3, Answered by (1). 4, (a) and (b) Yes.

## QUESTION—LOTTERIES.

### *Approval of Patriotic Raffles.*

Mr. J. HEGNEY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Police: 1, Have the raffles now being conducted in

connection with the Queen Carnival been approved by the Lotteries Commission? 2, If so, why has the approval been limited to some Queens only? 3, If not, what action is being taken by the Police Department to see that the law is observed? 4, Will he explain particularly the raffle of the pony Lubra, the raffle of the Golden Apple by the Press Queen, and the raffle of a radio set by the Economic Queen, and any others known to the police?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3 and 4, An announcement appeared in the Press, indicating that a pony was to be raffled. As this had not been authorised by the Lotteries Commission, those responsible were communicated with and an assurance was given that it would not be proceeded with. This assurance was not observed. Those responsible for the Golden Apple project applied to the Lotteries Commission for permission, but were refused. However, they announced their intention of proceeding. In both cases the police are taking necessary action. Inquiries are being made about the raffle of a radio set.

## QUESTION—ROYAL COMMISSION, PASTORAL INDUSTRY.

Mr. MARSHALL (without notice) asked the Minister for Lands: Can he inform the House of the approximate date when he expects to release the report of the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Fyfe, on the disabilities of the pastoralists of Western Australia?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: The Royal Commissioner has not yet completed his investigation and so far has not presented his report.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. North, leave of absence for one week granted to Mr. Willmott (Sussex) on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by Mr. Tonkin, leave of absence for one week granted to Mr. Raphael (Victoria Park) on the ground of ill-health.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.***Eleventh Day—Conclusion.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**MR. J. HEGNEY** (Middle Swan) [4.37]: I desire to take the opportunity to offer some observations on the Speech of the Lieut.-Governor. Criticism has been levelled at the Speech mainly on the ground that it was very short. Although it was succinct, it indicated that the Government would give attention to necessary measures to assist the Commonwealth efforts to bring the terrible war now raging to a successful conclusion, and do other things requisite to provide for the financial needs as well as the normal requirements of the State.

One matter upon which I wish to compliment the Government and particularly the Premier is the success of the endeavour to secure the expenditure on industrial development in Western Australia of a considerable amount of money raised for Commonwealth defence purposes. Ever since the beginning of the war the Premier has lost no opportunity to make strong representations to Commonwealth Ministers and departments whenever he made contact with them, and also to use the machinery of the State, in order to ensure that as much work as possible for defence purposes would be done here. Only now are his efforts bearing fruit, inasmuch as the Commonwealth proposes to spend a million and a half of money in Western Australia for the manufacture of munitions. The workers at Midland Junction particularly and the trade union movement generally have been responsible for a good deal of propaganda to the end that our man-power should be utilised to produce munitions of war, and that at least a fair proportion of Commonwealth money should be spent in Western Australia. I compliment the Premier upon his persistency and upon his indefatigable efforts to have some of this work done here. The proposal is to erect an annexe to the Midland Junction Workshops with the object of producing those requirements that Western Australian workmanship is capable of undertaking. That will mean much for this State, and instead of all the defence money being expended in the more populous States, Western Australia will share it at least to a small degree. We have not only competent

tradesmen already, but young men who could be trained to do a great deal in this respect. Many skilled fitters and turners who have passed out of the workshops at the age of 65 could also be made use of. Qualified men who have served their time as iron turners have been engaged in selling machinery in the agricultural areas, but because of the difficulties confronting primary industries they have had to cease their activities and are now looking for employment elsewhere. The services of many of those men would also be available. The Technical College is capable of training men for this class of work, and it would be all to the good for Western Australia that it should give them that training.

When the Minister for Lands was speaking the other night I made an interjection with regard to the £15,000 the Commonwealth Government is making available for Technical College activities in this State. Very often when the Commonwealth Government makes money available, a tag is attached to it. The State Government is twitted with not having made full use of the money, whereas it really has nothing to do with its allocation and subsequent expenditure. I understand the £15,000 is not a direct gift from the Commonwealth Government, and that the expenditure must be authorised from Canberra. Even if machinery is purchased for installation at our Technical College, I am told that the machinery itself will still belong to the Commonwealth. I trust, however, that the money will prove to be a direct grant to the State, and will be used to build up the Technical College and equip it as it should be equipped. Money spent in that direction would be well spent. Not only would the Technical College then be able to train men to carry out war services, but when the war is over would prove of untold benefit to the State.

A good deal of criticism has been levelled at the wages system of Australia during the present depression, particularly as it affects this State. The complaint made by members is that, because of the labour conditions obtaining here, we are unable to compete with the Eastern States. That was advanced as criticism of the Labour Government. At election time people said, "What advantage has the Labour Government given the workers of this State?" Now, after the elections, criti-

cism is levelled at the State Government for giving wages and conditions to the workers that are in advance of what appertain in the Eastern States. It is a sad commentary on our wages system to find that the judges of the Federal Arbitration Court, who have spent so many years of their lives dealing with industrial legislation, and in acquiring knowledge about all the industries of Australia, should make the observations they did regarding the system. I bring to the notice of members the remarks of Mr. Justice Beeby on the 12th August, when he was dealing with the wages system. He said—

A vital question on which the judges confessed themselves without clear guidance was "should the basic wage be determined on a minimum needed to keep a family on a reasonable standard or on the amount industry could pay." "The industrial people of this country should share in increased productivity arising from the joint effort of all factors," the Chief Judge declared. "They should share in the form of a higher standard of living, but the thing is to find a measuring rod. Quite frankly, all our wage fixation has been an expedient. We have done the best we can in the circumstances to find a minimum standard for the community. We have no rules to show what share of total production should go in wages, profits and public services. We have to consider the accepted distribution in various countries and get as near to a working basis as we can."

Judge O'Mara said that he was not satisfied that the way to fix the basic wage was to decide the highest industry could afford, instead of ascertaining what was necessary to supply the needs of a family. How could the capacity of industry to pay be discovered.

These observations were made by judges of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court and they constitute a sad commentary on our wages system. Apparently Mr. Justice Beeby and Mr. Justice O'Mara are not satisfied with the system as a means of indicating what should be the normal requirements of a man, his wife and three children, and feel that it does not disclose what industry can afford to pay. In other words, the system is merely an expedient. Australia ought to be able to devise a better system than that, having regard to the need of the worker, his wife and children, and the responsibilities that devolve upon them. Undoubtedly Australian industrial conditions have improved, although certain people contend to the contrary. Recently in the Commonwealth Arbitration Court certain people gave evidence in support of an increase in the basic wage. As some

members may have overlooked that evidence, I propose to tell them what is happening in industry in Australia. Mr. John Lindsay, formerly a lecturer in economics at the Western Australian University and now Director of Labour Research for the Labour Council of New South Wales, said that in the case of 79 key companies having an aggregate capital of £123,000,000, for the year 1938-39 the net profit increased by £3,800,000, or 36.8 per cent compared with 1936.

Mr. Abbott: And they paid 6 per cent. on the capital.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The reserves of these companies increased by £15,200,000, representing an improvement of 40.3 per cent in the total reserves compared with 1936. I have here a statement of profits made by companies during one period of six months of peace and during another period of six months of war. The figures of the nine large companies I have collected all show increases during those two periods. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company increased its profit during that period by £100,000. Australian Consolidated Industries increased its profit from £342,000 to £351,000, an addition of £9,000. Goldsbrough, Mort and Co., Ltd., increased its profit from £120,000 to £201,000, or £81,000 additional. Wunderlich, Ltd., increased its profit from £60,000 to £63,000. Anthony Horderns' profit increased from £108,000 to £111,000. Younghusband Ltd. increased its profit from £28,000 to £42,000. Woolworths (W.A.) Ltd. increased its profit from £24,500 to £32,600, a margin to the good of £8,100. Edward Dunlop Ltd. had an increased profit of £42,000, as against £40,000 for the previous year. The profit made by Woolworths (N.S.W.) Ltd. rose from £271,000 to £272,000. Generally speaking, the dividends of 150 Australian companies were maintained. One need only look at their balance sheets, published in the Press, to become aware of the fact. Even as regards our own State, we know that profits have been maintained. The Swan Brewery Co., West Australian Newspapers Ltd., the Swan Portland Cement Co., and many other companies operating here are shown to have made considerable profits.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: You would not have it otherwise, would you?

Mr. J. HEGNEY: That is what their balance sheets show. In this State the criticism levelled is that because of wages and conditions here it is impossible for industry to pay, or carry on. As a representative of the people I say the most essential need of the community is to provide a wage enabling a man, his wife and children to live in comparative comfort, having regard not only to the needs of the man and his family at the present time but also to his security in the community as a human being. But what do we find as regards the persons who rake off profits from industry throughout Australia? In the Arbitration Court they use all the forces of the law to prevent the workers from sharing in any increased profits made—sharing in such profits by better pay and better conditions. If the directors and managers of industry receive a fair share of the profits for their efforts, then I contend the workers should participate in increased profits. But that is not the rule in industry. The rule is to try to prevent the workers from improving their position, to keep wages down to the lowest minimum. I have here some criticisms offered by the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) and even by the member for North Perth (Mr. Abbott) practically urging that Western Australian standards should be reduced.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: No.

Mr. Abbott: That is incorrect. I would like to see the workers raised from sustenance and put in jobs.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Those two hon. members said that Western Australia should reduce its standards so as to enable the State to compete with South Australia and the East.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That is not so.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I will read for the edification of the member for Subiaco, who possibly does not know what she says in this Chamber, her utterances on the subject. She said—

Our industries have not increased. The reason for this was disclosed in the cessation of operations at the McPhersons factory, Bayswater.

Now listen to this. If I have not interpreted the words of the member for Subiaco aright, I will withdraw.

If our laws and regulations are such that this particular company could not compete against firms in the East, then, seeing that every such factory is needed today, it becomes the bounden duty of the Government to alter those laws and regulations, so that such factories may continue to function.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: You are including—

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The only inference to be drawn from those words of the hon. member is that because of allegedly high wages and good conditions in Western Australia the condition of workers here must be dragged down to the condition of workers in South Australia.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Never!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The hon. member meant that the industrial laws and regulations of this country should be brought down to the South Australian level.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: No!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: In South Australia a National Government has ruled for three years. Out on the election platform, of course these hon. members tell a different tale. They would not attempt to advocate that for the workers from the platform. But within these walls, knowing that very few people read "Hansard," they make suggestions of that nature. Now I come to McPhersons factory at Bayswater, which recently closed down. I remember meeting Mr. Fowler, who was running a factory just on the other side of Bayswater. He desired to interview the Minister for Industrial Development. I arranged with the Minister and the secretary of the department, Mr. Macartney, to visit Mr. Fowler's factory. He was anxious to obtain financial assistance from the department. He stated that competition from McPhersons in Victoria was very keen, making the position extremely difficult for him. Further, he stated that he had not sufficient funds to enable him to carry on. As the Minister for Works mentioned here recently, the Government advanced Mr. Fowler £800 or £900, and Mr. Fowler repaid the amount. But McPhersons of Victoria came here and bought out Mr. Fowler, and then made him their manager. Now they have done what every strong company has done where competition is keen—absorbed the competitor and closed down his business. Thereupon the Government is criticised for not doing anything to maintain Fowlers in existence. The set policy of

McPhersons was to destroy competition in Western Australia.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Why did not the Government take over the factory?

Mr. J. HEGNEY: If the Labour Government of this State took over McPhersons of Bayswater, or anything that came into competition with them, she would be the very first to denounce the Government for entering into business activities. She would flagellate the Government for entering into competition with commercial activities.

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The factory was employing boys, and men too, at reasonably decent wages, having regard to Western Australian standards. Now the plea is advanced that the factory was not able to employ as many boys as it could employ in Victoria. That is the criticism which is levelled at our Labour Government and its activity in trying to establish industries here—that the Western Australian industrial level is not as low as the Victorian level. That is the only inference to be drawn, and that was the tenor of the criticism she indulged in, together with others sitting on the Opposition side of the House. In my opinion, we should do our best to see that the most satisfactory conditions should apply and the highest wages possible paid instead of endeavouring to break down existing conditions and lower present day wage standards. The Government is confronted with difficulty in providing employment for those thrown out of industry. A feature of the present capitalistic system is that when employers have no further use for workers, those men are dismissed, and thereafter they become dependent upon the Government for sustenance.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: And your Government gives them a shilling a day!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: With regard to McPhersons, the contention was advanced that the Workers' Compensation Act was a deterrent to industry and that conditions and wages prescribed by the Arbitration Court had a detrimental effect. Those conditions and wages represent merely the minima applicable to industry. The member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) has never worked in a factory and does not know what the conditions are.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: You do not know much about them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The hon. member does not know what it is to toil and sweat in an industry, and she knows nothing about the importance of conditions. As for critics who urged that the employment of boy labour should be introduced here to a greater extent so that certain industries could compete with those operating in the Eastern States, I trust that our better standards will be maintained, not relaxed. McPhersons set out with the object of absorbing Fowler's undertaking, and succeeded in the task. Possibly we shall find that other industries will be placed in a similar position. We produced excellent jam in this State but because of the dumping proclivities of Jones, the Tasmanian manufacturer, he was able to undersell the local product in our own home market. Does the member for Subiaco urge that the Government, in consequence, should embark upon the manufacture of jam here? The member for Subiaco and many of her colleagues would be the first to denounce such a move.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There would be a general mess if you did take it up.

Mr. Hughes: At any rate, would it not be as well for the Government, when it next advances money under such conditions, to tie the firm up so that it cannot be absorbed?

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Probably so, but we can all be wise after the event.

Mr. Hughes: There is plenty of time left.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Some criticism has been levelled at the Employment Department. While at one stage it may have been possible to influence officers of that department to place this or that man in work, my experience is that those conditions have been altered during the past 18 months. That arose in consequence of the men themselves submitting a proposal to the Minister that the man who had been out of work longest should have the first call upon jobs available. As far as possible, the departmental officers are sharing out the work most fairly and are adhering religiously to that principle. No member can find fault with them in that respect. If one man has been out of work for six weeks and another for a month, the former is given the first preference. Further criticism has been lev-

elled against the Government because of the number of men still out of work, and the member for Subiaco, in the course of her speech said—

We are told there are still over 6,000 unemployed who are dependent upon the Government for relief work and yet Labour takes 25s. from each of those men with the object of bolstering up its political party. It makes my blood boil.

That sort of criticism has done service for many years past. As a matter of fact, many of the workers in receipt of Government relief are not members of the A.W.U. at all. That body has secured awards governing wages and conditions for men on works outside the metropolitan area. But where men are employed in various activities and there are appropriate industrial organisations such as those covering water supply employees, municipal employees and so on, the workers naturally pay certain fees to the unions to which they belong. What are those payments for? The object is, through their membership of the union, to secure industrial protection and also protection from unseen methods. I have had long experience in the trade union movement and still retain my membership. I know that when men are down and out, when they are in difficulties with regard to wages, compensation claims and so on, their union is the only body to which they can turn for aid. I can say without fear of successful contradiction that those industrial organisations have on many occasions been able to assist men to secure justice, to straighten out their difficulties and to make the way clear for them. The payment of 25s. that the member for Subiaco referred to covers the cost of union membership, and any proportion paid to the Australian Labour Party in the form of affiliation fees, would form a very small part of that payment. In any event, no such payment can be made unless the industrial organisation itself has decided upon that course.

The member for Subiaco suggested that members of the Government were subscribing towards Communist affiliations. She dealt with the propaganda leaflet placed in letter boxes throughout Subiaco, and suggested that similar distribution had been made in other districts. I do not know how any member of this Chamber could hold the Government responsible for the distribution of that leaflet or of any other form of

propaganda of such a description. No State Government could be held responsible in the circumstances, yet the member for Subiaco criticised the Government on that score. I have no doubt that the hon. member has since found out all about the leaflet because I saw her in company with a person who could provide her with all the requisite information. She probably now knows who wrote the article and distributed it, and is acquainted with its source. She also suggested that members sitting on the Government side of the House believe in the Karl Marx doctrine of the material conception of history. That charge cannot be levelled against me because I do not believe in that doctrine. There is no doubt that our economic system cannot continue as at present. If there is no improvement in the standards enjoyed by our people and a better social system is not inaugurated, there can be no alternative to Communism. That is what will happen if under democracy, as we know it, the position of the workers is not improved. Democracy must face up to the realities of the situation. If our economic position is such that we have large numbers of unemployed workers and other workers struggling all the time, the only alternative is some form of communism. It will not be fascism.

Mr. Marshall: Absolutely right.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The member for Subiaco ought to read a little more on this subject. She should read about the old-time conditions under which workers laboured and of their exploitation by capitalistic organisations. Our only alternative is to have a strong democracy; and at the present time the only safeguard against communism in Australia is a strong and virile Labour movement.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Your party has been in power for 15 years.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: And a great deal of work remains to be done before we reach our ideal. In Europe and other countries the conditions of the people have become so bad and their exploitation has been so great that perforce they have accepted communism; and they are keen on their propaganda activities. A great deal of what is propounded by the communist party has much sound sense in it. If our democracy fails to function, if the many extravagances existing in our community are not eradi-

cated, if all the Governments of Australia do not join in trying to improve the conditions of our workers—and not only our workers but also our farmers and others—I say the only alternative is communism. A great many people in this State have studied the communistic activities of Russia.

Mr. Mann: You would not support communism, surely!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I tell the member for Beverley (Mr. Mann) that I do not believe in the materialistic concept of history. I am not a communist; but a great many people in this State—among them some of our leading citizens—a few months ago were endeavouring to establish cultural relationships with the U.S.S.R.

Mr. Mann: They were cranks.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Professor Beasley was one of them and Dr. Le Fanu, the Anglican Archbishop, another. Included in the number were other leading citizens. They formed themselves into an organisation—no doubt with honest intentions—to study what was happening in Russia and to establish cultural relationships with that country. The British Government is definitely in difficulties because of the withdrawal of France's help in fighting fascism. At the outbreak of the war, the British Government was doing its utmost to negotiate a treaty with the Russian Government. Unfortunately, it did not succeed, but the Germans succeeded in negotiating an agreement with Russia.

Hon. C. G. Latham: A trade agreement.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Since then the British Government has sent an ambassador to Russia with the object of improving its relationships with that country.

Member: A good Labour man!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: As a matter of fact, he was expelled from the Labour Party in England. The party, not being a supporter of communism, got rid of him, just as the Labour Party in Australia gets rid of any known communist in its movement. Often-times opponents of Labour are only too quick to use such men for their own purposes.

Member: Sir Stafford Cripps was not a communist.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: He was expelled from the Labour Party in England. The member for Subiaco complained about disunity in

the Labour Party. I presume she was alluding to the Federal Labour Party, which she said was hindering the Commonwealth Government in its war activities. The disunity in the Labour Party in Victoria, and particularly in New South Wales, is due to the activities of communists.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That is just what I say.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: They got into the party, which has been trying to expel them. The hon. member suggests that disunity in the Federal Labour Party is preventing a united war effort in the Commonwealth. She need not go further than her own party to realise the disunity existing between that party and the Country Party. We know only too well that the Country Party leader, Mr. Cameron—

Mr. Thorn interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must ask the member for Toodyay to keep order.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: We know only too well that Mr. Cameron can bring the Federal Government to heel. On numerous occasions he has threatened the Prime Minister with resignations; even after the Government has made decisions he has gone behind its back and the Government has had to capitulate. Talk about disunity! There is certainly a great deal of disunity there.

Mr. Mann: You are making a very rambling speech to-night.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Every member of the Labour Council has pledged himself against communism and any other political party, and that is more than is demanded from members of the party of which the member for Subiaco is one. No pledge is required of members of that party. Many business men in this community, men who play an important part in industry, have subscribed to the tenets of the communist party. I know of several.

Mr. Mann: Rot!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The hon. member may say "rot."

Mr. Mann: I am just as conversant with them as you are.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The hon. member knows full well what happened in Holland and other countries owing to the activities of fifth columnists. The hon. member is not aware of what is going on here.

Mr. Mann interjected.

Mr. Marshall: It must be hurting.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: A member of another place urged a reduction in the number of members of Parliament. I think the suggestion a good one. If half Parliament was cut off, it would be all to the good.

Several members interjected.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I know members are interested in the half that should be cut off. The hon. member in question suggested that the number of members of the Legislative Council should be reduced from 30 to 20, and the number of members in this Chamber from 50 to 35. That would be a cumbersome method to adopt. In my opinion there should be one Legislature, one body to enact such legislation as is required. No matter what Government is in power, be it Country Party, National, or communist, it should function in the interests of the people who elected it. It should have the right to put its policy into operation and to be judged by the people. At present we have what is known as the bi-cameral system in Australia. We also have that system in the Federal sphere. The Senate could easily be abolished, because no matter what Government is in power—although the Senate is supposed to be a States House—it represents the party with a majority there. That is fundamental. If a National-Country Party Government has control—as in fact has been the case for some years—the Senate is only an echo of that Government. Again, if the Labour Party is in power in the House of Representatives and has a majority in the Senate, the same thing happens: the Senate is just an echo. It would be of great advantage if the Senate were abolished. In one State the Legislative Council was eliminated and I venture to suggest that the legislation enacted by that Parliament compares more than favourably with that passed by other State Parliaments throughout the Commonwealth. That indicates the desirability of the abolition of the Legislative Council of Western Australia. There is a very limited franchise in connection with the Legislative Council. The result is that thousands of young men who have enlisted with a view to fighting in the interests of the country in any part of the world have no voice in the election of members to that

Chamber. When war service is under consideration, those young men are the first line of defence. They are called upon to defend not only their own interests but the interests of property, which members of another place are supposed to represent. It is high time that Parliament was reconstituted and the other Chamber abolished.

Although the country is in a state of war, I hope the Government will not lose sight of the need for legislation in the interests of the people of this State. One important measure that should be re-introduced is the amendment of the Factories and Shops Act to give protection to women employees between the hours of 12 midnight and 6 a.m. A Bill to make provision of that kind was defeated in another place last session, but such a measure is extremely necessary. The Bill was defeated by people who say they have no party interests, but who do represent the vested interests of this country. In the main they are members of or contributors to the United Australia Party. I hope the Government will re-introduce the Bill for the benefit of women who work in the early hours of the morning. Most members at all events will agree that legislation of that kind will not seriously interfere with industry. It will certainly be all to the good if Parliament can ensure that those young women, the future mothers of our race, are home in their beds between the hours of 12 midnight and 6 o'clock in the morning. The Government should also re-introduce the measure to provide for third-party insurance. An amendment of the Traffic Act along those lines is long overdue.

Shortly we shall be facing a Federal election. I am not a candidate for the Federal election, but I hope the time is not far distant when we shall have a system of child endowment on a Commonwealth basis, and a national insurance scheme providing for unemployment. Such measures are long overdue. It does not appear as though we can expect anything from the Nationalist organisation or the United Australia Party as it is called. Whenever such issues have been raised in the past, that party has appointed Royal Commissions to investigate them, and that has been the end of the matter. I remember that on one occasion what was known



as the Piddington Basic Wage Commission was appointed to determine a decent basic wage for the Commonwealth. Mr. Piddington submitted a report but his figures were considered to be altogether too high for industry to pay. Again, an election was fought on the child endowment issue. For two years a Royal Commission investigated that subject. A minority report was submitted urging that the basic wage be fixed for a man and his wife and that an allowance of 5s. be added for each child. That scheme, however, was shelved. A plan for national insurance was investigated for two years. Experts were brought from the other side of the world to investigate the subject, recommendations were made and legislation based on those recommendations was passed. The legislation, however, was never given effect. Only the other day one of the Commonwealth Ministers, Sir Frederick Stewart, said—

Two years ago the same type of economic adviser persuaded the Commonwealth Government that Australia could not afford to provide £2,000,000 a year to implement national insurance legislation already enacted. Yet in that time we have accepted war commitments approaching £400,000,000 and are still far from a state of financial equilibrium.

Hon. members will recall the criticism throughout Australia in relation to the banking system. It was urged that an amendment should be made to the Commonwealth Bank Act, that the Bank should be made to function in the people's interests and that the private banks should not have so much influence over the Commonwealth Bank. The matter was an issue at the Federal election. Listening to the criticism, the Commonwealth Government once more appointed a Royal Commission, this time to investigate the banking system of Australia. A very representative personnel was chosen and the Commission sat for a long period—almost two years, I think. Every hon. member of this House received a copy of the Commission's report, but from that day to this, notwithstanding the fact that members of the House of Representatives urged that certain action should be taken to implement the Commission's findings, none of the proposals has been given effect. Some Country Party members asked that a mortgage bank be established for the benefit of the agricultural community in order that farmers might have reasonable accommoda-

tion when desired. Nothing, however, has been done in the matter.

When Sir Earle Page was Leader of the Country Party and Commonwealth Treasurer, he said that the Commonwealth Bank Act would be amended. As a matter of fact it was actually amended. A Bill was passed dealing with Commonwealth housing and £10,000,000 was set aside for the building of workers' homes throughout Australia. Not one house, however, has been erected under that scheme. The wheat industry was faced with difficulty, just as it is today. The subject has been a bone of contention in the Commonwealth Parliament for many years. Eventually a Wheat Commission was appointed to investigate that industry and make representations to Parliament with a view to putting the industry on a sound and satisfactory basis. Once again, however, nothing has been done. To my mind the time is ripe for a change of Government in the Federal sphere.

Much criticism has been offered on the subject of finance and once more the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) is raising his perennial motion relating to a reform of the financial system. Members on this side of the House, having the interests of the whole of the community at heart, are constantly endeavouring to secure the best possible conditions for the whole of our people and for our industries, but there is little doubt in my mind that our difficulties must increase because of the huge and ever-growing burden of interest that the country has to bear. The revenue of the State amounts to about £11,000,000 a year and, in addition, we raise other funds by way of loan, but before any social benefits are made available to the people and, indeed, before any of the services are paid for, interest commitments have to be paid to the bondholders. I am not suggesting that our obligations in this direction should be repudiated, but I am pointing out the huge burden that interest charges impose upon our small community. Our interest commitments represent approximately 41 per cent. of our revenue, and the proportion is increasing.

As the member for Perth (Mr. Hughes) stated when discussing the burden of the war debt, Britain's indebtedness incurred for the Napoleonic wars has not yet been met. During the 1914-18 war Australia incurred a war debt of £1,000,000,000, and that in-

debtedness has not been met. The present war has been raging scarcely 12 months and, according to the statement of one of the Federal Ministers, a debt of £400,000,000 has already been incurred by the Commonwealth. If we have to meet the interest payments on that large amount, the question arises as to how long the people will be able to bear the burden. Should we be unable to meet our obligations, we shall be in difficulties, but the ever-growing interest burden means that less money will be available to provide for the needs of the people and build up a Commonwealth of which we might justly be proud.

Mr. Berry: If we continue in the future as we have done in the past, each person in 70 years' time will be asked to pay interest at the rate of £3,700 a year.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The questions of war debts, national debts and monetary reform are of vital importance to the whole of the people of the Commonwealth.

I wish to support the statement made by the member for Toodyay (Mr. Thorn) last evening about the Judge Rutherford organisation. Yesterday a pamphlet was handed to me entitled "Freedom or Romanism?" and I venture to say that anybody who reads it can come to only one conclusion, namely, that it consists of mendacity and scurrility from beginning to end. This vilification of a large section of the community should not be tolerated. The organisation has received some attention from the Commonwealth, but a stop should be put to the circulation of this sort of stuff—vilifying, calumniating and traducing a large section of the community for which there is no foundation in fact. Everybody is entitled to hold his own religious convictions and to practise the religion in which he believes without let or hindrance, but when an organisation distributes such vile stuff, it is time that the State or Commonwealth, in the interests of good government, took action. Quite recently in England a judge dealt with a number of members of the organisation who objected to military service. I am not at present concerned with the justice or otherwise of their objection, but this is the report of the judge's remarks—

"I want to say publicly, with all the force I possess, that there is the gravest doubt in my mind about the bona fides of this organisation and the people it employs." This was the pronouncement of Judge C. J. Frankland,

president of a Conscientious Objectors' Tribunal, held at Manchester last week, after lengthy questioning of two Jehovah's Witnesses who sought unconditional registration as conscientious objectors.

These people are entitled to believe what they like and practise their doctrines, but they have no right to go about pestering other people and distributing matter that can only cause annoyance.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. A. H. Panton—Leederville) [5.37]: While listening to the remarks of some members, the idea occurred to me of appealing to the Premier not to bring down in future an opening Speech that was so short. Seemingly the shorter the Speech, the longer is the debate on the Address-in-reply and the more varied the debate. Naturally there has been a good deal of discussion about the war, especially as to whether the Commonwealth has made preparations for defence as thoroughly as it should have done. My experience over the last 40 years or more has convinced me that whenever there has been a war, there has always been someone in an arm-chair who could win it more easily than could those in charge of operations. I have no intention of criticising the activities of the Commonwealth or anyone else in regard to the war. Although, in this matter, I am probably closer to the Premier and to the Commonwealth Government than are most members of this House, I admit that I am not sufficiently acquainted with what is being done to be in a position to criticise. Much has been said as to what we in this State ought to do. I assure members that quite a lot has been done here. Still, those are matters I do not propose to discuss tonight. Either tomorrow or on Tuesday next, I expect to have an opportunity to deal somewhat with that phase. All I now wish to say on the point is that I consider members ill-advised to criticise this Government or that Government without being fully acquainted with the facts.

I had no intention of intervening in this debate, but you, Mr. Speaker, reminded me when I interjected the other night that interjections were disorderly, and the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) suggested that I should leave the Chamber. Thus I have been dragged into the debate, and for that I am exceedingly sorry. However, the member for Subiaco is responsible for my being

on my feet at the moment. Last Thursday night she dealt with the question of s.p. shops. I have no intention of dealing with that subject beyond saying that the longer I live the more astounded I become at the futility and stupidity of people who try to make money out of backing horses. The hon. member, in the course of her remarks, spoke very definitely—there was no question about the definiteness of her statement—as follows:—

If a complaint is made to the police, they reply that members of Parliament wish the trade to continue. That has been said to me time and again.

That was a very definite statement. She did not accuse the Government or the party, but accused members of this Parliament. There are 80 members of Parliament, including herself, thus leaving 79 to bear the accusation. My interjection was, "What policeman said that?" and her answer was just as definite, "Commissioner Hunter." Those statements and accusations were very severe. I was convinced in my own mind that even if the Commissioner of Police had such a thought he would not be likely to convey it to the hon. member or to anyone else. I stated that I did not propose, as a member of Parliament, to accept that accusation, and that I intended to find out what Commissioner Hunter had to say about it. The Commissioner had read the "West Australian" before I rang him up, as I did first thing the following morning. The Commissioner emphatically denied that he had said anything of the kind. He sent me a copy of the shorthand notes of the deputation introduced by the member for Subiaco to him on the 21st April, 1939. I went carefully through those notes, which disclose that not one word of this matter cropped up. It may be said we can ignore that sort of thing. There is, however, such a record as "Hansard." I am not worrying so much about the Press, because newspapers are probably read to-day and forgotten tomorrow, but "Hansard" can be produced in three months, six months or at any time. The hon. member or anyone else can then say, "This is what was said. No one attempted to deny it, and consequently it must be true." That is the usual practice. I determined either to get confirmation from the Commissioner of Police or to have the statement refuted. The statement appears in "Hansard," in definite terms, and it is

only fair to the Commissioner of Police, irrespective of the attack on members of Parliament, that his denial should also appear in "Hansard." I pointed out that it was not of much use for me to deny the statement on his behalf. He would have no right to come here and deny it. I, therefore, asked him to put in writing what he had said about the matter. I propose to read his minute, so that it will appear in "Hansard" as a denial of the remarks of the member for Subiaco. This is what he said—

With reference to our conversation of even date regarding the assertions made by Mrs. Cardell-Oliver, M.L.A., in the Legislative Assembly on the 15th inst., when speaking on starting-price betting, and the coupling of my name with same, I have to report for your information that on the 21st April, 1939, a deputation, a member of which was Mrs. Cardell-Oliver, M.L.A., waited upon me in connection with the suppression of starting-price betting. A copy of the shorthand notes taken at such deputation is attached.

These notes were returned at the Commissioner's request because the copy was the only one he had.

Before the deputation took place Mrs. Cardell-Oliver came along about five minutes before the other members and informally discussed starting-price betting with me. I drew Mrs. Cardell-Oliver's attention to several of my annual reports in which I had asked Parliament to legislate in regard to the matter, and said that if Parliament desired the evil stamped out it was in the members' hands. Definitely I did not say to Mrs. Cardell-Oliver that the members were behind starting-price betting.

Would you please return the notes of the deputation, as I have not another copy.

That is quite different from what was so definitely put forward by the member for Subiaco. She said that if a complaint was made to the police, they replied that members of Parliament wished the trade to continue. When asked who had made that statement, she replied, "Commissioner Hunter." The minute I have read is signed "D Hunter, Commissioner of Police." At least we shall have the statement of the Commissioner of Police as to what he did say on this subject in the same "Hansard" in which appears the definite statement of the hon. member. The member for Subiaco made many statements. I have no desire to deal drastically with her in any way. This is one of her statements—

For national discord as we have allowed it to be preached with impunity, and for the

activities of the subversive elements, the responsibility rests almost entirely with the Government.

The hon. member read extracts from a circular which she said was unsigned, but when the member for Forrest (Mr. Holman) was speaking, she said it was signed by a communist. Two minutes later she said—

Democracy must fall if those who form democracy become divided by hatreds as the writer of this paper and the Labour Party have preached.

There is no doubt that those two statements, together with the circular that was read, which she eventually admitted had been signed by a communist, constituted an endeavour to link up the Labour Party with Communism. I take exception to that, not as a member of the Government, because I am not worrying about that, but on behalf of the Labour Party, of which I am also a member. The Communist Party is well known for its subversive and disloyal activities. As a member of the Labour Party, I do not propose to be linked up with it. I shall make no apologies for communists. That party has always been disloyal, not only to the Empire and Great Britain but to itself. I do not care whether professors of the University or other people desire to be linked up with Communism, but I declare that the Labour Party does not propose to be linked up with it and never would be so linked. I venture to say that the Communist Party does not like the National Party and has very little love for the Country Party.

Hon. C. G. Latham: None at all.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: But it hates the Labour Party, as Hitler hates England, for the same reason that Hitler hates England. England is standing as the bulwark between Hitler and his domination of the world. Communists have told me that the reason why they hate the Labour Party is that that party stands as a bulwark between them and their ideals of revolution.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That may be true.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: On every occasion, whenever the Communist Party desires to slangwag any particular party or member of any party, I venture to say it will be the Labour Party. Yet we are told by the member for Subiaco that we have set out to link the Labour Party with the Communists. I suggest that she should read something of the history of the Labour

Party. There is no doubt she would if she could link us with the communists, as people endeavoured to do on the occasion of the last war when the Labour Party was accused of disloyalty.

Mr. J. Hegney: That has been done before.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not say that people were successful, but they did their best in making such an accusation. I want to tell the hon. member—I regret that she is not present—a little story.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is it a good one?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, I shall tell members of this Chamber the story. In telling it I feel some diffidence, because I am closely linked up with it. However, it is germane to the argument I am putting up. As an officer of the Labour Party for 40 years, I think I can be taken as a reasonable sample of men in the Labour movement. This is the party which is alleged to be disloyal, subversive, and linked up with Communism. An election is to be held on the 21st day of next month, and the speech of the member for Subiaco was in my opinion a pre-election speech.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You are giving it plenty of advertisement.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will give it a little more.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That will not hurt us.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Now I want to tell my story, which is simple and quite typical of the Labour movement. In 1900 I was president of the Miner's Union, and I rode 175 miles on a bicycle to enlist for the South African war. When that war was over I returned from South Africa and went on with my job as a trade unionist, like all trade unionists trying to assist those in the trade union movement. In 1914 another war broke out, and in 1915 I enlisted once more. The "Sunday Times" on that occasion published my photograph and said it was interesting. That fact shows how Labour men are thought of at times. I then happened to be secretary of a union and vice-president of the Metropolitan Council of the A.L.P. The "Sunday Times" then was a pretty good paper. Beneath my photograph it stated, "He is off to the Front. Would to God we had ten million more like him!" I ask hon. members to note that the "Sunday Times" then wished there

were ten million more like me. In 1920 I was chairman of the disputes committee, and in that capacity was associated with two big strikes. The same Sunday paper came out—I was a member of the Legislative Council then—with my photograph, to which was appended this: "The Hon. A. H. Panton, M.L.C. Should stand for 'Must lead country.'" So in 1915 that journal wanted ten million Pantons and in 1920—because I was fighting again—wanted to get rid of the only Panton there was. That is what we go through in the Labour movement. We have our ups and downs. But I was proud of those photographs and of the reason for which they were published by the "Sunday Times." When I went away in 1915, I left here a wife and two little boys and a little girl. In 1939 this war broke out, and those two little boys are now in the A.I.F. and the little girl's husband is in the Air Force. Therefore as a Labourite I am entitled to say at least that I am 100 per cent. loyal.

The point I wish to make is that to-day there are thousands of men of my age associated with the Labour movement who are in the same position as mine. The member for Middle Swan (Mr. J. Hegney) discussed the Australian Workers' Union. Many sneering remarks have been made about that union. For my part, I am proud of the fact that I have been for nine years, and still am, the president of the union. However, for that war from 1914 to 1918 the A.W.U. is to be credited with the enlistment of 80,000 men. Eighty thousand members of the A.W.U. went to the world war! If the hon. member who thinks so little of the Australian trade union movement, who talks about our subversive attitude and about our being linked up with the Communists, is not afraid of soiling her skirts by going to the Perth Trades Hall, she may look all round the hall and see everywhere honour boards belonging to all the unions, and she may see scores of the names on those honour boards flanked with the unfortunate little cross which indicates that the bearer of the name made the supreme sacrifice for the democracy which he assisted to make and in which he wholeheartedly believed. Yet we find people talking in this way, trying to link up the great Labour movement with the Communist Party, which hates us like

poison. Such persons can have no knowledge whatever of the fundamentals of the Labour movement. They cannot even have taken the trouble to explore any of the Labour literature that has been printed, or to speak with anybody having some knowledge of the Labour movement.

When the member for Subiaco accuses this party and this Government and the Labour movement generally of disloyalty, I am led to wonder whether she has ever read the newspapers. I venture to say there is not a man or a woman in any part of Australia or the British Empire to-day but was thrilled during the last week with the exploits of our airmen all over the English Channel. Would not any man or woman with red blood have been thrilled by such exploits? They are exploits which could not have been achieved but for the trade union movement of Britain and her dominions having made places in civil life for those airmen. The very essence of the war on Britain's part, and the fundamentals of the war in Australia, depend upon the trade union movement and the Labour movement.

Notwithstanding what Mr. Curtin has stated publicly, notwithstanding the assistance he has given to the present Federal Government, notwithstanding that the very first words of his policy speech were that he was prepared, should a Labour Government be returned, to render full co-operation to the British Empire for the successful pursuit of the war, the most unjust allegations are made against Labour. If the Labour movement of the United Kingdom refused to make guns and ammunition, the British Empire would be unable to wage war. What is the use of people standing on the street corners and talking about the Labour movement being disloyal—even subversive? I have been concerned in elections for a number of years, and never at any time—this I can say honestly and conscientiously—have I heard a Labour man in the course of an election campaign, or even at a propaganda meeting, speak as the member for Subiaco did the other night. It was sheer vindictiveness that prompted her to deliver a speech of that type. Why the vindictiveness I do not know. But I want to tell the the member for Subiaco, just as my colleague told her here last night, that there

is not one respectable woman, quite apart from whether she is in high society or in the poorest circumstances, but is entitled to esteem. If the member for Subiaco wants the respect of members of this House—certainly she would not receive much esteem from them—there is only one way to achieve her desire, and that is to play the game, as last night she was told to do.

I regret that I find myself dragged into this debate at all. However, having been brought into it, I take the opportunity to speak my mind. I am aware that only a few weeks ago someone said that I bridled very quickly. I bridle on only one occasion, and that is when an attempt is made to defame my honour. It is the only thing I have got. I have no banking account, and am never likely to have one. But in all other respects throughout my life I have endeavoured to keep my head up so that I may look anyone in the face. When any person attacks this party or the movement with which I am associated, and includes me in the attack, I am going to fight. The other evening the member for Subiaco deliberately made such an attack. She set out deliberately to do it. She was not even led away by interjections to do it, for she had it all there either printed or typed.

Mr. Cross: It was put up for her.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I shall not go so far as to say that. I give the hon. member credit for having made her own speech. However, she had it all typed. I can understand an hon. member being led away by interjections to say something spontaneous and regretting it afterwards. But the member for Subiaco was not in that position.

Mr. Cross: She had it all written out.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: She had it all fixed up and ready, every word of it. She knew exactly what she was doing. The hon. member was not fair, nothing like fair. First she said the pamphlet was unsigned; then she said it was signed by the Communists. Now we find in the "Daily News" this evening that she complains about that paper accepting anonymous letters. She made the definite statement that she had an anonymous communication.

Mr. Hughes: She was not the first member to use an anonymous letter in this House.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not say she was; she will probably not be the last to do so if the hon. member himself is long enough with us. I am not at all surprised about that.

Mr. Hughes: Now, just a moment ago you were saying—

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, I know. I apologise and withdraw the statement I made about the hon. member. I was led away! I regret having to make speeches of this description, which are not in my line. However, when the Labour movement, of which I am particularly proud is attacked, I am up in arms at once. The movement has done a wonderful lot for me. It took me out of the mines and educated me, furnishing me with the opportunity to become a Minister of the Crown. What sort of a man would I be if I were not prepared to stand up and fight on behalf of the movement, in view of what it has done for me. Even the member for Subiaco will admit that but for the Labour movement I would probably still be in the mines or, which is far more likely, would be where so many good miners have gone; I would by now have been buried, following upon the ravages of miners' phthisis. I look upon the Labour movement as my movement, one of which I am exceedingly proud, and if at any time it is traduced, I will be prepared to speak in its defence.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [6.2]: I found the speech of the Minister for Mines most interesting, and I think many of us can associate ourselves with the statements he made. I really wondered at one stage whether his utterance would develop into a personal biography. However, his speech was rather effective in its way, and to that extent we are very much indebted to the Minister. During the course of the debate we have listened to many speeches, some interesting, most otherwise.

Mr. Hughes: Another "otherwise" is coming.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know that many lent any degree of dignity to the debate, and certainly they did not add much to our knowledge nor furnish us with much information.

Mr. Needham: You will be able to supply that.

Mr. LAMBERT: Very little fresh or novel was uttered during the debate, either in connection with war or post-war conditions.

Mr. Cross: We have left that to you.

Mr. LAMBERT: That particularly applied to post-war problems likely to confront the State when the present unfortunate conflict is ended. In this world of stress and turmoil we feel that the future will bring with it great alterations, but in what direction it is hard for any individual to indicate at the present juncture. Some members of this Chamber have an idea that reform can be achieved by an alteration of the monetary system. Some believe that the curse of that system is the tendency towards inflation. Although I have read more than one most interesting and authoritative treatise on the problem of monetary reform, I have not yet been able to make up my mind as to how the contemplated change can be accomplished. Under our capitalistic system I cannot see that there is any royal road to that objective. To members generally the wonderful contribution that the goldmining industry has made to the wealth of the State during the past few years, must be extremely pleasing. The statement can safely be made that, had it not been for the fillip to our mining activities, the State would be in a very queer position at the present time.

The Premier: We would have been insolvent.

Mr. LAMBERT: Possibly so. Although the State might have been in a bankrupt condition on account of other unfortunate circumstances, the Federal Government was not deterred from levelling a sectional tax on the gold mining industry.

Mr. Marshall: That was not taxation; it was confiscation of products.

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member has a rather elastic imagination, and he can call it what he chooses. The fact is that the respectable designation adopted by the Federal Government for the impost was "taxation". The Premier made every effort to force home upon the Federal Government a realisation of the fact that the impost was a purely sectional tax upon the only

industry in the State that was not contributed to by any other industry in the Eastern States.

The Premier: What we got was a crumb of comfort.

Mr. LAMBERT: In this State we have, apart from the mining industry, two other sections—the primary industries and skeleton secondary industries. Much has been done to foster both, particularly the primary industries. Undoubtedly there has been a marked expansion of our primary industries over the last 25 years, notwithstanding our numerous setbacks and notwithstanding that farmers too often were placed on land which should never have been settled. While on this subject, it might be well for me to quote from a speech I made 24 years ago in this House with regard to the indiscriminate manner in which people were settled on our land by the then administration.

Mr. Doney: Hear, hear!

Mr. LAMBERT: The speech was delivered in all modesty, because it was my maiden speech. I said—

I believe that the only person who can deal with this soil problem is the scientist, and I say that with all due deference to the Commission which has been appointed.

A Commission had been appointed to inquire into the settlement of Esperance land. My speech continued—

In my opinion, the Commission should have been one mainly of scientists. Who gave us the one factor which has enabled us to grow wheat economically in this State but the scientist? Who gave us superphosphate? It was not discovered by any prosperous farmer; it was discovered by a scientist and developed by science, and there are no other means of coming to any right conclusion upon the proper development of the soils of the State except by the employment of scientists. The Government has no right to promiscuously grant money to all the supposed agricultural areas of the State. I should lay it down as an absolute principle that no money should be granted to a farmer unless that farmer was prepared to accept advice and till his soil under the proper direction and guidance of scientific and practical men. That is the only way to tackle this industry. The deficit in this State can be traceable to a large extent to the succeeding crop failures in the agricultural areas.

Hon C. G. Latham: That was in 1916.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. It is equally true to-day. Much, of course, has been done to settle our agricultural and dairying districts; but it has been achieved at great cost. While it is no purpose of mine to

hold an inquest upon past failures and past indiscretions, we know that our farming industry is a gamble, with two very unstable elements, namely prices and climatic conditions. In our great dairying industry we have an ever-increasing asset, one that will no doubt—as the years roll by, past failures will be forgotten and probably some of those responsible for them have passed into oblivion—contribute considerably to the prosperity of the State. I can say the same with respect to settlements in what are known as marginal areas. If competent advice had been taken a quarter of a century ago, we would not have settled farmers in those areas; nor would we have witnessed the distress suffered by the persons who were placed on what is known as the Miners' Settlement. We would not have embarked upon the 3,000 farms scheme away in the wilderness. I do not think it has been re-discovered during the past 10 or 15 years.

Member: Forrestania.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. I shall deal with land settlement before I touch on one or two other subjects. Much of that land is retrievable and possibly much of the loss is also retrievable, if a sound policy is laid down for the proper linking-up of the areas and a kindlier attitude adopted by the Agricultural Bank. We shall find that in those abandoned areas there is some of the best pastoral country in the State. But it cannot be utilised for pastoral purposes unless we have a proper scheme of water conservation and the area is reticulated from the goldfields water scheme. When the Water Supply Department is approached on the subject, we are told, "This is a business undertaking and we must run it as a business concern." That is the department's reply to many requests that have been preferred to it for a reduction in the price of water used by goldmines. In my opinion, greater utilisation can be made of the goldfields water scheme for the supply of water to thousands of acres to-day lying abandoned. Water from the scheme could be used for pastoral and other purposes.

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

Mr. LAMBERT: I was referring to the utilisation of water from the goldfields water scheme with a view to the rehabilitation of some of the abandoned land from

Merredin to Southern Cross. Notwithstanding the varying climatic conditions in that region, the sinking of dams in proper localities for the purpose of enabling rich pastoral land to be utilised is a commercial proposition. I need not unduly stress that matter. The officers of the Agricultural Bank and the Department of Lands and Surveys must be aware that if dams were put down in proper places, a good deal of water would be conserved. Insufficient importance has been attached to the granite catchments in those areas. Some of the catchments in portions of the goldfields further east have been harnessed and contain anything from 1,000,000 to 5,000,000 gallons of water each year. Now that the Agricultural Bank has to some extent straightened out the position of the farmers who unfortunately have been unable through one cause or another to make good and have left their holdings, I hope it will devote some attention to the matter I have been discussing. Whether a survey would have to be made to determine in which areas dams could best be sunk is a matter upon which our engineers would have to advise us.

I wish to say a few words about one or two objectionable clauses in the Agricultural Bank Act, notwithstanding the fact that many plausible excuses have been advanced for the retention of those clauses. Some time ago the Country Party made an attempt, through its deputy leader, to have the Act amended in order to bring it more in conformity with common decency and to ensure reasonable living conditions for settlers. Whether this matter will be revived or not I am unable to say.

Mr. Withers: It is contentious legislation.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know whether it is over-contentious legislation. I do not know of any very definite hardship resulting from the existence of sections 51 and 52 of the Act, but those sections are distinctly unpalatable to many farmers, and probably some method could be found of removing them from the Act without penalising the Agricultural Bank.

I was pleased to learn that a certain sum of money had been provided to continue the operations of the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act. In view of the amount already distributed for the relief of a considerable number of farmers in the mar-



ginal areas, it would be regrettable if the Commonwealth Government did not see fit to continue this contribution to the Commissioners who have done such good work. I believe the Agricultural Bank has a considerable sum of money available to assist the farmers. I do not know whether the report of the Commissioners has been tabled. If not, it would be pleasing for us to be given some idea by the Commissioners as to what amount is available and to what extent they are prepared further to assist farmers, particularly in those centres that have experienced difficult times for many years. Farming is carried on in the western end of my district. After leaving Southern Cross I have to turn my attention exclusively to mining interests. It is nice, however, to visit the farming area, notwithstanding the fact that for some peculiar reason best known to themselves the people there sometimes fancy they could obtain better representation from a member of another political party.

I was struck by the remarks of the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith) who, like an idealist, was reaching out for the moon. He said it would be advisable if we could balance the budget. For a quarter of a century I have heard successive Treasurers, idealists and new members, suggest that the budget should be balanced. That is a commendable objective, but it will not be achieved in our lifetime, nor in the next fifty centuries. I think the Premier said on his return from the Eastern States that this State had been allocated a sum of £200,000 or £300,000 from loan funds to enable the budget to be balanced. Whether the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe had that in mind I do not know.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith interjected,

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member would not suggest that money rains from Heaven.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: No, but it might rain from the Eastern States.

Mr. LAMBERT: Annually our accumulated public debt is being added to by allocations from loan funds. We have only to scan the figures to find that in 1901 the public debt amounted to £11,674,000 and that by 1939 the total had grown to £95,473,000.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: By how much has it increased per head?

Mr. LAMBERT: Per head of the population the amount has increased appreciably. The regrettable feature is that our population has not grown in the same ratio as has the public indebtedness. I have no desire to refer to Commonwealth finance, but if the member for Brown-Hill-Ivanhoe, in his laudable desire to instruct the Premier and lecture the House about balancing the Budget, will take a week-end off and study our Commonwealth indebtedness, he is likely to spend a few unhappy moments.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: I was speaking of the Budget, not of loan funds.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is all very well to speak of balancing the Budget, but in this young and undeveloped State, we must spend money in order to continue development. The important point is that the money should be spent sanely. I remind the hon. member that if it is not within our capacity to develop this State and all its varied resources, somebody else will probably spare us the opportunity.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: That is what I said.

Mr. LAMBERT: As to that, I shall refresh my memory later. An endeavour must be made to develop our industries. To do so will be no easy matter. To expand our secondary industries is not an easy matter. It is regrettable that in a State like Western Australia, which admittedly has only a sparse population, more has not been achieved in the time during which we have been in effective occupation. The Government should be commended for its attempts to expand the industrial structure of the State, but in that endeavour all sorts of difficulties confront us. The chief difficulties arise from the fact that we are in the Federation and are working under a tariff that gives us little or no protection. In days gone by when as youngsters we were fighting for Federation and talking of one flag, one people and one destiny, we thought that we would share on equal terms with the Eastern States. But what has been the result? Our secondary industries are either undeveloped or stagnant, whilst those of the Eastern States have gone ahead by leaps and bounds. I need not trouble to quote figures to show the enormous industrial expansion that has taken place in the Eastern States or the

colossal development of their sheltered industries. The progress in those States has been out of all proportion to our progress.

Later I shall refer to a remark made by the member for North Perth (Mr. Abbott) regarding the establishment of secondary industries in this State. The greater proportion of the people who control finance and who are interested in big business in this State have one-track minds, and it is very difficult to drill into them that, apart from making a profit from their businesses, they should be inspired by patriotic motives and give Western Australia some of those industries that are definitely associated with its varied resources. I feel that it is morally wrong to maintain able-bodied men and women in idleness for long periods, and what is morally wrong cannot be economically right or politically sound. That is a truism from which nobody can divorce himself. As I said before, the Government's action in appointing a full-time Minister to encourage the development of secondary industries is very laudable, but unfortunately the Government has gone about the matter in the wrong way. We shall never develop secondary industries in this State until there is a radical alteration in the attitude of the Commonwealth Government.

The first step the State Government should take is to request the Commonwealth to amend the Tariff Board Act in order to give the members of the board definite statutory authority to direct where a sheltered industry shall be established. The fact that we are importing £14,000,000 or £15,000,000 worth of manufactured goods every year and that practically nine-tenths of our primary products are exported, without first being converted into marketable goods, shows that there is something wrong. Before spending further money on the establishment of secondary industries, the State Government should impress upon the Commonwealth the necessity for a decentralisation of the industries of the Eastern States. Those industries should be decentralised in favour of a policy of establishing industries in Western Australia to the point of saturation or consumption. Until such a policy is inaugurated, little progress will be made with the establishment of secondary industries in Western Australia. The State should request the Commonwealth to hold a search-

ing inquiry by the Tariff Board into the extent to which manufactured goods are being imported from the Eastern States and the extent of the raw material we have to export without a soul being employed, apart from those people producing primary commodities. The Tariff Board would be a very useful body to advise the Government along those lines and a very useful instrument to bring about the necessary development in this State. It would not take long to ascertain what amount of manufactured goods is being imported by this State and what amount of primary products is being exported in an unmanufactured condition. We must hammer away at the Federal Government and see whether it is not possible to decentralise some of Australia's industries. Those industries are sending their goods to this State and sucking our life's blood, thus preventing Western Australia from developing along the lines we all desire for it.

Mr. North: South Australia has been a little more fortunate of late.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, because that State is nearer to the seat of the Federal Government. The Broken Hill Proprietary with a subscribed capital of about £8,000,000 has started industries in about four centres in South Australia, and those industries are associated with shipbuilding, iron ore and the works at Port Pirie and Whyalla. Those big industries, interwoven as they are, and passing from production to production step by step, make a big difference to South Australia. Members who are interested may look up speeches I made during the last war in connection with the synthetic production of nitrogen. That is what I advocated then, but no one has taken any notice of the suggestion. One might as well be a voice crying in the wilderness so far as any development of that nature is concerned. Neither commercial men nor business men have heeded the advice then tendered to them. I also pointed out that during the last war Germany, when armed against the whole structure of the world, raised its production of synthetic nitrogen from zero to 200,000 tons per annum. The Zinc Corporation, in conjunction with the British Industries Coy., started a plant in Australia for the production of synthetic ammonia, which represents the first step in the manufacture of high explosives, nitrogen, etc. I pointed out 20 years ago that we were not producing

enough salt for our own requirements. Indeed we were not producing a pound of salt per head of the population. Some people were able to scratch a few hundred tons from our lakes, and others were foolish enough to buy it. Really it should have been condemned for human consumption. Twenty years ago I urged that caustic soda should be manufactured in Western Australia. Caustic soda is electrically produced from sodium chloride. That could have led to the establishment of a key industry for the manufacture of other lines. It is uneconomical to attempt to produce ordinary soap on commercial lines unless cheap caustic soda is available. If the Government wishes to establish secondary industries in Western Australia, it should circularise every business man in the State and tell him definitely and clearly what it has in mind. Some time ago the Premier said it was essential that some direct assistance should be given for the establishment and encouragement of local secondary industries, because of the little progress that had been made in that direction. In circularising the commercial and trading community, the Government should point out that not only have we war conditions to contend with but that a post-war condition is accruing, like gathering clouds. When our good men come back from the war we shall not experiment by putting on the land inexperienced people, who are broken in spirit. The day for that sort of thing has gone by. We should ask our commercial and business heads whether those things they are selling to-day could be manufactured in Western Australia. If the answer is in the affirmative, they should be asked to what extent they require financial assistance, and what machinery and technical knowledge and guidance they need to start those industries. I would not have spoken on this subject but for the interjection of the member for Claremont (Mr. North). From the production of ordinary electrolytic caustic soda we obtain chlorine and other commodities that link up with a long chain of manufactured goods. It is impossible to start those industries without the fountain head of them all. If it is desired to make explosives, it is necessary to produce synthetic ammonia. If it is desired to produce soap, and other commodities in

which caustic soda is embraced, it is necessary to produce soda. The task is not impossible. At Lake Preston and other places are lakes ten times more dense in saline content than is the sea. We also have electricity, and at Collie, one of the biggest coal measures in the continent.

Mr. Abbott: If an investigation has been made here why have not these industries been started in Western Australia?

Mr. LAMBERT: Professor Woolnough made an investigation in this State. Does the hon. member think that the big companies would run away from 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 people, produce commodities in this State for half a million people, and export nine-tenths of the products to the Eastern States?

Mr. Abbott: Freight is not such a big item.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member ought to see me on that subject. I could tell him exactly what freights mean when it comes to a question of working on a margin of 10s. to £1 per ton in the shipment of minerals. I know of hardly one mineral in this State that can be shipped away as an economic proposition. The only mineral I know of that is being shipped is the felspar I opened up at Coolgardie, at a time when there was no demand for that commodity. Owing to the favourable balance of exchange, 25 per cent., it is now possible to export felspar on a small margin. Professor Bayliss talked about our minerals. He should get away from Crawley and tackle the Overseas Shipping Committee and ask for a quote for sending minerals to the Eastern States. It will be discovered that it is not economical to ship any of these non-metallic minerals to another State under present conditions. The Government is laying down a plant to experiment with alunite from Mt. Champion. Mr. Butfield, Mr. Mann and I held these deposits for some time and gave an option over them to the Western Mining Corporation. We engaged in a good deal of experimental work and opened up the deposits. After some time Mr. Charlton Dodd, lecturer at the Kalgoorlie School of Mines, was brought from America and he proved that 15,000,000 tons of alunite were available, of varying degrees of purity. The option was turned down for the nominal sum of

£3,000. Representations were then made to London, and one of the wealthiest and most influential corporations in the world took an option over the deposit. That was not the first occasion on which Western Australia experimented with alunite. Professor Bayliss says he will obtain information from the School of Mines in Utah, U.S.A. I called attention to this subject 18 or 20 years ago, when the late Mr. Scaddan, then Minister for Mines, spoke of experiments about to be carried out. I told Mr. Scaddan then that he could get all the information necessary by the expenditure of a postage stamp. However, the State went on and simply lost its money. The product was railed down here. Eventually it was dumped. The problem is simple enough if by flotation it is possible to reduce the silicious content of alunite and by roasting convert it to aluminium oxide and extract the potash. However, as I say, the member for North Perth (Mr. Abbott) is wrong in his belief that freight to the Eastern States is not a definite, or even a determining, factor in the economical operation of many of this State's industries.

Mr. Abbott: I spoke of manufactured goods.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LAMBERT: To send them over here?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LAMBERT: Surely a member of the legal profession is not unsophisticated enough to believe that the Eastern States manufacture for Western Australia. The manufacturers there manufacture for 6,500,000 people in the Eastern States, and dump any surpluses here at prices that suit those manufacturers. The member for North Perth also asked whether the Minister for Industrial Development, after the extensive investigations made, would indicate the reason why secondary industries could not be established in Western Australia. By way of retort I would ask the member for North Perth to indicate to us why he has not established himself as a legal practitioner in Marble Bar instead of Perth. It may be very pleasant if one is able to pick up a refresher from a client in Marble Bar, but I do not know that in that centre a lawyer could have an extensive clientele. That indicates the clear and indisputable reason why Western Australia is at a disadvantage regarding manufactures, apart from many of the factors I enumerated.

Much could be done to develop industries in Western Australia if we could get mining companies to follow the example set by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, which made its money in Broken Hill and invested it in South Australia and New South Wales. Some of our mining companies could interest themselves in the production of cyanide and explosives. In that event, we would obtain a production of at least £250,000 annually. But our mining companies are not told of these things. Unless we can absorb our population and make it productive instead of dependent solely upon the Government, we shall be penalised even more heavily in the future than we are today. I believe that if recommendations were made by men who know their job and can do it—it is not a boy's job either—some good will accrue. Years ago I spoke about the production of sulphur in Western Australia. For the manufacture of superphosphate we are bringing about £150,000 worth of sulphur into this State annually. Latterly we have imported it from the United States. The alunite deposits at Campion, of which I have spoken, if they cannot be utilised in the manufacture of aluminium, can by roasting be made to yield potash and sulphur. After the roasting of the alunite, the potash and sulphur production could be leased out. Another potential source of sulphur in Western Australia is the Kalgoorlie gold mines, which have almost pure sulphur. That, however, falls in a different category, because it could not be converted into sulphuric acid, but only into elemental sulphate, as is done by the Zinc Corporation of Tasmania. Under the Bonus Act of 1936 a bonus is payable upon the production of sulphur in Western Australia if its market price falls below a certain figure. So there are possibilities. A remark was made by someone—it may have been by Mr. Fernie, who was appointed to inquire into this industry—that the Government would co-operate with Mr. Thorn, the manager of the Lake View and Star Mine, in advising on the production of sulphur. The necessary information is all available here, and I can supply Mr. Thorn with it. I have discussed the matter with him. He knows that there are difficulties owing to the absence of a cheap freight. That factor renders it impossible to establish these industries in Kalgoorlie. Certainly

this would not appeal to the directors of the Lake View and Star Mine as a favourable investment.

About 17 years ago I spoke of the utilisation of our waste woods in the jarrah forests. An interesting article in this connection was published by the magazine of the Broken Hill Proprietary. It mentioned that in the Ukraine of Russia waste woods had been used to produce sponge iron, which is much more expensive than ordinary iron. In the Ukraine 700,000 tons of sponge iron is thus produced annually. Yampi ore could be smelted at Bunbury. Instead iron is brought from other places. The Government should approach a group of people saying, "Here is the timber being burnt at the fire chutes today; you can have that timber for ten years, and we will guarantee you a certain percentage on your investment, subject to supervision of your work by our experts." We shall never get anywhere in these matters so long as people here can talk themselves black in the face on the subject without anyone taking the least notice. There is no use in creating a Department for Industrial Development in Western Australia if we do not tackle some of the big key industries. We must start with the big key industries. The little industries will come along in due course, just as a man who marries knows what will come along.

And there are other things. I remember when the cement people here were getting lime from Lake Clifton. I informed them at the time that they could get the necessary decomposed rock and shell from the river here. As a result, they took up a concession, and they have never looked back since. They have been paying 25 per cent. dividends from the time they started.

Mr. North: Ships used to be made there.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LAMBERT: Where?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LAMBERT: The time has arrived when we should examine not only the capacity and capabilities of some of the officers who have advised us for so long, but the advisability of utilising the services of members of Parliament in an unselfish effort to act as an advisory board to assist our engineers and other officers. That should certainly be done. We should establish two standing committees, the members of which should act in an honorary capacity and

should not receive payment for their services as is the practice in connection with the Federal Parliament and, I believe, the South Australian Parliament. One such committee should be empowered to advise upon matters relating to power and transport and other important correlated matters. The other committee could advise upon public works and water conservation. I believe that much valuable information would be gained as a result of investigations by members of Parliament entrusted with the responsibility of membership of such standing committees, charged with the task of investigating some of our problems. Men have been elected to Parliament who possess much experience and considerable knowledge of Western Australia, and they could make extremely useful and fitting contributions to the knowledge we should have of the industries and resources of the State. Probably our biggest problem is associated with power and transport matters. While we are not so well favoured as are many countries having abundant water supplies that can be utilised for the generation of power, we have available coal deposits which, properly harnessed to up-to-date machinery, should be capable of producing power at a cost comparable with that in other countries.

Hon. C. G. Latham: In England nearly all the power is produced through the medium of coal.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, and exceptions are Norway, Sweden and other small countries.

The Premier: The problem is a big one in Western Australia.

Mr. LAMBERT: The problem was a big one in Sweden and Norway, where they smelt their various ferriferous metals. In that connection I shall not refer to manganese lest I send the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) into hysterics, in which condition I like to see him only when he is speaking. All the countries that have made progress during the last 25 or 50 years have been favoured with water power to a marked degree.

Although the member for North Perth (Mr. Abbott) did not discuss the matter with me when he raised the question of our industries, it might perhaps be well for me to consult that gentleman before I enlarge upon military topics. However, I would like

him to suggest to those in authority that if we are to establish a mobile force in this State for the purposes of home defence, they should immediately cause motor vehicles of all descriptions to be registered so that, should a national emergency threaten the State, the military authorities would know exactly where to lay their hands upon those vehicles. They would then know to what extent those vehicles were capable of carrying ammunition and guns, and have all essential knowledge so that military requirements could be sent wherever necessary in a very short time.

Mr. Cross: Could not they get that information from the Traffic Department now?

The Premier: Not all of it.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is not a matter for the Traffic Department; it concerns the Military Department, which should have information, properly tabulated, of all motor cars and motor vehicles in the State so that within a week or a month, should the necessity arise, the authorities would know exactly where to procure the requisite transport. A thousand motor cars would carry 5,000 men and 250 trucks would probably carry the necessary ammunition. If we are to be attacked in Western Australia, it will be, I should say, by means of a force landed on our shores, and in that event a fleet of motor cars and trucks would be a necessary adjunct to our defence measures. I throw out that suggestion to the member for North Perth and to the Premier, who can pass it on to the Commonwealth Government.

The Premier: We have done that. At two hours' notice we had 500 cars at our disposal when a troopship arrived.

Mr. LAMBERT: So long as something is being done, however faint the effort may be, we must be thankful that some attempt along those lines has been made.

I am pleased to note that the importance of Southern Cross, which is in my electorate, has been recognised in that an aerodrome has been established there. I trust that the authorities will go further by making provision for the installing of the necessary machine tools and so forth required to carry out at a moment's notice all possible repairs to aeroplanes. The country for a hundred miles in every direction from Southern Cross lends itself to aeronautical requirements because of its

nature. I should say the district is ideal as a training centre for pilots and for aeronautics generally.

The Minister for Works: You mean it is flat.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. In fact, the country is as flat as some of the speeches delivered in this Chamber from time to time.

It remains for me merely to observe with reference to the war that it can be won only by the determination to succeed. The man who is prepared to live behind the shelter and protection of a rifle should be prepared to shoulder one when called upon to do so. I feel that, in this moment of our Empire's trial, all sections of the community are standing together in a spirit of co-operation with a calm and resolute determination to preserve our liberty and institutions. Our Empire, under the Union Jack, has carried its benefits to the four corner points of the globe. I feel confident that we all pray for ultimate victory and that, however long the struggle may be, we shall finally teach tyrants and dictators that those who live by the sword will die by the sword.

MR. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie) [8.19]: I have listened with great interest to the speeches delivered during the Address-in-reply debate. I am not of the opinion expressed by the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) that the utterances have been flat. On the contrary, they have been instructive and informative, despite which I must say that the majority of them conveyed a most depressing effect. Should my speech this evening be couched in a somewhat pessimistic strain, members themselves will be responsible. Few of the speeches were characterised by optimism. As a matter of fact, what I listened to suggested a dirge from beginning to end. We had the member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) stressing the plight of the wheat farmers. This no doubt is serious and has been so for a number of years. The conditions under which those men labour and the hardships which they and their womenfolk must endure are something beyond fairness and reason. Then we have listened to the plight of our pastoralists. Their difficulties have principally been caused by bad seasons, but they have also a poor market in which to sell their products. We have heard continually during the last few months com-

plaints from our fruit growers that their commodities—apples and pears—have been commandeered and that the growers cannot get a fair price nor secure payment. What I myself have particularly noticed is that the result of the commandeering of apples has been that the local market has been flooded with the poorest quality of fruit. The apples are the poorest I have seen for many years, yet they are marketed at the highest price I have seen for many years. Whoever is getting the rake-off I do not know.

Then we had the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) complaining of the malnutrition of our school children and adducing medical evidence that at least 30 per cent. of the children are undernourished. There is admittedly the low standard of wages prevailing for many workers. Although our basic wage has been fixed at a sum a little higher than £4 5s. per week, the average worker in Australia earns about £3 per week, a sum considerably below the standard which the law of this State—the Arbitration Court—says is an amount equivalent to purchase necessities for a man, his wife and average family of two to live in a reasonable degree of comfort. Then we have the alarming feature that, despite the number of war orders coming to this State, employment in our factories is decreasing. We have a shortage of accommodation not only in our metropolitan schools, but also in our country schools. When complaints are made, the Government laments the insufficiency of funds to increase the accommodation. Therefore, listening to the debate one may be pardoned for adopting a somewhat pessimistic attitude. A person listening to the debate and unaccustomed to Address-in-reply speeches would wonder why it is that we are arming so many men and sending them oversea and why the men are willing to volunteer to fight for a continuance of conditions which have been appalling for the last ten years.

Two of the principal factors which have been emphasised during the course of the debate in my opinion are really subjects for discussions in the Federal Parliament, because they concern matters vitally affecting the prerogative of the Commonwealth Government; although the State Govern-

ment and we, as citizens of Australia, are also vitally concerned in such matters. The first is the prosecution of the war. While we have had many criticisms of Australia's war effort—and I candidly admit that at times I felt sufficient was not being done—I think it useless at this stage to indulge in recriminations because we find ourselves in our present undefended state. It is useless to try to place the blame on anyone. I have heard it said that the fault lies with the Commonwealth Government and with the leaders of the nation. People ask, "Why were we not warned that war was imminent? Why did not somebody wake up?" I again candidly admit that it is somewhat of a mystery to me that nations close to the seat of hostilities were not more prepared than they were, because undoubtedly they had considerable time to make preparations. We in Australia have always relied upon the protection of the British Navy. We felt secure because we considered the Navy was invincible. So we placed too much faith in a policy of pacifism. I was a great admirer of Ramsay MacDonald's policy of pacifism, provided that other nations also were practising it. But when one nation, or a number of nations, adopt a policy of pacifism whilst another nation is arming to the teeth for the purpose of aggression, then it is national suicide for the other nations not to arm also. In the final analysis, I think it will not be held against us that we did pin our faith to the policy of pacifism; but do not let us now indulge in recriminations and endeavour to place the blame on some one. People have said that we should have been making preparations for defence for the past five years.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Then they would have been called war-mongers.

Mr. STYANTS: That is so. What would have happened to the Lyons Government or to the Bruce-Page Government—

Hon. C. G. Latham: Or to any other Government.

Mr. STYANTS: Yes. What would have happened to those Governments if five years ago they had imposed taxation to raise the revenue which we now find to be necessary to put Australia in a position to defend herself? Such a Government would not have lasted; it would have been thrown out ignominiously from the political life

of Australia. We are all responsible and must all accept our share of the responsibility. As one British statesman said recently, "We have to stand together now or we will all hang separately in the future." That is our position to-day. We must get out of our minds any complaints about what has happened in the past; we have to meet conditions as they are at present and what they will be in the future. I believe that the Federal Government is doing a very good job as far as the defence of the country is concerned, especially when we come to consider that a highly industrialised nation like England, with its huge factories, has not yet reached its maximum production capacity, and this notwithstanding that England had 12 months after Munich before the declaration of war, and almost 12 months since, in which to organise. When a highly industrialised nation like the United States does not expect to reach the peak of its production for two years, how can we expect Australia to swing her industries from peace-time to war-time standards in six months? With the resources at its disposal, the Commonwealth Government is putting forth an excellent effort. The manufacture of the very tools required to make munitions is an industry in itself. The statement has been made that we have factories in Western Australia which could be utilised for manufacturing munitions. That is true, but not all classes of machinery are suitable for the manufacture of munitions. Munition-making is specialised work and requires tools which must be made to a millimetre of correctness, otherwise shells would be useless. I am not of the opinion that post-war problems should concern us to any great extent at the present time, although two or three speakers have touched on this subject.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We do not know what is ahead of us.

Mr. STYANTS: No. What we do know is that we must win the war and 100 per cent. of our energy has to be devoted to that purpose. When we see victory in sight we can begin a discussion of post-war problems for, as the Leader of the Opposition inferred, we shall then have a much clearer idea as to what those problems are likely to be. The task of those of us who are not

able to serve either with the local forces or those going oversea is to ensure that the troops are provided with necessary munitions, and to find money for the successful prosecution of the war. In the last war the urgent requirements were men, munitions and money, but the silver bullet was the most effective armament that could be used against the enemy. Today the position is practically the same. We have men capable of holding their own with the conscripted troops of any nation in the world and what we have to do is to provide the munitions. Our particular job is to see that those men are properly armed. The armies in France were defeated, but not because they were inferior as fighters. The Frenchmen were beaten not because the Germans were superior as soldiers, but because the German troops had up-to-date armaments. Our bounden duty is to ensure that when our men go oversea they will be provided not with single shot rifles with which to meet machine guns or 20 ton tanks with which to face 80-ton tanks, but that they will have the assurance of being supplied with most up-to-date armaments. In such circumstances I am satisfied they will do the job properly.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They have proved that in the air.

Mr. STYANTS: Yes, and they will prove it on the land if they are given armaments equal to those possessed by the enemy. A man with a single-shot or a magazine rifle cannot be expected to beat a man with a machine gun. From time to time suggestions have been made in the Press and elsewhere that certain sections of the community should be called upon to make special sacrifices in connection with the prosecution of the war. I do not hold that view. I have even heard a suggestion that some of the pastoralists should give a certain amount of their wool as a gift to the nation. I do not believe that any section of the community should be called upon to make a special sacrifice. The Commonwealth Government has been given unlimited authority by the people of this country to conscript wealth and man-power. It has complete taxation powers and in my opinion it is the duty of the Federal Government to use those powers to raise by taxation from every man and woman, according to ability to pay, the money required to achieve victory. No sec-



tion of the community should be singled out to make any special sacrifice.

A proposal that has met with a good deal of criticism is the Federal Government's suggestion to ration petrol. I would not care one iota if there were a complete restriction of the use of petrol for pleasure drivers in motor cars. The people must realise that upon petrol will probably depend their freedom and the safety of our country. If the Commonwealth Government finds that it has not sufficient reserves of petrol in hand, or if for any other purpose a restriction on the consumption of petrol is necessary, then the Commonwealth Government should go ahead and do the job. A few weeks ago, when the capitulation of France occurred, I thought there was no sacrifice that the people of this country would not willingly make. But now, because the Royal Air Force are holding up the German blitzkrieg against England. I find the citizens of Australia—which up to date has not felt the pinch of war one iota—squealing loud and long because there is a proposal to restrict the amount of petrol they may use. Some men employ their cars partly for business and partly for pleasure. I would not care if the amount devoted to the latter purpose were completely disallowed. I have heard it said in this House that all the reserve storage accommodation for petrol in Australia is full to overflowing, but I have been told by influential men from the Eastern States that not 50 per cent. of the accommodation is utilised. If that is the case, even greater restrictions on petrol consumption should be imposed. Our reserves must be built to enormous quantities because if the British Navy loses control of the seas, our supplies will be cut off and we must remember that we shall have to depend on the Air Force for the protection of Australia. In view of these facts, we should not complain when we are faced with the first restriction imposed upon us as a result of the war. To my mind the trouble is that we have been given so many reasons as to the necessity for the imposition of the restrictions on the consumption of petrol and some people are wondering whether there is any real reason for it at all. The only objection I had against the proposal to restrict the use of petrol drastically, as was proposed in the first instance, was the disorganisation of industry that would occur and the number of men who would be thrown out of employment.

We have been told by our Federal Leaders, however, that in 12 or 18 months' time 150,000 people will be employed in Australia in the production of armaments. Consequently, the people rendered workless by the restriction of the use of petrol can be absorbed in the munitions factories.

Hon. C. G. Latham: A lot of them are mechanics too.

Mr. STYANTS: Yes, that is so. A further restriction of the use of petrol may be necessary for the safety of Australia and its inhabitants, and we should not complain if such a limitation is imposed upon us. I hope this matter will not be used as an election bogey during the coming contest.

I was interested to hear two or three members mention that a matter that should be closely examined was the establishment of a child endowment scheme. Mr. Hughes, an ex-Prime Minister of Australia, says that we must populate or perish. It is interesting to study the position in New South Wales, the one State in which a child endowment scheme operates. In order to ascertain whether endowment schemes actually have the effect of increasing the birth rate, I consulted figures given in the "Commonwealth Year Book." I found that they do not indicate that such a scheme leads to an increase in population. As a matter of fact, the birth rate of New South Wales is lower than that of Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania. The New South Wales child endowment scheme provides for an allowance of 5s. per week for each child in excess of one. In view of the cry of most countries that a greater natural increase in population is necessary, the figures I am about to quote are of interest. In 1937 the crude birth rate for the whole of Australia was 17.4 per thousand; in 1908 to 1913, a five-year period, the corresponding figure was 27.4. That is to say, there has been a reduction of 10 per thousand in the crude birth rate. The figures for the various States are as follows:—

State.	1937	1908-1913
New South Wales ..	17.6	28.2
Victoria ..	16	25.3
Western Australia ..	19	28.9
South Australia ..	15.3	27.1
Queensland ..	19.4	28.2
Tasmania ..	20.7	29.6

Germany, the country with which we are mostly concerned today, was 18.8 compared with 29.5. A decrease in the birth rate has occurred, not only in Australia, not only

in British-speaking countries, but also in every country of the civilised world with the exception, I believe, of the Soviet Republic.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Have you the figures for Italy?

Mr. STYANTS: Yes, 22.9 per thousand compared with 32.4. Thus there has been a decline of more than 10 per thousand in Italy, despite the system of massed marriages there. The birth rate in Great Britain is 15.3 compared with 24.6; in England and Wales 14.9 compared with 24.9, and in France 14.7 compared with 19.5. Despite the low birth rate in Australia, we have a higher rate of natural increase than have most European countries, due to our lower death rate. When we subtract the number of deaths from the number of births per thousand of population, the Australian figures compare favourably even with those of foreign countries, because of our lower death rate. After deducting the mortality rate, the natural increase per thousand of population in Germany is 7.1, Italy 8.7, England and Wales 2.5, Scotland 3.7, Japan 13.6, France 0.3 and Australia eight. A significant fact regarding Australia—and I intend to touch upon this point presently—is that the three States where Labour Governments are in power have the highest net increase. Thus Western Australia has 10 per thousand of population, Queensland 10.2 and Tasmania 11.2, compared with the Australian average of eight.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That is one thing for which you can claim credit, anyhow.

Mr. STYANTS: I believe there is a definite reason for it; it is not mere chance. The institution of a system of child endowment does not necessarily mean that people will have larger families. That fact has been proved conclusively in New South Wales, but what would result from child endowment is that justice would be done to those who had large families. This is one of the weaknesses of our basic wage system. By the basic wage inquiry we seek to find out what amount of money is required to provide the necessities of life for an average family—a man, his wife and two children—and maintain them in a reasonable standard of comfort, but no provision is made for the man who has six children. By its very essence, our basic wage condemns a man and his wife with a family of six children to live in a lesser degree of comfort than we

say is fair and reasonable. These are the people who would receive justice if we had a child endowment scheme.

Various opinions are advanced to account for the continued fall in the birth rate. Years ago I had to depend on low wages to rear a young family. I have associated with the workers of this country and I believe the greatest deterrents to having families of reasonable size are the economic insecurity, the fear of unemployment, and the fact of constantly recurring war. When people have children, there are not sufficient jobs available for them. One of the greatest nightmares haunting parents these days is the fear that there will not be a job for the boy or girl on reaching an age when it is necessary to support himself or herself. The fact that there are better conditions operating for wages men in Western Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania is, I believe, reflected in the higher natural increase in those States.

Then there is the matter of constantly-recurring war. The mother of to-day was the young woman during the 1914-18 war. In that war she probably lost her fiancé, perhaps even her father or brother, and suffered the consequent grief and sorrow. Later on, time the great healer intervened, and she was married, and to-day she is the mother of boys who are enlisting for service overseas. Perhaps eventually she will be robbed of one or more of her sons in this encounter. The women are becoming fed up of the spectre of the breadwinner being out of employment, of the inability to find work for a boy or a girl, and of providing cannon fodder for the recurring wars that the international policies of the various countries bring about, seemingly inevitably. Those, I believe, are the three reasons why the birth rate is constantly falling.

I should like to quote a case that came under my notice a few weeks ago. A very good type of lad who had just reached the age of 19, was the son of a returned soldier, deceased. The mother had been left to rear two boys. He asked me to sign his papers for entry to the air force; he could not get a job. I signed his papers, and when I met him shortly afterwards he told me he had been successful, but the fly in the ointment was that he was without a job and would not be called up until about November. The recruiting officer said, "Get a job; we will call you up about November."

Mr. Berry: There are thousands like that.

Mr. STYANTS: I believe there are. The boy said, "That is what I have been trying to do for the last nine months. I have been unable to get a job, and my widowed mother will have to keep me until November when you call me up." That is a disgraceful state of affairs. Fancy a boy of 19, who is prepared to give his services in the most dangerous defence arm we have, the son of a returned soldier, being unable to get a job at the hands of this country. One marvels why the boys enlist to serve oversea and fight for a system that provides such conditions. I know of other instances of two or three boys in a family. All of them have enlisted and are waiting to be called up but cannot get a job. I remember in the last war when young fellows who went away were promised a workers' paradise when they came back. They went away in their tens and hundreds of thousands, and we know what their achievements were, but history repeated itself. After a few years of post-war boom, history repeated itself as it does after every war. People faced privation, want, pestilence and unemployment. If we do not alter our system, history will repeat itself after this war. That is one of the problems we shall have to face when we secure ultimate victory, as undoubtedly we shall.

I could understand the situation if there was a shortage of food and goods. During the ten years of what was known as the depression there never was a greater abundance of everything that man requires. Our granaries were full and our warehouses were full. As a result of the rigging of markets and the cornering of supplies, one man had sufficient for a million while another had not sufficient to keep body and soul together. In the midst of plenty, millions of people were actually in want, if they were not starving. Every member knows of families who have been in dire distress and want, yet in the midst of plenty. I admit I do not know what the solution of the problem is. I have listened attentively to exponents of monetary reform, and to other suggestions that have been advanced. The more books I read on the subject, the more confused I become. One thing must appear quite clear to every member who has given any thought to it, and that is that the system which permits of such conditions is

fundamentally wrong and should be altered. That is our job. We do not want Mussolini or Hitler to tell us what reforms to make, for that task is ours. There is a tremendous stranglehold upon the community in the shape of interest that has accrued on loans we have made, loans that we are in honour bound to repay. To such an extent have we borrowed money that it requires approximately 47 per cent. of the income of the State for the funding of our overseas indebtedness in the shape of exchange and interest on accumulated loans. It will thus be seen that we have reached almost the end of our tether.

I wish to refer to a matter that has been broached by previous speakers, namely, that of females displacing males in the employment market. Members inferred that such a practice should be abolished. I disagree with that view. My respect for the women of the nation is tremendous. I firmly believe in the old axiom that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. The two best friends I ever had were women. The higher the status of women in the community, the better is the home-life and the higher will the efficiency of the nation be.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You are right; the better the nation would be.

Mr. STYANTS: As the father of two girls, I view the situation with alarm. These girls are just reaching womanhood. I could not bear to think that anything would be done to prevent them from utilising their abilities to secure positions for themselves. If the policy that has been expounded by two or three members, that women should not be allowed to pursue their natural bent and obtain jobs for themselves is followed, the effect will be that women will be forced out of employment into matrimony and the moral status of the women of the country will be destroyed.

Mr. Withers: Not so long as they are not exploited to their disadvantage.

Mr. STYANTS: We have power to prevent that.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Shall we use that power?

Mr. STYANTS: I do not hold the view that is advanced by many that if we give equal pay for equal work for the sexes men will be thrown out of employment. That

is an old-fashioned idea. Women have proved themselves the equal of men intellectually in every walk of life. Physically they are handicapped by Nature, for they do not possess the power of endurance or physical strength of the male. Intellectually, however, they have proved themselves wherever they have been given equal opportunities with men. To drive women into matrimony, to say that we are not going to allow them to obtain employment but, by economic circumstances, force them into marriage, will increase tremendously the overcrowded lists in the divorce court. If women are compelled by economic circumstances to sell themselves into matrimony in order that they may be kept, they will be forced to a status very little higher than their unfortunate sisters who sell their bodies for a dollar a time. That is what will happen if we follow out that policy to its logical conclusion. Women will have to sell their bodies to gain a living. If it is intended that women shall by economic circumstances be forced into marriage so that they may be kept, the effect will be to place them on a level but little higher than that occupied by their unfortunate sisters who sell their bodies at so much a time.

Mr. Withers: You cannot have much respect for women if you say that.

Mr. STYANTS: I have a great respect for them, but I wish to prevent such conditions from being brought about.

Mr. Withers: You ought to have a better opinion of them than to say such a thing.

Mr. STYANTS: Women should be given the right to work and to choose their form of employment. It should not be said that because a man wants a job, it has to be given to him and the woman is to be compelled to marry so that she may be kept. Women are just as much entitled to get jobs as are males. I have no desire to speak in a derogatory manner of men, but my personal experience is that the moral standard of the community is set by the woman. A man will quickly adapt himself to the moral standard of women. If we destroy the moral standard of our women, to that extent shall we destroy the home life of the community, upon which rests the security and progress of the nation. I hope that avenue will not be exploited.

Since I have been in the House I have noticed a tendency on the part of certain members, perhaps facetiously, to make cheap jibes at the people of Kalgoorlie, those I represent in this Chamber, and the goldfields generally. I was a little incensed at the remarks of the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) the other night when he made an exaggerated statement concerning the number of starting-price betting shops in Hannan-street, Kalgoorlie. He said there were 15 such establishments, whereas as a matter of fact there are no more than five. If the hon. member travelled around his own electorate he would find a greater number than five starting-price betting shops. I do not mind if the truth be told, but when one gets a grain of fact and a bushel of imagination, all levelled at the people one represents in this Chamber, a natural feeling of resentment must make itself apparent.

Mr. Hughes: You suggested that hospital committees which run sweeps should be watched.

Mr. STYANTS: I have no recollection of making such a remark. When did I say that?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Hughes: I recollect that you said it.

Mr. STYANTS: I cannot remember it. Kalgoorlie in relation to Western Australia is something like Western Australia in its relation to the Commonwealth. In the Eastern States Western Australia does not appear to belong to Australia. It is not on the map unless something is required of it. The people of Kalgoorlie are not on the map unless we require to sell Western Australian products to them. At such a time the elite of the community is sent to Kalgoorlie to hold a local products exhibition with a view to securing the custom and trade of the people. I could enumerate half-a-dozen injustices which are perpetrated on the people of Kalgoorlie. The only class of goods which has shown a profit to the Railway Department during the past 12 months is the foodstuffs which have gone into the home of every man on the goldfields. The former rate was remunerative, but nevertheless it was raised, and the outback people paid the increased rate. I repeat, the original rate was raised notwithstanding its profitable nature. The goldfields people pay the highest rate of tax of any people in Western Australia. Rents are higher in Kalgoorlie than in any

other parts of the State. In the opinion of the Arbitration Court when fixing the basic wage, £4 16s. 8d. provides exactly the same for a Kalgoorlie resident as £4 2s. 4d. provides for a Perth resident. The goldfields allowance is about £38 per annum. When it comes to paying financial emergency tax and income tax, Kalgoorlie residents are charged those taxes on the £38 allowance.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They pay on the whole amount, not only on the £38.

Mr. STYANTS: That is often the case. The getting of the £38 makes Kalgoorlie people liable to income tax, and then they have to pay on the total amount received; whereas Perth people frequently escape taxation.

It is true that in Kalgoorlie men have a few drinks on Sunday. If Nature did not intend a man to drink on Sunday, he would not get thirsty on Sunday. Moreover, the clerk of the weather does not always send cool Sundays to Kalgoorlie. Ever since Kalgoorlie has been Kalgoorlie, men there have been allowed a certain degree of latitude as regards getting a drink on Sunday. Seeing that there are no diversions in Kalgoorlie, and having regard to the climate, I would oppose the prevention of obtaining a drink on Sunday. Kalgoorlie men follow the hazardous occupation of mining. The climatic conditions are bad in Kalgoorlie. There are no sea beaches, river beaches and parks in Kalgoorlie as there are in Perth.

Mr. Mann: No more are there in the wheatbelt.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Beverley (Mr. Mann) to keep order.

Mr. STYANTS: In the wheatbelt on Sundays I have seen men come in truckloads to get a drink.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Men get drink on Sunday in the metropolitan area too.

Mr. STYANTS: Undoubtedly. In an important seaside town I recently saw as much Sunday drinking as one sees in Kalgoorlie; and certainly one does not see as many drunken men in Kalgoorlie as one sees in the metropolitan area. I know a country town in which a cabaret was still running at four o'clock on Sunday morning. That would not be tolerated in Kalgoorlie. The residents of that city desecrate the Sabbath by playing football on Sunday, but this is due principally

to the fact that the men have to work on Saturday afternoons. The shops are open on Saturday afternoons. Sunday is regarded as the day of recreation. Let me point out that Kalgoorlie people are the most charitable people in this State. They subscribe liberally for the relief of cases of distress. In respect of enlistment Kalgoorlie had the highest rate in the Commonwealth during the war of 1914 to 1918, and it is making the same achievement this time. As regards war savings certificates, Kalgoorlie people are putting up the highest ratio in the State, as the State is doing best in the Commonwealth. Therefore, while Kalgoorlie residents are held up to ridicule—

Mr. Mann: They are not.

Mr. STYANTS: There are many sneers and jeers thrown at Kalgoorlie.

Mr. Mann: You are highly sensitive.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And sensible too.

Mr. STYANTS: This sort of thing spreads about to such an extent that tourists after staying at Kalgoorlie for 24 hours are prepared to designate it as the wickedest city in the world. In point of fact the Kalgoorlie people are the most law-abiding people in the world. It has been stated—the inference is always there—that little laxities exist in Kalgoorlie because a Labour Government is in office and the goldfields return Labour members to the Legislative Assembly. I did not think that statement was correct, and I asked in this Chamber a question as to the number of prosecutions in the Kalgoorlie magisterial district for selling liquor outside licensed hours during the regime of the Mitchell Government from 1930 to 1933. The reply was, "None." As regards the following three years, 1933 to 1936, when a Labour Administration was in office, I was informed that there were 18 prosecutions. That is a sure indication that no favouritism is shown to Kalgoorlie in this respect by a Labour Government. If anything, the leaning is in the opposite direction, as compared with a Nationalist Government. I have been greatly distressed by the attitude of Opposition members as disclosed by the remarks they have made on the closing of McPherson's Bolt Factory at Bayswater. The sentiments they voiced distressed me, because it appeared to me they thought that because some industry was alleged not to be able to compete with like industry in the Eastern States, we

should agree to longer hours, lower wages and child labour. My candid opinion is that any industry, whether in Western Australia or anywhere else, that does not provide a decent standard of wages and reasonable hours of labour should be closed down.

Hon. C. G. Latham: But you buy the articles produced by such industries.

Mr. STYANTS: Even if certain things are done in the Eastern States, we do not want them done here. I trust that no industry will be fostered in Western Australia unless it is able to provide decent wages, decent conditions of labour, and a decent standard of working hours. I endorse the opinions expressed by those members who have referred to anonymous attacks in newspapers upon members of Parliament. Those who have spoken have said practically all there is to say on the subject and have voiced my sentiments. I believe that form of attack to be the most cowardly conceivable. It suggests sniping from an ambush. I believe a law should be enacted to deal with such people along the lines adopted in connection with electoral matters when a campaign is in progress. Should a person desire to express his opinion in a newspaper, he is required to sign his name to the communication.

Mr. Marshall: Only a coward does that sort of thing.

Mr. STYANTS: Yes, it is the most cowardly form of attack. I cannot understand why newspapers should publish such sneering references to Governments.

Hon. C. G. Latham: To some it appeals as wit.

Mr. STYANTS: Yes, that may be so, but why should they hold up to ridicule the form of parliamentary government under which the people live? I do not view the matter personally, but merely from its application to the parliamentary institution. Our form of government allows the Press the freedom that would not be permitted in a totalitarian country.

Mr. Cross: Only a certain type of newspaper does that sort of thing and publishes such rot.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. STYANTS: Should this continued sniping at our form of parliamentary government have the effect of undermining our

system of government generally, the newspapers will be the first to squeal and suffer.

Mr. Marshall: And so will the anonymous writers.

Mr. STYANTS: One other matter I wish to refer to relates to transport. That question has been mentioned particularly with reference to the Claremont buses and the system on the south side of the river. I do not know much about those services, but I am familiar with what obtains in the section of the metropolitan area where I live. People are left behind at peak periods because insufficient transport facilities are available. As one who has worked in connection with our railways for a quarter of a century, I recognise that crowds are inevitable at peak periods. But while I realise that fact, transport services should not be permitted to be so crowded that people cannot secure the necessary accommodation. Particularly do I refer to the service to Reserve-street in Wembley. My daughters have been left behind on more than one occasion when attempting to go to work in the morning. They could not board the trolley bus because it was already over-crowded. If the Government is to create a monopoly for itself—I am a great advocate of Government-owned transport services—then the onus is upon the State to provide adequate facilities. If it cannot do so, then the only logical, fair and honourable course is to allow private enterprise to undertake the task.

Mr. Sampson: That would be the safe and proper thing.

Mr. STYANTS: Where we create a monopoly for a State-owned transport service, I contend that sufficient vehicles should be provided to afford the public adequate facilities. I would not disregard the requirements of the public at peak periods when, so to speak, all the people desire to go to work or likewise to return from the city at the one time. I was particularly struck by an interjection by the Premier when one member was speaking about the transport services. The Premier suggested that if the people patronised the railways, they would enjoy a good service. I am inclined to think he should have put the position the other way round. If we provide a good service, we will secure the patronage.

Business people do not wait for trade to come to them; they provide the accommodation or the product, and then go out after the business. I have known instances in connection with the railways where improved transport facilities have been provided as an experiment. In a very short time the people have patronised the service to such an extent that instead of a single steam coach being utilised, three or four coaches have been added to the train. That is a matter that should receive the attention of the Government, particularly in view of the petrol restrictions that will be imposed in the near future and which will possibly be intensified later on. I was pleased to learn from the Minister for Railways that already some consideration has been given to that problem.

In conclusion, I wish to say how particularly sorry I was to hear the acrimonious tone introduced into the Address-in-reply debate by a member of the National Party. Many years have elapsed since such sentiments have been expressed as those that have passed between members of the Opposition and those sitting on the Government side of the House. During the five years I have been in the Chamber I have felt that a spirit of comradeship prevailed between those sitting in Opposition and those sitting behind the Government. I had thought that this year, with the war in progress, that spirit would have been more and more evident, that all petty differences would be set aside, all subjects likely to invite acrimonious exchanges would be dropped, and that all members would pull together as one team in an endeavour to ensure that no great differences of opinion were allowed to arise, and that our whole objective, in respect to problems affecting the war effort, would be to assist the Commonwealth Government to further the one great achievement we have in view—the winning of the war. I thought that feeling would operate to the full. I trust there will be no repetition of what has occurred recently. I have felt that we have been one large family and continual references to anything of this nature can only serve to widen the breach instead of healing it.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

## BILL—FREMANTLE GAS AND COKE COMPANY'S ACT AMENDMENT.

*Leave to Introduce.*

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [9 17]: I move—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend Section 11 of the Fremantle Gas and Coke Company's Act, 1886-1938.

**HON. W. D. JOHNSON** (Guildford-Midland) [9.18]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

**Hon. W. D. JOHNSON**: The reason I moved that the debate be adjourned—

**Mr. SPEAKER**: Order! The hon. member cannot discuss that matter.

**Hon. W. D. JOHNSON**: I propose to oppose the granting of leave to introduce the Bill.

**Mr. SPEAKER**: The hon. member may proceed.

**Hon. W. D. JOHNSON**: The reason I wished to adjourn the consideration of the motion is that I considered the measure would be wrongly introduced if permission were granted. I do not propose to take much of the time of the House, but I desire to draw attention to the fact that the measure is essentially a private enactment. The Bill is associated with the operations of a Fremantle company that has the right to distribute its commodity and is in the nature of a public utility. That activities of such a kind should be controlled by a private company is not general in Australia. In Perth we had a private company—I will deal with it later, if necessary—and it became necessary in the interests of the community, particularly the ratepayers, to purchase the company's undertaking, and a fairly high price had to be paid. In Fremantle the private company is still operating. Some little time ago the Government gave the company an extended area, thus increasing the value of the asset. When the Fremantle people desire to acquire the undertaking, as they must ultimately do if public opinion in the port is in accord with the general sentiment on public policy in Australia, then they will have to pay a greater price because the increased area that has been granted has materially enhanced the value of the asset.

That was done by Parliament. It is quite wrong for members to be called upon to take the responsibility for an action of that kind. We are elected on the people's franchise. We have a bigger responsibility than have the ratepayers who should deal with this question. It is wrong for the ratepayers to seek to transfer the responsibility for increasing the value of the asset and strengthening the grip of a private company. It is wrong for them to place that responsibility upon our shoulders, so that posterity will blame us when the undertaking is to be purchased.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is reflecting on a vote of this House.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am seeking——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not reflect on a vote of the House.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I definitely assert that the Bill should be a private Bill. I will prove that. There is no doubt about it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member cannot discuss that point now.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have no wish to. You alone raised the point. The position is that the Fremantle Municipal Council should be called upon to say whether it is in the interests of the people of Fremantle for them to have what this Bill quite clearly proposes. The title of the Bill makes it clear that the company is to obtain the right from Parliament under a public Bill to increase its capital.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in anticipating what is contained in the Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I say that ordinary common sense——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member cannot anticipate what is in the Bill. He is out of order in doing so.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I abide by your ruling, Mr. Speaker; but if you read the title of the Bill, you will see that the Bill deals with a specific section of the principal Act. It states the section that is to be dealt with. The section of the principal Act dealt with by this Bill and specially mentioned is the one giving the company authority to raise capital.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in discussing the Bill. He is anticipating.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not want to.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON. All I am doing is to point out that the local governing body should not transfer to this House the responsibility for increasing the value of the company's asset. There will be trouble over this matter ultimately. Our Standing Orders and Parliamentary practice protect Parliament against matters of this nature by providing that private companies must arrange for the introduction of private Bills. By adopting the present method the Government is accepting responsibility for increasing the value of an asset and for strengthening a private company's grip upon a public utility. That is what the Labour Government is doing.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member cannot continue in that strain. He does not know what is contained in the Bill. He is anticipating.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am saying that the title makes quite clear what the object of the Bill is. The title of the Bill discloses that I, as a Labour man, am to be forced to deal with a matter which Parliamentary practice says definitely Parliament should not be called upon to deal with.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in doing so at this stage.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Do not you realise, Sir, that if I allow the Bill to be introduced, I shall be failing in my duty?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I cannot allow the hon. member to continue in that way. He cannot discuss the proposed Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am discussing the proposal to give a private company privileges which it should only get under Parliamentary practice and under our Standing Orders, by means of a private Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am pointing out that the hon. member is not in order in doing so now.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I abide by your decision, Sir; but I want to make it quite clear that I am allowing this Bill to be introduced because of your ruling. I reserve the right to raise my objection at another stage, although it is wrong that I should be forced to do so at the second reading stage.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That is a reflection on the Chair.



Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Surely I can reason it out, Sir. If I agree to the introduction of the Bill, surely to goodness I am stultifying myself.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is no necessity for the hon. member to agree to its being introduced. He must not discuss the Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I say the Bill should not be introduced. That is my point. It should not be a public Bill. This is not a matter which the Government should handle. All the Fremantle interests should be called before a committee under the provisions of the Act dealing with private Bills, and the Fremantle people alone should accept the responsibility of penalising posterity with regard to this matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member does not know they will be penalised. I ask the hon. member to deal with the motion, which is that leave be given to introduce this Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is what I am opposing. I do not want the Bill to be introduced. It is wrong for it to be introduced; and because I feel it is wrong I want to try to put the matter right. In conclusion, I appeal to the House—although I do not want to attempt in any way to defy the Chair—to realise that a wrong is being done and that the Labour Government is doing something it should not be called upon to do. The Government is asking me to vote on a question respecting which I should not be called upon to vote. The thing is wrong in principle, it is against our Standing Orders and the motion should not be agreed to.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn—in reply): [9.28]: In cases like this we consult legal authorities. The Crown Law Department, in a lengthy ruling on this question, says, "The Speaker of the Assembly or the President of the Council—"

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister may not deal with that matter now, either. All he can discuss is whether leave shall be given to introduce the Bill at this stage.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: That suits me. I am not anxious to speak.

Question put and passed.

Bill introduced and read a first time.

## **BILLS (12)—FIRST READING.**

- 1, State Transport Co-ordination Act Amendment.
- 2, City of Perth (Rating Appeals).  
Introduced by the Minister for Works.
- 3, Licensed Surveyors Act Amendment.
- 4, Reserves (Government Domain).
- 5, Metropolitan Market Trust (Land Revestment).  
Introduced by the Minister for Lands.
- 6, Civil Defence (Emergency Powers).
- 7, Mine Workers' Relief (War Service).
- 8, Petroleum Act Amendment.
- 9, Mine Workers' Relief (Payments Authorisation).
- 10, Inspection of Machinery Act Amendment (No. 1).
- 11, Coal Mines Regulation Act Amendment.  
Introduced by Minister for Mines.
- 12, Electoral Act Amendment.  
Introduced by the Minister for Justice.

*House adjourned at 9.37 p.m.*