

Legislative Assembly,*Thursday, 11th August, 1927.*

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

QUESTION—LONG SERVICE LEAVE, REGULATIONS.

Mr. J. MacCallum SMITH asked the Premier: When will the regulations relating to long service leave, announced by him last year, be submitted to the House?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** (for the Premier) replied: Details are nearing finality, and the regulations will be published shortly.

QUESTION—NEWCASTLE STREET SCHOOL.

Mr. J. MacCallum SMITH asked the Premier: 1, Why is the Newcastle-street school being closed? 2, Do the department intend to provide another school in the same locality for the benefit of the small children, as suggested by a deputation to the Minister for Education and approved of by him?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** (for the Premier) replied: 1, To enable the building to be converted into a Junior Technical School. 2, This question has been under consideration in connection with the draft Estimates, and an early decision may be anticipated.

QUESTION—WATER SUPPLY, NORTHERN SUBURBS.

Mr. J. MacCallum SMITH asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that the water supplied to the northern suburbs is as filthy and unfit for domestic use as ever? 2, What is the department doing, other than flushing the pipes, to improve the service? 3, When may users expect to be supplied regularly with clean water?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (for the Minister for Works) replied: 1, The department are not aware that the water supplied to the Northern suburbs has at any time been filthy and unfit for domestic use. The water has been discoloured at times with rust from the pipes. 2, To reduce the corrosive quality of the water it is treated with lime both at the diversion weirs and the various service reservoirs. All new extensions are laid with cement-lined pipes. 3, Occasional discolouration of the water with rust is inevitable so long as iron pipes not thoroughly protected from the water are used.

QUESTION—TIMBER RIGHTS AND REVENUE.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Premier: 1, What is the area over which Millar's Timber Company have either hewing or milling rights? 2, What amount was received for rent or royalties for the year ended 30th June, 1927? 3, What is the area over which all other firms, companies, or individuals (excluding the State Sawmills) have either hewing or milling rights, including all timber sold by tender or auction? 4, What amount was received for rent or royalties from such firms, companies, or individuals for the year ended the 30th June, 1927? 5, What was the highest rate of royalty per load received for timber sold by auction—(a) milling, (b) hewing?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** (for the Premier), replied: 1, 468,053 acres. 2, Rent £925. Royalties (excluding sandalwood) £148,558. 3, 859,690 acres. 4, Rent nil. Royalties £85,051. 5, Highest rate of royalty per load (received during 1927) for timber sold by auction during 1926—(a) milling, 8s. 9d.; (b) hewing, £2; or, highest rate of royalty per load received for timber sold by auction during 1927—(a) milling, 8s. 6d.; (b) hewing, £1 6s.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.*Seventh Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. BROWN (Pingelly) [4.41]: I naturally feel pleased at again having an opportunity to speak on the Address-in-reply. When we go up for re-election we never know whether we shall be returned or not.

However, I am extremely gratified that the electors have had sufficient confidence in me to send me back to the Assembly. The first time I spoke in this Chamber, I mentioned that I had not too strong a leaning towards party politics, that in fact I was rather inclined towards elective Ministries. After fighting the last election, I am firmly convinced that the system of elective ministries should be adopted. Before the general election a prominent Parliamentary told me that he was going to my electorate to fight for his party's candidate. I told him I did not mind so long as he fought fairly. His rejoinder was that there was no such thing as fighting fairly when contesting an election under the system of party politics. He added, "Everything is fair in love and war." After my experiences during the contest I am inclined to think the Parliamentary in question is just about right. An ordinary lay mind, such as I possess, still fails to see why a system of elective Ministries could not be inaugurated. Let us fight our elections, and after that let us elect a Ministry from the whole House. Under those conditions the legislation passed would be good and for the benefit of the State as a whole.

Mr. Lutey: How many parties were fighting you?

Mr. BROWN: Three. The party of the (the hon. member interjecting missed the bus. I am sorry the candidate in question did miss the bus, because the Premier came up to help him. I believe the hon. gentleman was to make some highly important announcements in my electorate. However, when he found that his candidate had missed the bus, the Premier merely talked about the time when he was minding turkeys and how he got a jolly good hiding for losing them. I wish specially to refer to the administration of certain departments. I do not wish the House to be under the impression that my criticism is going to be purely destructive and none of it constructive. Probably I shall have a little of each to offer. The first department I desire to touch upon is the Treasury. The Premier and Treasurer has said—and I have no doubt his statement is correct—that he has a surplus of £28,000 for the financial year just closed. The Leader of the Opposition fails to see it. The member for Beverley (Mr. C. P. Wansbrough) says the surplus consists of receipts from the vermin tax. To my lay mind it is difficult to decide which is right, but I am

strongly disposed to think that a statement made by the Premier of the State must be pretty well correct. In any case, it is most gratifying to learn that we have a surplus. One peculiar thing about the finances, though, is that while we have, according to statements published in the Press, a huge credit balance at the end of June, there is always a tremendous debit balance at the end of July. I do not know how that comes about, or what the system of bookkeeping is; but as soon as we get into July a tremendous deficit accumulates. However, I am pleased to know that the deficit for last July is less than it has been for the same month in previous years. There is a good season ahead of us, and probably at the close of the current financial year we shall have a more substantial surplus than the present one. One of the most important announcements made from the Premier's Department relates to the arrangement for the abolition of the per capita payments. Probably the Premier had no alternative but to accept what was offered, for it was entirely in the hands of the Federal Government. He had to accept what the Federal Parliament had passed.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Why do you say he had no alternative?

Mr. BROWN: Well, the only alternative is secession, and we have as much chance of getting that as we have of flying over the moon.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, you are wrong. We shall have an opportunity for discussing it soon.

Mr. BROWN: One thing, under the new agreement, we are to get certain moneys for 58 years. With the sparse population we have, probably for many years that arrangement will be in our favour. But if Western Australia is going to advance, as I think she is, we shall have a very much larger population at the end of a decade, and so the arrangement may no longer be in our favour. It must not be overlooked that as our population increases, so, too, will our wealth, and if the Commonwealth is going to abandon the field of direct taxation, it may be all right for us. But the Commonwealth is not doing that; it is still going to maintain a certain amount of that taxation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: All of it.

Mr. BROWN: It is maintaining the income taxation, merely reducing the amount by 40 per cent. If adversity should ever come

to the Commonwealth, it stands to reason the Commonwealth will restore that taxation to the old level. Still, as I say, if the Commonwealth really did abandon the field of direct taxation, probably we should benefit by the arrangement made. However, when everything is in the balance, I have yet to learn that the new arrangement will be in the best interests of Western Australia. The next thing I wish to mention in relation to the Premier's Department is the North-West. We should have much more information before we agree to cede to the Commonwealth any part of the North-West. Some time ago, last session or the session before, the House passed a resolution to the effect that a Royal Commission should be appointed to report on the disabilities and capabilities of the North-West. I am at a loss to understand why that Commission has not been appointed. I have never seen the North-West and so I do not know the quality of the soil, or whether the climatic conditions will permit of a white man living up there. If we had that Royal Commission, we could peruse the evidence taken before it and the report of the Commission, and so we should be in a position to cast an intelligent vote on the proposal to cede some of that valuable territory to the Commonwealth. However, it strikes me that this North-West proposal, and the abolition of the per capita payments, are but further links in the chain of unification.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Do you approve of that?

Mr. BROWN: Not at the present juncture. It is the opinion of many people that we have too many Parliaments. But, being the distance we are away from the seat of the Commonwealth Government, unification would be a great inconvenience to the people of Western Australia. Also, the North-West, or that part of it proposed to be ceded to the Commonwealth, is some 2,000 miles away from the seat of our State Government, almost as far as we are from Canberra. The North-West, it is admitted, is labouring under certain disabilities because of its remoteness from the capital city. It would be very much better for the North-West if its affairs were administered by a deputy controlling body located in the North-West. The most important department we have at present

is the Lands Department. I wish to touch upon the system of selection. Since we have introduced survey before selection, I am inclined to think we have driven many a valuable, practical young man away from Western Australia. The present system is to survey a few blocks and advertise them. In consequence we have up to 70 applicants for each block. Many of my acquaintances, young men whom I know would make good and prove typical pioneers, men reared on farms, have for over 18 months applied without success for a block of land. Yet I believe we have millions of acres of first-class agricultural land awaiting selection. I would advise the Minister for Lands to get his surveyors to work and, instead of throwing open half a dozen blocks at a time, wait until he could offer 400 or 500 blocks and so give those young men a chance to settle in the State in which they were born. I know half a dozen young men from one locality who have had to leave Western Australia because they could not procure land.

The Minister for Mines: Can they do better anywhere else?

Mr. BROWN: I should like to see more blocks thrown open at a time, so as to give our own young men an opportunity to establish themselves on the land. After all, charity begins at home and we should look to our own young men. During the debate a good deal has been said about some of the work on farms, and we are told that we have an influx of Italians. I have now retired from the farm, and so I am not engaging any men. However, a couple of days ago I met one of my constituents who told me he had employed several Italians and found them to be the best men he ever had. I asked him what he paid them, and he said he had to pay them the full rate of wages. At first he paid only £2 per week and tucker. They had to go out suckering, and in no time they struck for another 5s. per week. However, my friend compromised and paid them £2 2s. 6d. "Truth to tell," he said, "they are worth £3." He did not give them that, of course.

Mr. Marshall: Well, he was frank, if not honest.

Mr. BROWN: A son-in-law of mine wanted a man, so I went round to the Government Labour Bureau. The wages offered were £2 per week and food, but

although there were over 100 men there, I could not get one of them. Next time I called at some of the private registry offices, and at last was successful in getting a man. But after two days he cleared out, saying the task was altogether too hard and that we were working him 18 hours per day. He was given £1 to clear out, and his fare was handed to him by the registry office, but those at the office have not seen him since.

Mr. Griffiths: Was he working 18 hours per day.

Mr. BROWN: Certainly not! Absurd! He did not start till 9 o'clock on the first day, and on the second day he was dressed at 4 o'clock and about to clear out. When employers have experiences like that, it is only natural that they should turn to those men who will do the work. Of course I think we should patronise our own kith and kin, for we have thousands of young Australians only too eager either for employment or for land, and we should pay attention to them first. The next thing I wish to touch upon is group settlement. It was with a great deal of pain and sorrow that I listened to the remarkable statement made by the Minister for Lands last night. The condition of those groups seems to me deplorable. We should like to know what is wrong. I can come to no other conclusion than that we were not quite ready for those immigrants, that they came out in too large numbers all at once, with the result that land had to be found for them before we had the opportunity to pick out the best land.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Quite wrong. Half of those who went on the groups were our own people.

Mr. BROWN: I believe a lot of them were Australians. Still, we had to settle our migrants. So they were settled there, and when we find such an enormous debt on their blocks, we can come to no other conclusion than that they have been over-capitalised to such an extent that it is impossible for them to make a living. What was wrong? Were those men settled on land not altogether suitable for the purpose? The Royal Commission was able to procure evidence, and it distinctly reported that several of the settlements were not suitable for what the settlers were trying to do. If that is the case, we have no

one to blame but ourselves. I have been trying to work out some of the Minister's statements. When we find that from £1,500 to £2,600 has been expended on some of those blocks of only 160 acres, it is clear that something must be wrong when the settlers cannot exist on their blocks even after the expenditure of all that money. The land is supposed to be adapted to the butter industry. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we have to foster that industry, but it seems to me it is, in a measure, a dying industry. Having regard to the prices of butter, milk and cheese, something is radically wrong if a man on a convenient piece of land cannot make a living. The Minister said the Paterson scheme was inaugurated only to put a bounty of 2d. per lb. on butter because the men were trying to make a living off over-capitalised land. But if the dairying land in the Eastern States is over-capitalised, so too is it over-capitalised here, and anything that we can do for our settlers, it is only right that they should have it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Being over-taxed is the trouble.

Mr. BROWN: Five or six weeks ago I made a tour of Gippsland. There I came into contact with the Closer Settlement Board and learnt a lot of useful information. I found that the Victorian Government went in largely for repurchased estates. I had an opportunity to peruse one of the settler's books and accounts for the year, and I found that on 50 acres he produced £550 worth of butter and milk and £150 worth of pigs. If that can be done on that land, we can accomplish the same in Western Australia.

Mr. Latham: Some in the South-West are doing that.

Mr. BROWN: I am pleased to hear it. In Gippsland some improved properties were purchased at not more than £10 per acre.

Mr. Mann: You would not get properties for £10 an acre now.

Mr. BROWN: Probably in that heavily-timbered country settlers are confronted with the difficulties experienced here but we have to foster our dairying industry for all we are worth. Otherwise the time will come when the Commonwealth will be producing insufficient butter and cheese for its own needs. The member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) told us that the Bunbury butter factory had produced 600 tons of butter last year and that every pound of it had been

eagerly snapped up. If that is not encouragement for us to push on with the production of butter and milk, I do not know what is. When men are settled on dairy farms, it is essential that they be provided with the right sort of cows. There are some breeds that will produce more milk and less butter fat than other breeds. If a man is living at a distance and cannot forward the milk to the large towns, he would favour a breed for the production of butter fat. But we must have the right type of cow. It has been difficult to stock our group settlements, and cattle have been imported from the Eastern States. I saw one mob of well-grown heifers just landed from the Eastern States, and I feel satisfied that a majority of them will never prove payable. It takes years to build up a dairy herd of a high standard because of the necessity for weeding out unprofitable beasts. That, however, applies everywhere. In introducing cattle from the Eastern States we must not overlook the fact that they are unaccustomed to our climatic conditions. In the South-West a good deal of cold, wet weather is experienced, and it stands to reason that from that cause, to say nothing of the danger of the zamia palm, there must be great losses. I was surprised to learn that the losses had been so few. I should be sorry if any disaster overtook our group settlement scheme. The day is probably not far distant when we shall congratulate ourselves on having undertaken the establishment of this form of settlement in Western Australia. There is not the slightest doubt that we ought to encourage land settlement to the fullest possible extent. Last season the State produced over 30,000,000 bushels of wheat; we still have millions of acres of unoccupied land that will grow wheat, and it is the duty of the Government to do all they can to encourage settlement. Away from the wet and cold districts of the South-West it has been proved that the light land will respond to proper cultivation and produce payable crops of wheat. We have millions of acres of such land suitable for wheat growing, and I think it would be better to put some of the group settlers on land of that description rather than on the raw, sour country of the South-West where they will be unable to make a living for a considerable number of years. I am informed that in certain parts of the heavily-timbered country of the South-West it takes the work of two or three generations to get the land into full production. Just after

Sir James Mitchell succeeded in arranging for the Imperial Government to assist us with our scheme of group settlement, the residents of the Pingelly district formed a deputation to wait on him. They had under offer 20,000 acres of Pingelly land at an average price of £2 per acre, half of which was cleared and a considerable area otherwise improved. Practically all of it was fenced. We explained to Sir James that if group settlers were put on that land, an area of 500 acres each would be a payable proposition.

Mr. Marshall: He did not tell us anything about that.

Mr. BROWN: We knew that the land was suitable for the cultivation of raisins and sultanas, but unfortunately the bottom fell out of the dried fruit market just at that time. The land, however, it still capable of being profitably employed for group settlement purposes.

Mr. Davy: For what purposes?

Mr. BROWN: For dairying. If group settlers had been put on that land at the time, the Government would not now be faced with the necessity for writing off such large losses in the South-West. To-day that land could not be purchased for less than £4 an acre. Had it been bought at the time it would have been a good business proposition. The Public Works Department has been functioning well. The Main Roads Board has been operating actively and has had a tremendous amount of money to expend. The local road board submitted tenders for work required by the Main Roads Board at Pingelly and have done excellent work. Day labour is employed; that is one of the conditions under which the road board's tenders were accepted.

Mr. Mann: Who made that condition?

Mr. BROWN: It was one of the conditions stipulated when tenders were called. The board employed a good class of workmen and, with the aid of up-to-date road-making plant, have constructed some magnificent roads.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Did they use shovels and picks?

Mr. BROWN: No, they ploughed the surface, employed motor trucks to cart the gravel, which was obtained nearby, and used road-making machines. Some of the roads, however, are costing nearly as much as a railway. A road is being constructed from Northam to Greenmount, passing through Clackline, and I believe it is costing as much

as a railway, exclusive of the rails, of course. That road is being constructed departmentally. Many of the workmen employed on the job are mere youths who are in receipt of 14s. or 15s. a day, and when pay-day arrives, they have so much money that all they can do is to travel to Perth for a jolly good time. An employee in the Railway Department told me that after many years' service he was in receipt of the basic wage of £4 5s. and had a family to keep, and yet those young fellows were drawing as much as he was.

The Minister for Lands: That man has a permanent job and the others have only a temporary job.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, working for perhaps only three months in the year.

Mr. BROWN: Young men will not undertake farm work when they can get such "cushy" jobs on the roads.

Mr. Panton: "Cushy," all right, swinging a pick!

Mr. BROWN: A Pingelly man told me that he was seeking work under the Mains Road Board because the pay was much better than on a farm. Men will not give attention to farm work when such "cushy" jobs are offering under the Public Works Department. I have no complaint to make regarding roll-stuffing in my electorate. The road board undertook the electoral work and most of the men employed upon it were local men. If there was any roll-stuffing I do not think it made much difference. It is a matter for congratulation that the railways showed a profit last year of £34,556. The achievement is creditable to the State as well as to the officials from Commissioner Pope to the humblest man in the service. During the last year or two the 44-hour week has been introduced and the men's wages have been increased, and in spite of all that the railways made a profit. I think I am right in saying ours is the only State system in the whole of Australia that showed a profit last year. From the point of view of ability, our railway officials can compare favourably with any others in the world. We have fewer accidents than elsewhere. Sometimes our trains do not run according to schedule, and are often an hour or two late, but like the slow horse they arrive at their destination safely.

Mr. Panton: It is safety first.

Mr. BROWN: I have no complaint at all on the score of the attention that is paid

to passengers, and the courteous treatment accorded to them. But what has the surplus cost, and what has been neglected to attain it? Our railways were not introduced in order to make profits. They were built by Governments to develop and open up the country and our resources. Seeing that our population is less than 400,000 and our mileage of railways is about 4,000, it is remarkable that a profit of £34,000 can be shown. Still more remarkable is it that the freights and fares charged compare more than favourably with freights and fares charged in the other States. The only difference is that probably they have the zone system in the other States. If people are living 400 or 500 miles away from the seaboard they will not pay a great deal more for the carriage of their produce than if they live within 200 miles of it. In this State those who are living in the backblocks have to pay a considerable amount more freight than those who live nearer the city.

The Minister for Railways: Not a considerable amount.

Mr. BROWN: Our fares are cheaper than those charged in Victoria. In that State a second-class fare over 126 miles is 15s. 3d., and over 130 miles in this State it is 13s. 3d., so that the difference is in our favour. To accomplish this surplus what has the Commissioner neglected? What conveniences has he provided for the travelling public? It will be generally admitted that we should have more railway stations built. Passengers have to suffer considerable inconvenience because of lack of accommodation. At Pingelly inspectors examined the station recently and had a look at the proposed site for the new building. I hope something will come of that. Last year Pingelly gave the railways revenue to the amount of £10,000. Its railway station is so insignificant that some of the homesteads on the groups that are being abandoned are better built and cost more. I have been on the Pingelly station platform in the early hours of the morning waiting a quarter of an hour for the train, and had no place to sit on.

Mr. Marshall: The West Perth station is the worst on the system. It is absolutely vile.

Mr. BROWN: West Perth is close to the city. What does that matter? If the hon. member had to wait on the Pingelly station in the cold he would know what it meant. I do not suggest the Commissioner should be

extravagant in building new railway stations, but much more is needed by way of conveniences for the travelling public. The Brookton station cost £2,000 to £3,000, and it is a credit to the system, but the revenue from that station was not nearly as great as that from Pingelly, which has had its station for 40 years.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It was absolute 20 years ago.

Mr. BROWN: It was obsolete 40 years ago.

The Minister for Mines: The railways must have spent most of their money at Narrogin.

Mr. BROWN: I admit that Narrogin is the hub of the universe.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: And now it is too small.

Mr. BROWN: It is a flourishing place, but Pingelly is also flourishing and deserving of a better railway station. I know that other centres require railway stations also. We have heard of comprehensive schemes for new railways. I am working very hard for a particular railway which has been mentioned in the scheme of the Engineer-in-Chief. It is in the interests of Western Australia that this line should run through to Armadale. The Kondinin people have to go through Narrogin, on to Spencer's Brook, and thence to Fremantle, whereas Kalgarin, which is 35 miles east of Kondinin would provide a route to Fremantle that would be only 206 miles from that centre.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And wipe out Bunbury and Albany.

Mr. BROWN: If people go round Lake Grace and on to Bunbury it makes the distance 50 miles further. The capital city is where all the banks and important institutions are. That is where we get our phosphates, and the place to which everybody goes.

Mr. Withers: You believe in centralisation?

Mr. BROWN: No. The natural port of the country is Fremantle. New South Wales has only two ports, namely, Sydney and Newcastle. Probably Newcastle is not convenient and everything has to go hundreds of miles to Sydney, because that is the principal harbour. I do not wish to deery any other scheme, for I am in favour of any comprehensive plan that would be in the interests of Western Australia. Ours is a big territory. Our railway system is all

wrong. It is spoilt in the eastern districts because the line was taken out of Narrogin into Wickepin. If a railway had been started running in a south-easterly direction, instead of in a northerly direction, we would have been saved many miles of haulage. I believe the railway out from Brookton is made up of only 45lb. rails. Within 10 miles there is a heavy grade, and everything has to go east to Corrigin, run down the line to Narrogin, and thence to Spencer's Brook. That is not a payable proposition. If the scheme I refer to is accomplished, a great saving of haulage will be effected. At all events, it will be necessary to regrade the line out from Brookton, whatever is done. From Brookton there will be a saving of 30 or 40 miles to the seaport. Our system was so arranged as to run our lines the longest way round we could find. If a comprehensive scheme had been put before Parliament many years ago Western Australia would be far better off to-day. It speaks volumes for the prosperity of the State that with our present system we are able to show a profit. This shows that in our primary products we have assets that are the making of Western Australia. The Government ought to have no hesitation about building these railways as quickly as possible. Railways should precede settlement. I believe we have something like 1,000,000 acres of land between Kondinin and the Esperance line, which it would be good policy to open up.

Mr. Maley: What is the rainfall?

Mr. BROWN: It is 14in. or 15in. and is assured. I have it on the best authority that 35 miles east from Kondinin the average rainfall is 1in. or 2in. better than it is in Kondinin, which is one of the best of our wheat-producing districts. We have only to look at the railway returns to see the freights that have been carried from Kondinin and surrounding sidings. If we have land equally as good as this, and we have, it would be good policy for the Government to open it up by means of a railway. Let us throw open a solid area of land rather than crawl along with a little spur line extending for a few miles only. Spur lines really only run into country that is already settled. To build these railways would be a statesman-like act. I believe the land is there to warrant the work being done. Towards Ravensthorpe there is also a large area of good land. The member for Albany

tells me there is equally good grazing and cereal growing land in the direction of his principal town. If that is so there is no reason to quarrel about these comprehensive schemes, for all of them will be required. The scheme I more particularly advocate is in the best interests of the whole State. What has the Commissioner neglected in his endeavour to make ends meet? More trucking yards are required at different sidings. The policy adopted should be to construct these yards as soon as the railways are built. It is very difficult afterwards to get these facilities provided for the settlers. Along the Great Southern, as far out as Kondinin, there are likely to be many thousands of sheep in the near future. I have been trying to get suitable trucking yards provided, but it is very difficult to get them. Portable sheep yards are a failure. When sheep travel a long distance there must be some place in which they can recover before they are put into the trucks. On the Dwarda-Narrogin line I have seen yards that are a credit to the department. Some of these places are not used as often as the temporary yards. Perhaps the Minister for Railways has been excluding some of those yards with the object of getting a surplus of £30,000 for the railways!

The Minister for Railways: No, that does not come out of it at all.

Mr. BROWN: I have noticed the disreputable condition of some of our railway carriages, particularly the second class coaches. They badly want painting, for they are dirty in appearance. They should be sweetened up for the convenience of the travelling public.

Member: The same could be said about the trucks.

Mr. J. H. Smith: There should be the one class, anyhow.

Mr. BROWN: That is probably so.

Mr. Maley: The coaches are not so good as those on the Midland railway.

Mr. BROWN: The railway service is being starved for want of trucks. Probably the Commissioner of Railways never anticipated being called upon to handle a harvest of 30,000,000 bushels of wheat, and that helped towards creating the difficulty. Then again it is said that the superphosphate orders did not arrive in time. For instance, I know that orders were given in January for superphosphate supplies that were not received until May!

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Was that the fault of the railways?

Mr. BROWN: Yes, because there were not sufficient trucks to cope with the demand. I have it on the best of authority that the superphosphate works refused to accept orders until they were assured that trucks were available.

Mr. Mann: Was not that due to the fact that the companies were short of superphosphate at their works?

Mr. BROWN: No. We know that ship loads of phosphatic rock arrived about the time the orders were to be sent in, but the super works have those supplies coming in all the year round. They also have their stocks of super on hand as well.

Mr. Maley: What about the position regarding the Midland line?

Mr. BROWN: I do not know whether Government trucks are going over the Midland line or not.

Mr. Maley: I did not say anything about that.

Mr. BROWN: We have to look after ourselves first. The next matter requiring attention refers to tarpaulins. The Minister has told us that a great many new sheets have been provided for the railways, but many more still are needed. I would prefer to see the profits made by the railways devoted to the purchase of additional tarpaulins and more trucks. If our railways are payable under existing conditions, their position in the near future will be still more satisfactory.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have nearly 12,000 trucks, and we want another 4,000.

Mr. Withers: If we had a tarpaulin muster, we might get some more sheets!

Mr. BROWN: When we are considering the question of super orders, it must be remembered that the Great Southern area is a late district. The authorities would like the farmers to send their orders in before the new year, and while the wheat was being raised, but if that were done in the Great Southern districts, the super would have to be stacked and before it could be used it would set like stone. Some of the farmers would infinitely prefer to pay more and wait until they required the supplies.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But wheat is still coming down.

The Minister for Railways: That is so.

Mr. Maley: That will want a lot more for the Piawaning country.

Mr. BROWN: If that is so, the Minister should look ahead and procure some more trucks lest Piawaning should fall in the soup!

Mr. Maley: They should be prepared.

Mr. BROWN: That is the principle that should be considered in all our dealings. The Government should have no hesitation in spending money on the construction of railways in districts where agriculture is already assured, nor should they hesitate to spend the profits earned by the railways in constructing more trucks.

The Minister for Railways: Where is all this money to come from? We want a million for the groups, another for water supplies, and so on.

Mr. BROWN: I do not know. For my part, I would allow the group settlements to work themselves into a flourishing condition. I believe they will reach that stage and that the day will come when we will be truly grateful that they were established in the State. However, to revert to the railways. I would like to refer to the zone system and the periods during which the cheaper freight rates operate. The Pingelly district is a late one, and I believe that the time during which farmers can avail themselves of the cheap rates should be extended a little later through the Great Southern areas in particular.

Hon. G. Taylor: Cut out the cheap freights and give everyone the same charge.

Mr. BROWN: I do not know whether there is to be a standard rate enforced or not. I would prefer one, for under those conditions farmers would send in their orders so as to get their supplies of super when they required them.

The Minister for Railways: That would mean that all the orders would be coming in about the same time and we cannot shift all their requirements in two or three days.

Mr. BROWN: What the Minister wants apparently is that farmers shall stop their stripping operations so as to go to the railways to collect their superphosphate.

Mr. Maley: It is not necessary to knock off stripping in order to cart in the super. You can cart your wheat in and bring the super back.

Mr. BROWN: I am surprised to hear that interjection from the hon. member who is a farmer himself.

Mr. Maley: That can be done.

Mr. BROWN: Not many practical men would agree with that. I have been engaged in farming all my life and I know that as soon as the crop is ripe, not a moment should be lost in stripping it. If the Minister compels us to knock off that work in order to cart super it will not be right and it may involve economic losses to the State. At that period of the year hail storms or rains are likely to occur.

The Minister for Mines: What about getting one of the super companies to shift their plant to the country areas?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: One on each farm!

The Minister for Mines: No, but in a good district, for instance.

Mr. BROWN: That would not help the farmer because the raw material would have to be hauled to the country districts, and that would not make the super any cheaper. There are not many centres where such works could be erected.

The Minister for Railways: What about Geraldton?

Mr. BROWN: Yes, that is an important port, and so is Bunbury. At Bunbury, however, the agricultural land is not close to the harbour.

The Minister for Mines: It is necessary to go 60 miles or so from Fremantle before you reach the agricultural country.

Mr. BROWN: Yes, but agricultural land runs right up to Geraldton. I believe Geraldton will be the second port in Western Australia in the near future.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That will please Bunbury.

Mr. BROWN: But, of course, Albany will always be the most suitable harbour in the State. Turning now to agricultural matters, there has been a good deal of controversy about the vermin tax. The position regarding Pingelly, Brookton, Beverley and York is practically the same. The tax is $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound on the unimproved value. No dog has been troubling the settlers in the Pingelly district this year. There were two, I believe, last year, and £25 per head was offered for the dogs. They disappeared, but I do not know if they will reappear. On 1,000 acres in the Pingelly district a farmer will have to pay a tax of £2 3s. 4d., which is a considerable sum. That is not the worst feature, however. The districts I have referred to have never been revalued until now, when a valuator is going through

them. It may be found that instead of land being valued at from 15s. to £1 per acre, the unimproved value may be increased to £2 or more. At Bruce Rock the old valuation of the district stood at £290,000; to-day the unimproved value is fixed at £850,000. On that basis the valuation of the Pingelly areas will be enormously increased. Yet the farmers will still have to pay at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound on their unimproved values. I believe the vermin tax is necessary in order to eradicate the pests, but it is administered in an absolutely unfair way. There is to be a uniform bonus rate of £2 throughout the State.

The Minister for Mines: Well, sack your representative on the board.

Mr. Lindsay: That happens to be me!

Mr. BROWN: It would not be possible to get a professional dog catcher to endeavour to catch a dingo in the Pingelly district for £2.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: But cannot you subsidise that bonus?

Mr. BROWN: I believe that the board should have the right to increase the subsidy to £5. At Corrigin and other centres they have dingo clubs, the members of which offer up to £30 for a dog. The tax will benefit those in the North-West and the South-West. It may be argued that if the people in the back country check the pest, they will prevent the vermin from coming into the more settled areas. There is something in that.

Hon. G. Taylor: There is a lot in that.

Mr. BROWN: But the old settlers have to bear the brunt. I have lost 30 or 40 sheep in a night, and I had to bear the brunt of the ravages of the dingoes because I was then the furthest out settler.

Mr. Chesson: That applies to a lot of the squatters, too.

Mr. Angelo: I do not think there is a dog in the Gascoyne district, but the people there are paying the tax, and are not grumbling.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They pay a quarter of the amount paid by the farmers.

Mr. BROWN: I believe the board should have full power to allow a district to provide the amount they think necessary in order to deal with the pest. The present position is not satisfactory, although I believe the tax is being collected under an arrangement whereby there will be a refund to various boards not using it. It has to be credited to their account or paid to the individual. On top of that we have our own

vermin tax. True, that is only a farthing in the pound, but when valuations go up, so will the tax, and in districts like Pingelly, Beverley, and York, where there are no dogs, the tax will be a hardship. I am not opposed to the tax; I think it would be a splendid thing if wild dogs were completely exterminated, but how that is to be accomplished, I do not know. We are threatened now with another menace in the shape of the fox. I am told that the fox breeds very rapidly and is extremely cunning and that it finds its way into places where the dingo would hesitate to go. The fox has even been known to make his home close to a fowl house. We can imagine the menace he will be, and we can hope that the Act will be useful in the direction of bringing about the destruction of this pest and the eaglehawk as well. The eaglehawk is not quite so prevalent; we do not see it in the older settled districts. I am aware that there is exemption from those who will erect dingo-proof fences, but what constitutes a dingo-proof fence should be defined.

Mr. Panton: It was defined for you last night.

Mr. BROWN: If it is defined it will prevent a good deal of argument and people will be in a position to know exactly where they stand.

Mr. Griffiths: What you mean is that the definition should be in the Act.

Mr. BROWN: It should be set out in the Act. At the present time too much authority is given to the inspector. A number of people are erecting dingo-proof fences and in my district there is considerable activity in that respect. Unfortunately this casts a burden on the poor man.

Mr. Panton: I thought there were no dogs in your district.

Mr. BROWN: Sheep diseases come under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture. I am not aware what has been done by the veterinary pathologist for whom a laboratory was established in the hope of the cause of the mortality amongst sheep being discovered. We have had no announcement as to the result of the investigations that have been carried on and sheep are still dying in the Great Southern areas. It looks as if we are as far off as ever from solving the problem. Personally I do not consider that we require the services of veterinary pathologists: my humble opinion is that the cause of the mortality is a particular herb that grows

on our areas. It is strange that in one paddock sheep may be dying whilst in the adjoining paddock across the way not one sheep may be suffering from any form of complaint. Perhaps a chemist or an analyst may discover the cause of the mortality, and I consider it is due to the Minister to extend the research. We have been told that the wool on the sheep's back is carrying the burden of Australia, and if that be the case it behoves us to leave no stone unturned to discover the cause of the mortality and eradicate it.

Mr. Griffiths: Biologists have reduced mortality in animals by two per cent.

Mr. BROWN: How did they do it? The mortality amongst sheep in the Great Southern districts is as great as ever. A matter to which I wish to draw the attention of the Minister is the prevalence of an insect called the red spider.

Mr. J. H. Smith: We call it the red mite.

Mr. BROWN: It is almost impossible to grow anything in the shape of vegetables where this pest exists. It should be possible for the department to discover a parasite for this pest.

Mr. Lambert: Why don't you do as Sir James Mitchell did, use gypsum to kill it?

Mr. BROWN: The economic loss as the result of the ravages of this insect is considerable because of the way it attacks vegetables in the early stages. In Beverley I have known the red spider attack a paddock of peas. It also plays havoc amongst young lettuce. Experiments should certainly be made with a view to stamping it out. I wish to say a few words about the Health Department. I have the greatest admiration for the present Minister for Health and my sincere hope is that he will introduce legislation to impose a tax for the maintenance of hospitals. I intend to speak plainly and may perhaps offend the Minister. I assure him, however, that I shall speak what I conscientiously think. When the Lotteries Bill was introduced, I considered it a burning shame that we should have to depend upon gambling in order to support our sick. I received many letters from the clergy objecting to that form of raising money for the hospitals and I advocated a tax on incomes, a tax that could have been very small. Sir James Mitchell introduced such a Bill, but our friends opposite did not favour it. A

man in receipt of £300 a year could be taxed to the extent of a penny in the pound. That would mean the payment of 25s. a year. Such a tax would not be felt to any extent by any person. Our friends opposite, however, preferred the lotteries Bill which passed through this House, but failed to pass another place. Now let me draw attention to what has taken place since. It does not matter to which part of the city one goes, he is met everywhere by young women and young men, and old women and old men, selling tickets in a lottery or a sweep. What are these organised for? For charity, I will admit.

Mr. Panton: All are.

Mr. BROWN: If that is the case, the sooner we have another lotteries Bill the better.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROWN: But the most astonishing thing is that I hear no complaints about these sweeps and lotteries from the clergy. I really believe that one was got up recently for the benefit of a church. If that be so, let us have a lotteries Bill and the sooner the better. Another reason why I opposed the lotteries Bill was this: Only those who patronised this form of gambling would contribute towards the maintenance of hospitals. Since I spoke on the lotteries Bill, which was before us some time ago, I have had half a share in a ticket in Tattersall's consultation. That is the only interest I have ever had in Tattersalls. Therefore, as I do not subscribe to consultations, I would not be a contributor to hospital taxation derived from gambling. If, however, a tax of a penny in the pound were imposed on the salaries of the community, I too would contribute my portion. I have never been to White City, but I have heard a great deal about it and the gambling that goes on there, but it seems to me that one need not go to White City to gamble; it faces everybody in the streets where you hear people calling out "Here you are, your last chance, only one more day, £1,000 for a shilling." You will see young girls and young boys patronising those sweeps and paying their shilling for a ticket.

Mr. J. H. Smith: It is a shame. Who authorises that?

The Minister for Mines: If I had my way there would not be one sweep conducted anywhere.

Mr. BROWN: I trust that the legislation that will be passed this session will be of benefit to the State as a whole. I was pleased indeed to hear the member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) express the hope that we should consider Bills submitted, in a non-party spirit. Those are my sentiments. I hope that we shall all work amicably together and if we treat legislation that is introduced for the good of the country, in a non-party spirit, it will be better for everyone as a whole. Now as to redistribution of seats. Even if such a Bill were introduced and passed during this session, the House would not be sent to the country on it.

The Minister for Mines: You would not like that to happen.

Mr. BROWN: I hope that such a Bill will be brought down during the third session of this Parliament, and that the next general election will be held on a more equitable distribution of seats. To find a man of the great ability of the member for Menzies (Mr. Panton) representing only 129 electors, and by a majority of about a hundred, is clear proof that something is radically wrong. The member for Menzies is an acquisition to this Chamber.

Mr. Panton: Thank you.

Mr. BROWN: Still, I would rather see him representing 3,000 or 4,000 electors instead of 130. I trust the Government will afford us an opportunity of discussing a Bill for the redistribution of seats. The measure is badly wanted. Great alterations are needed in the boundaries of electorates. Many electorates now have no community of interest. In my own electorate such community is lacking. In the Yilgarn area, to which the railway should be extended, there is going to be a second wheat belt; and it is almost impossible for a member now representing Yilgarn to do justice to the entire electorate. If some of the goldfields seats are wiped out, Mr. Panton could represent a farming constituency. I have no doubt he would do it with credit.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is an invitation to him to go to Pingelly.

Mr. BROWN: The hon. member can contest Pingelly if he likes.

Mr. J. H. Smith: In that case the House would not be likely to secure his services.

Mr. BROWN: I thank hon. members for their attentive hearing, and I trust that our deliberations will result in benefit to Western Australia.

MR. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [6.4]: This is the fourth time I have had the opportunity to speak on an Address-in-reply. After hearing various hon. members describe speeches on the Address as a waste of time, I had hoped that I might abstain at least for this session; but in order to carry out the duties of a member of Parliament, especially one representing such a constituency as Toodyay, it is necessary to address the House on such an occasion as this, in the expectation that members will learn something about one's electorate, and also in the expectation that the Government will assist one to carry out one's duties towards the constituency. Various hon. members represent very small constituencies, and some of these constituencies are old and in a state of decay; and it is useful to compare them with a large constituency such as mine, where everything is progressive and flourishing. I therefore take this opportunity to give the House an idea of the productiveness of my electorate. In the past, statements have been made by certain members tending to discount my figures on the subject. I shall repeat now certain figures I quoted two years ago in regard to the production of my electorate. In the year 1924-25 Toodyay produced 5,604,000 bushels of wheat, or practically a quarter of the wheat grown in Western Australia. That was two years ago. In that year the average yield per acre was 12.8 bushels. There seems to be an impression amongst the Western Australian people that last season was a good season. In point of fact, it was not so. It was not as good as the season of two years ago, notwithstanding that Toodyay's production of wheat, 7,328,000 bushels, was still practically a quarter of the wheat yield of Western Australia. I quote these figures in order to show the possibilities of my electorate, as well as the possibilities of the remainder of the wheat belt. It has been stated here by various members during this session and previous sessions that so long as the price of wheat remains high we can go on developing the wheat belt. On more than one occasion I have interjected that the price of wheat is not high. I am prepared to give information to prove this, and also information proving that although the price of wheat, according to the "Commonwealth Year Book," has not increased commensurately with the price of other commodities, the prosperity of the Western Australian wheat

grower is greater than that of any other wheat grower in the world. The Minister for Lands yesterday dealt with the dairying industry and also mentioned the price of wheat. The "Commonwealth Year Book" index figures of prices for the years 1921-25 show agricultural products as 1,722 and other commodities as 1,866. From those figures it is apparent that the price of wheat is considerably lower than are the prices of other commodities; in other words, the rise in the price of other commodities since 1911 has been much greater than the rise in the price of wheat. The Minister for Lands gave certain figures relating to the price of wheat during pre-war years. I have here a pamphlet by Mr. A. J. Perkins, Director of Agriculture in South Australia, entitled "Is Rural Production on the Decline in South Australia, and, if so, what are the Factors Contributing Thereto?" Mr. Perkins is recognised as one of the greatest agricultural authorities in Australia, and his pamphlet deals with the price of wheat. I am not prepared to say that the price of wheat here was the same as South Australia's before the war. I am inclined to think that our pre-war price for wheat was lower than the pre-war price in South Australia. However, since the wheat pool was established in this State, the price of wheat has been higher here than in South Australia. The mean price for the years 1907 to 1913 was 3s. 9¼d. per bushel. During the war period it was 5s. 5¾d. The post-war mean is 6s. 1½d. But I must explain that in the year 1919 the mean price of wheat was 9s. and in the year 1920, 8s. Those were abnormal prices caused by the shortage of wheat after the war. Taking the second five years of the period mentioned, we find that since 1921 the average price of wheat was 5s. 2½d. per bushel. Comparing the post-war mean price with the pre-war mean price of wheat, we find there has been an increase of 37½ per cent., as compared with the index figure of 80 odd showing the increase in the price of other commodities. I especially ask hon. members to keep those figures in mind, because they have a considerable bearing on what I intend to say later. The price of wheat, naturally, has a considerable influence on the question whether we can continue to improve and expand the settlement of the 25,000,000 acres of wheat land about which the previous Minister for Lands told this House. I am one of those who hold that

the lamp which should guide our feet is the lamp of experience, that we can only forecast the future by the light of the past. In considering a question so important as this to Western Australia, we should have all the available information at our disposal. I want to show what the wheat position is as regards Australia and various other countries. Australia will this year be exporting approximately 90,000,000 bushels of wheat, representing about a-seventh or an-eighth of the wheat exports of the world. The other large exporting countries are the United States of America, Canada, and the Argentine. It is not easy to secure definite figures from other countries, with the exception of the United States. The figures relating to the wheat production of the United States are available in great detail in the Parliamentary Library. It appears that the average production of wheat in the United States is about 850,000,000 bushels, while the average consumption of the United States is about 650,000,000 bushels. That is to say, the United States export about 200,000,000 bushels annually. That quantity, naturally, has a much greater influence on the markets of the world than has the Australian export of wheat. The only doubt as to the continued expansion of the wheat area of Western Australia arises from the question whether other countries can compete with us successfully in the markets of the world. I trust it will not be thought that I am dwelling too long on the subject of the United States, but I must obtain the basis of my figures from the statistics of that country. As against the common assertion that Australia is at a disadvantage because it is situated so far from the world's markets, I can adduce figures showing that since 1921 the wheat growers of Western Australia have received an average of 4¾d. more per bushel at siding than have the wheat growers of the United States. The explanation is that although the United States wheat growers are closest to the markets of the Old World, United States wheat is grown at an average of something like 1,000 miles from the sea ports.

Mr. Lambert: Would it not be more useful to compare our export with the export of wheat from Russia before the war?

Mr. LINDSAY: I am afraid that is impossible, because Russian figures are not available. However, I shall deal with Russian wheat production later on. We can agree that the wheat grower of Australia,

or at all events of Western Australia, notwithstanding that the price of his commodity has not increased commensurately with the prices of all other commodities, is in rather a prosperous position. On the average, our wheat growers are producing at a profit. Other countries of the world are producing wheat at a considerable loss; and we must agree, therefore, that in our country there is something, whether it be the climatic conditions or another factor, that gives an advantage not possessed by other countries. Let me quote from the "United States Year Book"—

When the Agricultural Credits Act was passed (24th August, 1921) there was a state of demoralisation everywhere among all classes of agricultural producers. Farmers and stockmen generally were in a desperate plight. Bank deposits were being withdrawn, and resources were being depleted; loans could not be collected, and the stability of our whole agricultural and banking structure was threatened. While industry was booming, agricultural sank to lower and lower levels of depression.

That was the position of the United States, according to the Secretary of Agriculture. Norman Angell, in an article republished in the local Press, puts an even worse complexion on the agricultural situation in the United States than that I have just quoted. One of the reasons given by Angell is that the United States Government of the past derived their taxation from the land, and that notwithstanding the rise of more productive industries the land tax was continued. It is asserted that the tax increased three times as fast as the price of land. This was more than the United States farmer could bear.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. LINDSAY: Before tea I was dealing with America. The member for Coolgardie interjected, "What about Russia?" It seems to be a mistaken idea with many people that the average wheat yields of Australia are lower than those of other countries. That is not always so. The average wheat yield in Russia for 10 years was 8.9 bushels, and the average for America for the same period was 13.8 bushels. The average yields of Australia have been increasing rapidly during the last few years. Even the Western Australian averages are increasing. One of the reasons why our wheat farmers are better off than those of certain other countries is be-

cause of our climatic conditions, and owing to the difference in the value of our lands and the larger areas worked by individual farmers. For instance, turning to America, in North Dakota, the State that produces the largest quantity of spring wheat, the average yield is 9.2 bushels and the average farming area is 466 acres. Then in Texas, a winter State, the average yield is 12.3 bushels, and the average area of a farm 261 acres. In my own electorate, in the Wyalcatchem subdivision, the average farming area is 1,582 acres. That, of course, has some relation to the point I am making. Another factor is to be found in the burdens placed on the man on the land in one or another country. I am touching upon this as a warning, not only to the present Government, but to other Governments that the burden placed upon agriculturists can be too great. Let me quote this from the United States Year Book of Agriculture—

The general feature is that of an industry trying to support a larger and better governmental structure while experiencing the most acute difficulties in meeting private obligations. Personal property put to industrial uses is frequently favoured in valuating in order to attract capital from competing political units. Almost everywhere property used in agriculture stands out as the most ill-favoured of all classes, when the tax is considered in relation to earnings. The tax on farm real estate, together with taxes on farm machinery, livestock, and other property, all of which are easily reached by the property tax, has caused the agricultural industry to bear an undiminished tax burden, despite the rise of more productive industries.

I have shown that the burden of taxation has been piled on to the agricultural industry until that burden is more than it can bear. I gave certain figures a little while ago from Professor Perkins' report dealing with the price of wheat. The professor has gone into this very exhaustively to show that rural production is on the decline. He has taken certain statistics from Yorke's Peninsula, South Australia. He concentrated on that district, because practically the whole of it is under wheat. He has also shown in this report that although the production from that district, and from South Australia as a whole, has doubled, the number of rural workers has decreased. And he gives the reason; this is what he says—

We shall readily concede that in the main recent prices for rural produce have been higher than those of pre-war days, but we cannot admit that they have always kept pace with ever-rising costs of production. Hence, the

certainly that net returns from rural industries are lower to-day than in pre-war days in all those instances in which producers have not known how to adjust their methods to changing economic conditions and to reduce their costs of production. That many have done so, we have clear evidence in the apparent prosperity of our rural industries, but in the main, it has been replacing men by machines, and it is questionable whether the remedy is altogether in the best interests of the State.

He then goes on to prove his statement. He takes the pre-war, the war and the post-war figures to show the area under crop per hand-cultivated and he says that in the period of 1913 to 1917 the average area under crop per hand-cultivation was 89.9 acres. And coming to the post-war figures he shows that the average area had increased to 128.6 acres. He shows that the efficiency of those engaged in agriculture at that time had increased by 87 per cent. Probably that was done by increasing the average area of farms, and by the employment of larger and better machines, so increasing the efficiency per man. The farmer has been forced to do that because he has no protective tariff by which he can raise the price of his commodity, whereas all other commodities have increased in price and been passed on to him and so he has had to increase his efficiency to make up the difference. A little time ago Mr. Sutcliffe read a paper before the Society for the Advancement of Science in Perth. He showed that the efficiency of those in production in Australia had increased by $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. during the last 10 years. The agriculturists were included in that class. It went to prove that the agriculturists had increased their efficiency and that that increase was reflected in the $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. increase for Australia. Professor Perkins sums up the position in this way—

Now if we summarise the position from the point of view of the three items considered we get the following results:—Increased cost of plant, 6s. 6d. per acre; increased cost of purchased material, 4s. 1d. per acre; increased cost of labour, 9s. per acre; total, 19s. 7d. per acre.

I want to show that in Australia it has been possible owing to the fact that our land is cheap and our areas large, that we have long dry summers and can use large harvesting machinery as against those countries where the crops have to be hand-cut, bound, stooked, and carted in and threshed. We have shown the world what can be done. In other words, we in Australia are producing more bushels per man than is any other country

in the world. That is the reason for our efficiency as compared with those other countries. I believe this is a very important phase for us, since probably we have more wheat lands to open up than has any other State in Australia, or indeed an other country in the world. People talk about Russia. It is not possible to get any definite information as to the probable progress of Russia in the future. But we have heard the bogey of Russia for many years past, and I suppose we shall continue to hear of it in the future without any actual result. The member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) spoke of dry areas, and the member for Irwin (Mr. Maley), when the member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown) was speaking, wanted to know what the rainfall was. I have often said here that wheat is the one crop that requires, not a heavy rainfall but a light one.

Mr. Withers: I was only explaining why we should have experimental farms in dry areas

Mr. LINDSAY: Let me quote my own electorate again. We have there some half-a-dozen subdivisions. If we were to assume that the success of wheat growing depended upon the rainfall, we should expect that the heaviest rainfall would produce the biggest yield. That is not so. In Toodyay, for instance, where the rainfall is fairly heavy, the average yield is 9.9 bushels, whereas in Wyalcatchem, with a lighter rainfall, it is 12.8 bushels.

Mr. Davy: The yield in England is anything up to 40 bushels, is it not?

Mr. LINDSAY: The average yield in England is the highest in the world. I have collected some figures showing that our average yield in Western Australia is increasing. For some years it stood at 10.16 bushels, but it has been increasing during the past three or four years. In every country in the world where wheat settlement is pioneered, the men who go out use extensive methods. They mine the soil. They limit the amount of labour and use the land as much as possible. It follows that, in the first years of settlement, the yields are always low. Even in South Australia, where for a long time the yield was the lowest in the Commonwealth, it is now increasing because better methods are being used in the pioneering districts. I make no doubt the time will come when the average yield of this State will be far greater than it is to-day. If we are to develop the wheat land of Western Australia, if it is only going to be

settled on the patches of forest country that we have in the wheat belt, Western Australia will not be a very large producing State. It is unfortunate, but I doubt if 20 per cent. of the land in the wheat belt can be regarded as first class. We have concentrated on settling that small portion of the wheat belt and left the huge areas of light lands to look after themselves. I have drawn attention to this on several occasions in the House and the Minister appointed Mr. Bostock to make inquiries. Mr. Bostock has reported on the light lands, submitting certain recommendations, but no action has been taken in respect of those recommendations. I do not agree with them all. It is a pity the committee appointed to make their report to Parliament did not have a practical farmer amongst its members. It was composed of departmental officers and some of their recommendations could be greatly improved. But recommendations do not cut much ice; we want something done. We have heard even this session talk of great losses made on the light land of the State. I realise that since 1919 the Government departments have been consistently opposed to granting any assistance to or encouraging any further development of the light land. The fault lies not with the land, but in many instances with the Government departments, and particularly with the Industries Assistance Board. I am prepared to go further and say that the fault lies with the Department of Agriculture, which has never given us a lead in this matter. About 1914 we had a few dry years, and it was noticed by the Agricultural Bank inspectors that the crops growing on light land were better than those on forest land. The bank then assisted settlers to improve the light land. It is recognised by all farmers who work light land that it is not sufficient to scratch it with a cultivator, and it requires at least 1 cwt. of manure to the acre to make a crop. The clients of the Industries Assistance Board were not given the machinery and they could not buy it. I have seen hundreds and even thousands of acres of light land that had never had a cultivator on it, and the department refused to give the settlers more than 56 lbs. manure per acre. I had a letter from a friend at Dowerin, who was indebted to the Industries Assistance Board and was getting deeper into debt, because the board would not advance him more than a $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of manure per acre. He approached the local store-

keeper and explained his position. He asked the storekeeper, "Can you assist me?" and the storekeeper replied that he would. He supplied another $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of manure per acre, and the result of the increased quantity of fertiliser was that that man got the first crop he had had for many years. In a few years time he was able to pay off his indebtedness to the Industries Assistance Board, and he became an independent settler. Failure on light land is not always the fault of the settler; in many instances it is the fault of those who should be leading the agricultural development of the State. Instead of leading, I am sorry to say that in my opinion they have always followed a long way behind. It was only the year before last that the Department of Agriculture altered its previous announcement to the effect that the heavy dressings of manure would burn the crops. Yet we farmers were using twice as much manure as was recommended by the department. I stress this fact because it must have a big effect on the development of our wheat lands. The Minister for Agriculture was at Ben-cubbin the other day, and went to see the farms of Mr. Basil Hopwood. The first and second prize crops in the competition were grown on land on which the Agricultural Bank would not advance money for improvements. When we have such a large area of light land to be developed and realise that the settlers on it have very little capital of their own, it is a serious matter that the Agricultural Bank should refuse to assist them. I am continually receiving letters from my constituents asking me to assist them to obtain loans. At one stage the number of letters became so great that I approached the trustees of the Agricultural Bank for a definition of what they required in order to make advances. The reply was that a man must have not less than 2,000 acres of good second quality land before he could get assistance from the bank, and then the settler would get 50 per cent. of the value of the improvements provided he could show that he himself had sufficient capital to carry on. Those farms competed with the forest country, and although there was a large area of forest country, the two farms on the light land took first and second places in the competition. I speak with some experience when I say that in my opinion the second class land in the drier areas of the wheat belt will produce a better average crop year in and year out than the heavy forest land. We have large

areas of third class land. It is difficult to find out which is third and which is second class land. We have some poor land; we have the wodgil country and the yellow sandplain. I have some of the yellow sandplain myself. Some years ago a Royal Commission condemned the wodgil country and rightly so, because at that time nothing could be grown on it. However, we found that there was some toxic acid in the soil and it required to be cropped for a few years in order to work the toxic acid out of the soil. It has been said that the light land might yield two or three crops and then become too poor to work. That is not our experience, and after all experience is the best guide. I was speaking to Mr. Alf Metcalf of Dowerin a while ago and he showed me land that had been cleared 21 years ago. He asked me to point out where the light land was and where the forest land was, but I was unable to do so. The light land is not good during the first few years, but the more it is worked the better it becomes.

The Minister for Justice: Is not the colour different?

Mr. LINDSAY: It is at first, but after it has been cropped for a few years and the stubble has been burnt, it is very hard to tell the light land from the forest land. When it comes to a question of crops, we find that the forest country produces a greater quantity of straw, but the light land produces equally as much grain.

The Minister for Justice: The forest land would require more rain.

Mr. LINDSAY: One of the great advantages of the drier areas is that less rain is required for the light land. Therefore we find that the light land does better with a light rainfall than does the forest country.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You admit that the light land will not stand successive cropping as the forest land will.

Mr. LINDSAY: That is a matter to determine by experience. We are finding that the more we work the light land the better it becomes. I referred to the yellow sandplain. Only the other day the Honorary Minister (Hon. H. Millington) passed a farm that he had known years ago, and he said, "I see that Ferris has cleared that sandplain." I said, "Yes." We had thought the yellow sandplain too poor for anything, but Mr. Ferris told me that last year he had taken his best crop off that land—eight bags to the acre. That indicates that the

light country is not going to be worked out in a few years. The more it is worked the better it becomes.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: When was that land previously cropped?

Mr. LINDSAY: Two years before.

Mr. Griffiths: The light land there is different from the light lands around Bruce Rock.

Mr. LINDSAY: Yes. Of course all the land in my district is much better than that round Bruce Rock. I think I have said sufficient to show that the price of wheat must be governed by the quantity placed on the world's markets. The Department of Agriculture in the United States is educating the wheat growers there to refrain from producing so much wheat. The argument is that if the United States could reduce its production by 200,000,000 bushels—the quantity exported each year—it would be possible to increase the price of the 600,000,000 bushels required in the country, and therefore the growers would be much better off for the smaller quantity raised.

Mr. Griffiths: The great slogan there is mixed farming.

Mr. LINDSAY: I think we can safely continue to develop our wheat lands. One of the most prominent agricultural teachers in Victoria paid a visit to Western Australia last year and, after he had spent two months in the State, we were discussing the possibilities. That man gave as his honest conviction that the day would come when Western Australia would produce more wheat than the rest of Australia combined. I believe that day will come. Two years ago I told the House that my electorate would produce 20,000,000 bushels of wheat. Since then its output has increased by 2,000,000 bushels. If that rate of progress is maintained, as I believe it will be, it will not be long before we reach the 20,000,000 bushel mark. Travelling through the wheat belt we find that even in districts that have been settled for the last 15 years, there are still large areas of unimproved land. People like Mr. Gregory, when touring the wheat belt, indicate certain land and ask why it is not selected. My reply to Mr. Gregory was, "It has been selected for many years, but the owner has 2,000 acres and will be unable to improve it in less than 15 or 20 years." Consequently even in the older settled portions of the wheat belt there are still large areas of land not under cultiva-

tion. The great advance in the area cropped during the last few years has been largely due to the fact that we have been putting the light land under cultivation. One of the factors that has aided the cropping of the light land is the advent of the tractor. The work of rolling light land with horses is not pleasant and, apart from that, the horses are required for fallowing. Since tractors have come in, we find they provide an easy, quick and cheap method of getting the light land under cultivation.

Mr. Griffiths: We are getting into the mechanical age.

Mr. LINDSAY: That has been an important factor in the development of large areas of light land.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Do you think that tractors pay?

Mr. LINDSAY: I am not dealing with that question. I think they pay in this respect, that without them we would not have the increased area of light land under cultivation, but they do not reduce the cost of production per acre. The area of my electorate is 6,600,000 acres and of that the area under cultivation is 622,000, or about one-tenth of the whole. I have endeavoured to show that it is necessary for the Government to be careful how they increase taxation on the land owners; I have shown what has occurred in the United States and the great disabilities that have followed increased taxation there. I now want to mention what has occurred in the past in order to show that the onus of taxation has been placed year by year on the men on the land. I believe the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) mentioned that the Government had reduced the subsidy to road boards. I do not think we have had a subsidy for some time. I am aware that 12 or 14 years ago the Government granted road boards a subsidy of 10s. in the pound of rates collected. This meant that the road boards did not have to strike so heavy a rate or collect so much money from the settlers; the Government were assisting them out of the general revenue of the State. In those days we were not asked to clear roads. The Government sent out men to clear the tracks necessary to enable us to get to our holdings. The road boards did not collect rates until two years after the land had been selected, but roads were necessary and the Government undertook the work of clearing the tracks. To-day,

generally speaking, we have to provide our own. In addition we used to receive special subsidies from the Government for gravelling roads, amounting to £100 or £200 a year. To-day we do not receive that money. Governments talk of what they are doing in the way of road making, but they did in the past what they are not doing to-day. The 10s. subsidy was reduced to 5s. when war broke out. It was afterwards reduced to a maximum of £300, and now it is £140. We are more and more called upon to rely upon ourselves for the collection of rates. There is also another anomaly—the increase in the land tax. Governments continually say that the land tax has not been increased because the money has been given to the railways. Notwithstanding what the Minister said about land values being 15s.—it is so in some cases—whereas our land is valued at 10s. an acre, the average value of our forest country is nearer 35s. an acre. We, therefore, have had an increase in the land tax. We used to collect on the 10s. basis, and now we collect on the 35s. Road boards are not receiving the assistance they did get from the Government, and, being obliged to make roads, they also have to increase their land taxes. In my district we are paying eight times as much in rates and taxes as we did in 1923.

The Minister for Railways: Do not the Main Roads Board relieve you of a certain amount?

Mr. LINDSAY: No. They do make roads, and give us £2,000 per annum in order to make others. I will agree that it is a certain amount of assistance. We cannot tax ourselves more than we are doing. Taxation is considerably increasing, notwithstanding statements to the contrary.

The Minister for Railways: You are trying to show that you are worse off from the standpoint of roads.

Mr. LINDSAY: I do not say that. I am not like the member for Bunbury. I do not say that no roads have been made in the State except those that are the product of the Main Roads Board. In the wheat belt road boards have done good work. They have made good roads, and they made them before the Main Roads Board made them, and constructed them at less cost. When the hon. member makes such a statement I feel I should go further and say something about main roads. The

policy of the Government is to do the work by day labour. We have proved that this policy is not satisfactory when it comes to a question of cost. There is no doubt about this. I will tell the House of a deputation I introduced to the Minister for Works. This was made up of various road boards in my electorate. Under the Commonwealth development roads scheme, as it was then, the conditions laid down in the original specifications, and by the Government, were so stringent that we could not tender. We approached the Government to alter the conditions and give us an opportunity to put in a tender. The Minister met us reasonably. In doing so he made a statement that the policy of the Government was one of day labour. He said, "If my engineers cannot do the work as cheaply by day labour as by contract, I will sack them, and get others who will." That is a definite statement. I am prepared to challenge it, and show that this is not being done in my electorate.

Mr. Withers: Do you suggest that a private contractor can get more out of day labour than can the Government?

Mr. LINDSAY: We all know that when people work for the Government they adopt the Government stroke. To show that my statement is not irrelevant I will read the letter from the road board concerned dealing with this matter. This is in connection with a development road, the Nembudding South work. Seeing that the Commonwealth Government give the State a certain amount of money for the making of roads, the Main Roads Board should see that we get good value for that money. They should see that it is well spent on the roads, and that it is not spent according to any particular policy for day labour or contract work. The road boards in my electorate have put in tenders. In many cases the work has been done by day labour, and in other cases by contracts. Although I have no recollection of bringing the matter before the Main Roads Board, I received a letter from them recently asking me about complaints I had made. I replied that I had no recollection of any complaint and that it must have been a verbal one. I put in no complaint in writing, but I did make one verbally. I will quote the letter to which I have referred:—

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd inst., and give hereunder

the information required by you. Allowing £1,000 for the Nembudding South work done by P.W.D. day labour, the foreman in charge completed 63 chains of forming and gravelling (the work was not rolled), and my board was informed that the balance available to carry the work on to the railway cross at Nembudding, a distance of 15 chains, was under £100. Therefore my board's supervisor came to an arrangement with Main Roads Engineer, J. D. Leach, to submit a tender of £6 10s. per chain for the completion of the work. This board's usual tender price was £7 per chain, but our supervisor, Mr. Moody, submitted a tender of £6 10s. per chain in an endeavour to keep within the balance of the grant available to carry the work to the railway crossing, which we did. Deducting the £97 10s. available for the completion of the work, also deducting a further £50 for the year's maintenance leaves £852 10s., and as 63 chains only was completed by Foreman Lambert (and very indifferently completed) this works out at £13 10s. 7d. per chain, and the work was not even rolled. The first heavy rain left gravelling in such a condition that it cost my board £95 2s. 3d. to recondition it. Every assistance was given foreman Lambert on the day work job, even to loaning him this board's road grader free of charge. All the papers forwarded to you in connection with this matter are a copy of those sent to the Main Roads Board, but so far nothing has been heard in reply by my board, and the balance of the money due is urgently needed before the end of this financial year. I have to convey to you the thanks of my board for your interest in connection with this matter, and trust that some satisfactory conclusion may be arrived at.

The board's tender for the work was £7 10s. a chain, the work to be done according to the specifications. Under the specifications the road had to be rolled. So far as we could ascertain the Main Roads Board carried out the work at a cost of £13 0s. 7d., and the road was not rolled. The board had to go over the road afterwards, and it cost 25s. a chain to put it into a state of repair. That is not in the interests of the State. I understand there were some difficulties at the time. Men had been taken off the roads in the South-West and work had to be found for them. They told the board that if they did the work by day labour it would be done, but if not, it would not be done. When the board spoke to me about it, I said, "Don't do it. You will get your £1,000 eventually, and you will get £1,000 worth of work done. If you do it under this system you will probably get £600 or £700 worth of work."

Mr. J. H. Smith: I suppose the work was done at the wrong time of the year.

Mr. LINDSAY: Yes, but that is not the point. The work cost nearly twice as much to do by day labour as it would have cost under the tender that was put in.

Mr. Withers: That is an exception.

The Minister for Mines: We have completed one road at half the price put in by the contractor.

Mr. LINDSAY: I have another instance. The Kununoppin Road Board tendered for some gravelling on a road in their area at a cost of £7 5s. a chain, the road to be 15 ft. wide. The Government refused to give the work to them. The work was done by day labour at a cost of £7 10s. per chain and the road was only 12 ft. wide. I give these illustrations to show that we cannot know what the main roads cost. We can only assume the cost. If I put up figures that I did not know to be correct, I should be told they were wrong. I know from my own knowledge that men were put on to main roads without tools. When they got their tools they consisted only of picks and shovels. When one sees a gang of men with picks and shovels throwing material across the road, and knows that a grader could do all the work that they are doing, one can only assume that the roads have cost a great deal more than they should have cost.

Mr. Davy: Meanwhile the chairman of the Main Roads Board is travelling throughout the world to ascertain the best methods for road making.

The Minister for Mines: Is there anything wrong in that?

Mr. Davy: He should find that out first and begin road making afterwards.

Mr. LINDSAY: I object to the statement of the member for Bunbury as to no roads having been constructed by road boards. He does not know anything about the subject.

Mr. Withers: I was only referring to roads which have been properly made, and the places where God had been kind to the people.

Mr. LINDSAY: On previous occasions I have referred to some of our Acts of Parliament. Parliament is here to make laws. We should not pass Acts to permit departmental officers at their discretion to do this or that, particularly when it means imposing taxation upon the people. There has been a tremendous lot of discussion concerning the Vermin Act, and statements and cross state-

ments have been made. There is only one way to deal with dingoes, foxes and eagles, namely, to pass an Act covering the whole State. The Government were right in bringing down that Act, but they were not right in the matter of the incidence of taxation. I look at the matter in this way:

Mr. Clydesdale: I do not know of any farmers who think taxation is right.

Mr. LINDSAY: The hon. member does not pay that tax.

Mr. Clydesdale: I pay more than you do.

Mr. LINDSAY: In the past, Governments provided some money out of general revenue to deal with the dog pest. That pest should be dealt with not only in the interests of Western Australia, but Australia as a whole. Everyone in the State will benefit as the result of the increased production that will come about. Seeing that in the past revenue was provided for this purpose, the Government should have made some preparation for paying something out of revenue, and should not have asked a certain section of land owners to pay the whole lot.

The Minister for Railways: Who gets the direct benefit?

Mr. LINDSAY: The people who will gain the direct benefit will be those in the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Railways: No.

Mr. LINDSAY: The great bulk of the people who pay the tax will gain no more benefit out of it than will those in the metropolitan area. There has not been a dog in the Toodyay, York or Beverley districts for the last 20 or 30 years, and yet the people in those districts are asked to pay a tax for the destruction of dogs in outside districts, in my district and in the North-West. That is quite right. It is in the interests of the State and of everyone that dogs should be destroyed. The tax should not necessarily be paid only by those persons who happen to have dogs in their vicinity. All the people in the State should pay their proportion. That is the only right and proper way to look at it. I do not believe that the pastoralists and the agriculturists should be asked to bear the whole cost. We have been told that they asked for it. I was a member of the committee that discussed the matter. In 1915 I called a conference of road boards in Northam to try to induce road boards in the east ward to put the matter on a uniform basis and collect a uniform tax. That was done years ago, so this is nothing new

for me. I agree with the principle but the incidence of the tax is wrong. When the Bill was under discussion I entered my protest against the specifications for fences not being included in the measure. It is not right that we should leave such a question to the Chief Inspector. Parliament should decide those things, not a departmental officer. At the particular committee meeting about which there has been so much discussion, I moved that there should be no exemption and I still believe there should be none. I live in a dog-infested area and I went to the expense of putting up a fence five years ago. Notwithstanding that, I am prepared to pay my quota. I have to remember that it is not only the dog that jumps my fence but the animal that tears his way through that I have to guard against. I am prepared to pay the vermin tax, and I consider there should be no exemptions. There are other matters that should be included in the schedule so that the people would know what the legislation provides. I would like to see the Government amend the Land Tax and Income Tax Assesment Act. I have had some dealings with the Commissioner of Taxation, and with that Act quite recently. I have studied that measure and it is remarkable that it should have remained so long on the Statute-book without drastic amendment. It was amended in 1923 and I have read the debate in that year with great interest. I have to give members opposite credit for the work they did on that occasion, for they claim to represent a certain section of the community and as a result of the stand they took during that debate, they secured an increased exemption for the worker. As to Section 31, I know that it was amended, but I could not find out why the alteration was made. I read the debates closely and it was only the day before yesterday that I found out the reason. It was due to a deadlock between the two Houses, and the amendment I refer to resulted from the conference of managers. Even lawyers asked me why the amendment had been made, and that was the explanation I gave them. There are many other parts of the Act that require amendment. I recognise the difficulties confronting the Commissioner of Taxation. No one likes to pay income tax, and many are not paying who should be taxed. Very often the innocent suffer for the guilty, for that is possible under the Act. The individual should have some rights that he does not possess to-day. There are many things

included in the Act that should not appear there. Section 48 means that if I appeal against the Commissioner and he takes me to court, I cannot get any costs even if the objection to the appeal is frivolous and unreasonable. I will have to pay the costs of the proceedings in which I was recently involved.

Mr. Davy: Let us put through a small amending Bill to get over that difficulty.

Mr. LINDSAY: I am not going to pay; don't worry about that! Taxpayers should have the right to appeal, as they have under other legislation. Another section deals with the furnishing of false returns and it provides for a penalty of anything from £2 to £200 and three times the tax. The Commissioner can take a taxpayer before the police magistrate and have him fined, on top of which he can impose the treble tax. The taxpayer can appeal against the magistrate's decision and take it to the Supreme Court. He may be able to convince the court that he is right. In one instance I know of, the magistrate did not consider the case a serious one, and fined the person concerned £7. He did not impose the treble tax as well. The taxpayer found, however, that when he had finished with the law, the Commissioner of Taxation got to work and charged him three times the tax. There is no appeal against the Commissioner's action. It does not seem right that an extra penalty should be inflicted after the court has dealt with a case. Regarding the recent proceedings that I have referred to, in which I was involved, the decision arrived at is a far-reaching one. I suggest that the Government should bring in a Bill to amend the Act to make it clear, in view of the decision that was arrived at, for it opens up a wide question. Surely it will be seen that it is advisable to have it definitely laid down just what the section means. Originally, the section referred to an "annual amount spent for the production of income," but in 1923 that was amended to read for the "protection of income that cannot be insured." It is quite possible that some exemptions from taxation will creep in although they should not be allowed. Another sub-section requiring attention is one in Section 31; I cannot understand why it has been allowed to remain there for so long. Thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money is spent annually in the preparation of returns and the payment of taxation specialists' fees. There is a clause

dealing with depreciation. It is laid down that the Commissioner may allow depreciation, which means, the life of a machine. Against the Commissioner's decision there is no appeal. He alone can decide upon the life of plant, whether five years or 50 years, and there is no appeal. Once the Commissioner has fixed the life, he has to allow depreciation on that life, but he has never done so. He has allowed depreciation on the written down value of the life of the plant, and, therefore, I contend he has been doing something illegal. He has taken from the taxpayers money to which he is not entitled. I hope the Government will amend the Act in that direction. Dealing with railway matters, a new line has been started in my constituency. I refer to the Ejanding-Northwards railway. I have asked the Premier to receive a deputation regarding a further extension. When the Minister for Railways was speaking I think he was under a misapprehension, for he merely said the railway should be extended further north. He knows the country to the east of the line as well as on the other side.

The Minister for Railways: There are two branches.

Mr. LINDSAY: That is so. Although the branch to the north is also in my electorate, that which will run eastward is the one that will tap more settled land and where more wheat is grown. The Ejanding-Northwards railway has been authorised for 75 miles. When I approached the Premier regarding the deputation he said he had already instructed the Advisory Board to make a report on the proposition and that, therefore, a deputation was unnecessary. A peculiar position has arisen since. In going through the report of the Railway Advisory Board, furnished in 1923, I noticed that they recommended that the railway should go 70 miles to the north-east, which would bring it about 25 miles north of the Bencubbin line, which is a further extension of the Ejanding line. Having submitted their report on that railway, one would think that the board would make the same proposal on this occasion. However, the Premier has instructed the members of the Railway Advisory Board to proceed with the inspection and to report. We know what it will be, for it is already here before us. Although I have not the whole of the information available regarding the areas to be served, the Minister for Agriculture was out there with me recently

and he appreciates the fact that there is some very fine land there. If I read part of the Advisory Board's report to the House, the position will be made clear. This is what the board reported—

The line recommended is about 70 miles in length, starting from Pithara, and following as nearly as possible the road running easterly from that place to the rabbit-proof fence, thence in a general direction as shown on the plan, and terminating at a point about 25 miles north of the Bencubbin line.

The report then goes on to deal with the quality of the land, which is described as good wheat-growing country. I hope a further extension will take place as recommended by the Advisory Board some years ago. If possible I hope the Government will bring in the necessary Bill this session. I wish to deal with the question from another standpoint. We are anxious to have the wheat lands of Western Australia settled. Governments and departments can claim the credit for settlement, but if there is any to be given, it is to the men who went out and proved the country in face of opposition. In that area we have had men 30 miles away from railways, unable to get any assistance from the Agricultural Bank, although they are farming first-class land. They are clearing and improving their holdings slowly, because they have not the cash to go in for more rapid development. When people talk about how the wheat belt areas were settled, we should realise that it was done by the individual who went beyond the limits of ordinary settlement, without any assistance from the Agricultural Bank, and far from the railways. It is a good thing for Western Australia that we had men possessed of the spirit that enabled them to do such pioneering. We hear so much about various Governments and departments and what they have done, but had it not been for those people who took up their holdings ahead of safe areas, and away from reasonable reach of railways, the wheat belt would not be what it is to-day. There is another railway I will refer to. The member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) intends to move a motion shortly, and I will not dwell on the subject at length. However, I think the Yarramony Eastwards railway should be built. I hope the Government will say definitely whether they intend to build the line or not. There are rumours that it will not be built. I hope that people will be told what the position really is, so that

they will know where they stand. They should not be allowed to continue in uncertainty. The member for Avon dealt with electoral rolls. I will tell a story different from that he placed before the House. A few weeks before the election I travelled over my electorate to find out where the claim cards and rolls were. I travelled for hundreds of miles and although I could find plenty of Federal rolls and claim cards, I could find none from the State.

The Minister for Justice: Did you go to the post offices?

Mr. LINDSAY: Yes.

The Minister for Justice: And the police stations?

Mr. LINDSAY: Yes, and I will tell you what happened. I came back to Perth and saw the Chief Electoral Officer. I told him what my experience had been, and I asked him for an explanation. He said that every post office had received rolls and claim cards, but they were not there when I went through. Discussing the matter with him afterwards I found out the position. At the time of the elections I ascertained that on election day 35 people came in to Dowerin who found their names were not on the rolls, and the total number of votes recorded there was 180. At Wyalcatchem that was the experience of 50 people and the poll there was 240; at Korrelocking there were 17 not enrolled and the voters there totalled 80, and at Nembudding there were 17 not on the rolls and 17 voted there.

The Minister for Justice: We could get some revenue out of fines there.

Mr. LINDSAY: I told the Chief Electoral Officer that there were 1,200 persons in my electorate who should have been enrolled but whose names were not there. I know of an instance of a motor truck load of men, about 20 of them, coming in to vote, and on arriving at the polling booth finding that their names were not on the roll. Why? They all believed they were on the roll; they had cards to show they were on the roll, but on examination it was found that those cards were Federal and not State cards. I discovered afterwards that Mr. Gregory, who represents the Commonwealth Electoral Department there, received a certain bonus for each name that he put on the roll, and that he gave the local postmaster a penny for every person's name that he, too, put on the roll. Therefore it was to his interest to see that everyone he could get hold of became a Commonwealth elector. The consequence

of all this was that when a person made inquiries about enrolment he received a Commonwealth claim cards and the State was entirely neglected. That matter should certainly be attended to. I mentioned it to the State Chief Electoral Officer and he told me it was receiving his attention. Although I may get into trouble for saying so, I cannot help declaring that those people who failed to get on the State roll deserve to pay the penalty to which they are liable. The greater part of my speech this evening has dealt with the production of wheat and the extension of our wheat areas. I really do think that is an important matter for the State. I have some practical knowledge of the subject, and I reaffirm the opinion that we, in this State, have only touched the fringe of wheat development. The time will come, and it is not far distant, when we shall be producing a lot more wheat than any other State in Australia. The time will also come when we shall be exporting more wheat than all the States of Australia combined. It is necessary, however, that the Government should do their best in connection with the settlement of the land. Of course the work could be done better if the Country Party occupied the Treasury bench. Agriculture is the one primary industry that we can develop, and it is the industry around which all the others revolve; it is also the industry upon which Western Australia will stand or fall.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [8.33]: With the exception of a statement that 140 blocks have been surveyed near Wyndham for tropical agriculture, and that certain surveys have been carried out in the Ashburton district, there is no mention in the Speech of the intentions of the Government regarding the North-West. To a great many this is not only disappointing but very disquieting. For years the North-West members of this House, as well as many other people who know the conditions that exist in that part of Australia, have been pointing out the grave danger in permitting the North to remain in its present uncoupled and undeveloped state. Governments in the past have agreed with this viewpoint. The present Government also seemed to have been fully seized with the position. Shortly after the Collier Government came into power, a Cabinet Minister went to the North and looked into the matter of development, and on his return made the statement that the North would

have to be developed and peopled, but that it was quite too big a job for the State Government to tackle. Others in this House have also made that statement and it has been generally acknowledged that it is too big a job. I agree with that view. We have a huge area that requires to be developed; we have a small population and a limited amount of money with which to develop the State. But the necessity for developing the North does really exist and that is becoming more and more necessary every day. The Prime Minister, evidently realising the necessity for taking prompt action, made an offer to the Government of Western Australia to take over that portion of this State north of the 26th parallel. It will be remembered that a debate on the subject took place in this House almost on the concluding night of the last Parliament. The matter came forward on the motion moved by the Premier that the State should decline the offer of the Federal Government. One Cabinet Minister at about that time made the statement that he would not allow the people of the North to be sold like sheep. It is not a question of selling the North; it is a question of protecting Australia, and to a certain extent the British Empire, from invasion of a portion of that Empire. It is not a State matter, neither is it, we may say, a Commonwealth matter; it is really an Imperial matter, because, after all, the weakest link is the strength of the chain of defence. At the conclusion of the debate the Premier promised that the matter would again be discussed with the Commonwealth Government, and that we would be advised from time to time as to what was being done. Eight or nine months have gone by and not a word has been heard of any further discussion with the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. Marshall: I think the Commonwealth Government have gone on strike.

Mr. ANGELO: Why was nothing said about it in the Governor's Speech? The Speech should have contained an announcement that the State Government, in compliance with its promise to Parliament, had discussed the matter with the Federal Government but that the Federal Government had gone to sleep. I do not think that has actually happened, but I do urge upon this Government not to lose another day in getting this most important matter settled once and for all. The North must be

developed. We cannot hide the fact that there are a thousand million coloured people, increasing every year and becoming more and more accustomed to the munitions of war. The China war has given the Asiatics an opportunity to gain more knowledge of the use of munitions of war. Within seven days' sail of our North there is another powerful nation, as we all know, that is daily becoming greater and stronger in every way. It may not be generally known what the position of this particular nation is to-day. Japan has an area of over 236,000 square miles and its population is 80 millions. That means that they have 339 persons to every square mile. Those who read have learnt that Japan is expanding in population at such a rate that something will shortly have to be done to accommodate its vastly increasing numbers. Adjacent, and within a few days' sail of that country, there are 1,150,000 square miles with a population of merely 191,000 people, and of that total 95 per cent. are in North Queensland. In our own North we have one person to every 67 square miles of country, whilst in the Northern Territory there is one person to every 113 square miles. We have just read of the failure of the conference to limit armaments. That will cause another race for naval supremacy. Everything points to the danger to which I have referred as growing every day. Something must be done. I think we have only the next 20 years to see that the North is properly protected and that can only be done by populating it. Who is going to do it? Is it to be the State with Commonwealth money, or the Commonwealth doing it themselves? In any case it must be done as soon as possible. We should not allow another month to go by without making an effort to determine who is to do it. It must be done. The matter has been discussed in this House to my knowledge for 10 years and every year the promise has been made that something would be arranged with the Federal Government. To-day we are in just the same state of uncertainty as we were in 10 years ago. It is the duty of this Government, knowing that they cannot do it themselves, to get to work and find out who is going to populate and develop the North. Either the State must do it with Federal assistance or the territory will have to be handed

over to the Federal Government on certain conditions. If the Federal Government are not prepared to carry out some scheme, then it is the duty of the State Government to point out to the Imperial Government that this neglect of development has taken place through the State's inability from a financial point of view, and through the negligence of the Commonwealth Government. But something must be done. It is the function of the Commonwealth Government to find the money, even if they do not carry out the work. The Commonwealth Government are responsible for the defence of Australia. A Commission was appointed some time ago by the Federal Government under the Northern Territory Act. It is quite a year since it was appointed, but I have not seen a single item of news as to what has been done by that Commission. Time is the essence of the contract; the matter is getting more and more dangerous every day and nothing appears to be done to lessen the menace. It can only be done by population and development, and we should certainly know from the Prime Minister what his ideas are in respect of taking over that portion of the State lying north of the 20th or 26th parallel. The sooner an announcement is made the better will it be for the State and the Commonwealth and for the safety of the Empire. I am glad to be able to tell the House that we have had a remarkably fine season in the North following on what may be termed a three years' drought. Unfortunately, at the end of that drought period, the condition of the areas in the North was very poor. The losses of sheep have been considerable and the pastoralists, especially those at Gascoyne and Ashburton, have had a rough time. Men who were considered very wealthy had to curtail many of their expenses, and had to look to their financial backers for help.

Mr. Marshall: That does not apply to the whole of the North-West.

Mr. ANGELO: No, but it does apply to a considerable portion of it.

Mr. Marshall: To quite sufficient of it.

Mr. ANGELO: What I have to say shows the unfortunate position we would have been in if some of the so-called big areas had been cut into areas of 40,000 or 50,000 acres. It would have been disastrous for those districts.

Mr. Marshall: It is all rot to talk about 40,000 acres up there.

Mr. ANGELO: The pastoralist has to be a big man, and must have a big area. It is not an industry into which a small man can enter.

Mr. Marshall: He could not possibly manage with 40,000 acres.

Mr. ANGELO: I quite agree. There has been a great deal of comment about the vermin tax, especially from the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay). This is not a tax. It is a contribution by the pastoralists and the farmers towards a fund, contributed to by the Government, to fight a special danger and a special menace.

Mr. Ferguson: What is the share of the Government?

Mr. ANGELO: The Government undertook to contribute to the fund.

Mr. Ferguson: But they did not do so.

Mr. Marshall: The fund is not yet operating.

Mr. ANGELO: The Act did not originate with the Government. It was brought down by the Minister for Agriculture at the request of the farmers and pastoralists. These people realised what the dingo pest might mean to the State. Two or three years ago I quoted from an article published in a Sydney paper showing what the dingoes have done in Western New South Wales, where the flocks have been decreased by 70 per cent. Some stations had to go out of sheep altogether because of the dingoes, and take on cattle. Whereas a cattle station employs say one man, a sheep station will employ about 15 men. This shows what the pest means to the labour market as well as to the pastoralists themselves.

Mr. Rowe: Six thousand dingoes were killed last year.

Mr. ANGELO: I am defending the contribution which these parties make to a common fund that is to be used for the one purpose.

Mr. Marshall: The member for Beverley thinks the Premier got his surplus out of the tax.

Mr. ANGELO: He certainly did get his surplus out of the tax if he used it, but I do not really think the Premier put the money into revenue.

Mr. Marshall: He could not do so under the Act.

Mr. ANGELO: If properly dealt with, the dingo may be brought down to such small numbers that the tax may be reduced, and may even disappear later on. While the numbers are increasing so rapidly and such extensive damage is being done, it was necessary that some campaign for the destruction of this pest should be entered upon right away. The Government did right to accede to the requests of the farmers and pastoralists, and raise this fund. All I ask them to do is to get on with the job and rid the country of the dingoes. The sooner that is done, the sooner will the tax disappear. It is not to the dingo only that the Act applies, for it also deals with foxes and eagles. It may be considered that the fox is something that need not be mentioned, and that it does not at present come into the question. That is not so. Only about 18 months ago I heard of the first fox being in Western Australia. There was a notice about it in the paper, and a photograph was published of some person holding up the body of the fox. Now these pests have reached Shark Bay. On one small farm at Perenjori seven foxes were killed within the last few months. I have two of the skins at home now. When I was in Adelaide a few months ago I visited a friend's house four miles from the post office in one of the hill suburbs. I was told that people in that suburb could not keep fowls because of the foxes. After all, it is not from the farmer that all the help should be forthcoming. We might yet have to tax the suburban householder to assist in keeping out the foxes. I only mention this to show that foxes will become just as difficult to get rid of as the dingo.

Mr. Ferguson: They are pretty rough on lambs.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. Farmers ought to be only too pleased that the so-called tax has been imposed. I hope when the sum is raised it will be put to good use, and a campaign against dingoes and foxes will be carried on with vigour.

Mr. Lindsay: Why not make the householders pay and obtain the benefit?

Mr. ANGELO: Perhaps foxes will come much closer to civilisation than dingoes, and be a source of trouble to those who will not be affected by dingoes. It is many years since we heard of dingoes on the lower Gascoyne, and yet the people there are quite willingly paying the tax. They know that if the dingo is not tackled now while it is further out, it will probably come along and

extend through the Gascoyne area. This should be regarded as a national task. Every person who is liable to visitation from the dingo or the fox should contribute to the tax, and assist in ridding the country of the pest as far out as possible. Reference has been made to the development of the North-West. There is at present a good chance of a new industry being carried on successfully up there, and developing into a big undertaking.

Mr. Griffiths: It has already made good progress.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. It may lead to the introduction of thousands of people to the North. I refer to the shark skin industry, and to that which will deal with marine products generally.

Mr. Griffiths: People laughed about that years ago.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. I remember having to reply to one of my colleagues from the North who was making fun of the possibility of the shark ever being any good except to take down newcomers. Thanks to the discoveries of Dr. Ehrenreich, who is now recognised as the world's greatest authority on marine products, this industry is likely to prove a most valuable one.

Mr. J. MacCallum Smith: Is that why he was recalled?

Mr. ANGELO: He was not recalled. It has been found possible to make use of practically every portion of the shark. When the factory ship arrives here from England, equipped with proper machinery, every portion of the shark will be used, and nothing will be left but the bite. The teeth will be used, the bones, the fins, the flesh and the liver. The shark's skin has been proved to produce some of the finest leather known.

Mr. Griffiths: It is better than the Chicago pigs, all of which are used but the squeal.

Mr. ANGELO: The bones and a certain portion of the shark have now to be thrown away because of the lack of machinery to deal with such by-products. Almost every piece of the shark will be put to commercial use. At present the flesh is treated in a primitive manner by sun-drying. Even so it is bringing a big price in the far East for human consumption. I was shown some of the prices that have been obtained for it. Every ship that goes out shows that there is an increase in the price, and indicates that the people in the far East, now that they are becoming used to this food and can rely upon it, are more and more anxious to get it. The skins are all being sent to

England for treatment. It is hoped when the factory ship arrives that all the parts will be dealt with in the North-West. Last January the Government were approached by the directors of the English company with an offer to take over the Carnarvon meatworks. I understand they were allowed to occupy the buildings under leasehold conditions for a certain time. I believe now they are offering to purchase the works. Pastoralists of the North have lost a considerable sum of money there, and so have the Government, which advanced money against the freehold.

The Minister for Mines: The Government lost the larger amount.

Mr. ANGELO: I think the losses were evenly divided.

Mr. Davy: The Government lost about £80,000.

The Minister for Mines: It was over £60,000.

Mr. ANGELO: The hon. member is referring to the Fremantle works.

Mr. Davy: No. The money there is not yet lost.

The Minister for Railways: It is £60,000 without accrued interest.

The Minister for Mines: It was over £60,000 at Carnarvon.

Mr. ANGELO: The pastoralists have lost all their money. The Government will lose a certain amount. If the industry progresses as we hope, the money lost by the Government will be returned to the State in an indirect manner by the employment that is given to large numbers of persons, by a certain amount of taxation that will no doubt come back to the Government from the operations of the company, and through other devious channels. I understand from the directors of the company that they have acquired a fine ship of about 1,750 tons, which is being fitted out with the latest appliances for dealing with marine products. It is hoped that the vessel will be out in Australia within three or four months. It will be equipped with a dozen launches specially built for the purpose of deep sea fishing. At present the company's fishing operations are restricted to a couple of small steam launches picked up in Sydney harbour which are rather unsuitable for the job. Even with these two launches I have seen over 20 tons of shark, dugong and turtle brought into Carnarvon within one week; I have seen five tons brought in on one day. That shows that even with those

two little launches the prospects are indeed good. If the company can get 20 tons of fish in one week with two small, unsuitable boats, it can well be imagined what they will be able to do when they have 12 or 14 good boats operating at the same time. Dr. Ehrenreich seemed to be very pleased indeed with the result of his investigations in the North. He says that we have a tremendous variety of marine products of which he had never dreamt. He showed me some edible fish that had been caught in nets by his party while fishing for sharks, and he considers that quite an industry will be built up in dealing with edible fish apart from sharks, which seem to be the special object at present.

Mr. Griffiths: All we have to do now is to utilise the alligators.

Mr. ANGELO: There are no alligators in the Gascoyne. In the shark nets the company have been getting an average of six or seven turtles per day—huge green turtles which the doctor considers will be worth at least £5 each to the company when dealt with in the way of making soups and obtaining certain extracts and other by-products. Then there are the dugong, large numbers of which are being caught. This aspect is really new to us and also to the doctor, who thinks use can be made of dugong, which should prove upon investigation to be also a highly valuable fish.

Mr. Marshall: Dugong oil is a wonderful remedy for rheumatism.

Mr. ANGELO: That is recognised already. The company have had dugong up to 1,200lbs. in weight, so it can be imagined what this vast quantity of good food stuffs will be worth when proper experts have got to work and ascertained exactly the best method of utilisation. I am told by the directors that they hope within 12 months to have 600 men employed in and around Carnarvon. Of course those men will not all be at the factory, but they will all be connected with the business; and we know that if there are 600 men fully employed on good wages, it will mean at least 1,200 wives and children and so forth coming along.

Mr. Clydesdale: They will all be Labour supporters.

Mr. ANGELO: If I can only see the population of the Gascoyne doubled within the next two years, I will retire with a certain grace in the event of being beaten by

a Labour man. However, I am not worrying about that. A period of nearly three years may cause quite a difference, and meantime there may be a redistribution of seats, opening up new vistas and new avenues. Still, that does not affect the question. I shall do all I possibly can to help the industry along. I am indeed glad that the Government are so sympathetic towards it and are doing so much to foster it. The Premier and his Ministers have instructed their officers to assist the company as much as possible. That is the right spirit in which to encourage people coming from the Old Country to open up a new industry here.

The Minister for Railways: About half the members of the Government have visited the company's works.

Mr. ANGELO: I am very pleased to know they have done so. The company's operations, although only in the initial stage, are being watched carefully; and already I have heard of two more companies being formed—one in Sydney, the other at Home—to operate on our northern coast, and along somewhat similar lines. One of these new companies has already acquired certain concessions giving a basis of operations on the coast. I hope these companies also will be very successful, for along our coast, in the opinion of the directors of the first company, there is room for them all. The fishing there will not be a monopoly for any one company. Our coast is so huge, extending over nearly 2,000 miles, that there is room for a dozen companies; and the more that come along and operate and produce this leather and these foods for export to the Far East, the better the market will be. The possibilities of success in this industry open up another vista—the possibility of our having a tourist resort or an anglers' resort at Shark Bay. I hold in my hand a booklet which I found on the Trans. train a few months ago. It is issued by the New Zealand Government and is called "The Home of the Big Fish." It gives illustrations of numbers of huge fish found on the coasts of the North Island of New Zealand. There is the sword fish, the maple shark, the hammerhead shark, and several other huge fish which run up to 700 and 800 lbs. in weight, and which anglers now delight in catching on rod and line. It sometimes takes eight or nine hours to land a fish after it is hooked. Zane Grey has written a book on

this sport: I think the Leader of the Opposition has it now. Zane Grey claims to have discovered this new fishing ground, which is attracting to New Zealand hundreds and hundreds of people from America and other parts of the world to indulge in the deep-sea sport. Only about 25 years ago a small number of anglers, say, six or eight, formed themselves into a little club on Santa Catarina Island, California, to catch these very same kinds of fish. They arranged that there should be friendly competition, with trophies for whoever caught the largest fish; and they selected a little beach where there were at that time only a couple of fishermen's huts. That little beach, with two fishermen's huts of 25 years ago, to-day is called Avalon, and at least half a million anglers visit Avalon every year. That fact shows the possibilities of a little fishing resort properly worked up. Zane Grey's book is now being sold all over the world, and we shall find that tourists to New Zealand will increase by thousands and thousands in the near future. I showed this folder or booklet to Dr. Ehrenreich, and he assured me that every fish mentioned in it can be found in Shark Bay, together with a number of other sporting fish not mentioned in the New Zealand booklet at all. I have taken on myself to write to Mr. Zane Grey telling him about Shark Bay, and suggesting that on his next tour to the South in his wonderful yacht he should try to make Shark Bay, and discover it as a fishing resort, and thereupon advertise it throughout the world. If we can only get a few hundred people to visit Shark Bay every year, it will be something. It will help the world to know the land that we live in, and perhaps bring us in touch with people from countries where the existence of Western Australia is practically unknown. I sincerely hope that the establishment of an industry for the exploitation of our marine products will help us to solve the question of how we are to develop the North. Quite a number of other industries will follow in the train of the main industry, once we have it established. Now I want to jump from the North down to the wheat areas. The Governor's Speech states that loans made to settlers during the year by the Agricultural Bank amounted to £599,000. In answer to questions I put to the Treasurer the other evening I was informed that repayments during the same year to the Agricultural

Bank were £570,129, and to the Industries Assistance Board £893,930.

The Minister for Railways: Those amounts included interest.

Mr. ANGELO: I wanted to know what was the actual money coming in. The actual money received by the Agricultural Bank from the farming industry last year was £1,464,059, whereas advances to farmers during last year amounted to only £599,000, showing that the Government received from the farmers £865,059 more than they advanced to them.

The Minister for Railways: No, that is not correct. A lot of that money was interest.

Mr. ANGELO: But I am speaking of the actual money received by the Government. They received the money; whether it was part loan and part accrued interest does not matter. That was the amount the Government got back.

The Minister for Railways: They got additional money, new money, to the extent of about £500,000.

Mr. ANGELO: But the Governor's Speech says that Agricultural Bank advances to settlers during the year totalled £599,000. That is actual new money, I suppose. But the repayments to the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board totalled £1,464,000, showing a difference of £865,000 actually received back by the Agricultural Bank in London from the settlers. I am indeed pleased that the farmers were able to pay that amount back, but I am sorry to think that at this time, when money was being requested for new developments and new farmers were coming in, the Government should set a bad example to other financial institutions by allowing nearly £1,000,000 to come back to them. Why not use all this money and lend it to others to assist in development? It is the hardest job for farmers to get money at the present time. I know of hundreds of cases where extra areas would have been put under crop if the farmers could have financed the putting-in of the crop.

The Minister for Railways: We have to pay interest on the money we borrow.

Mr. ANGELO: That is so, but the Government should not require to draw in £1,000,000 in one year.

The Minister for Railways: We did not draw it in. If we have ten million pounds or twelve million pounds out on which we

have to pay interest, we have to do what you complain of, and pay the interest.

Mr. ANGELO: But it is rather drastic to call in £1,000,000 in one year.

The Minister for Railways: But the majority of that represented interest payments, which we have to pay to people from whom we borrow.

Mr. ANGELO: But this concerns some £865,000, which would represent a thundering lot of interest. That would indicate a sum of about twelve million pounds upon which interest was being paid. I am sure the Government have not got that amount involved.

The Minister for Railways: But there are the Industries Assistance Board clients, too.

Mr. ANGELO: I understand the Minister's point of view. At the same time we are asking young lads to go into the country areas instead of staying in the towns. New farmers are wanting assistance to get a start. That is what the Agricultural Bank was established for. It seems to me bad policy to pursue the lines adopted by the Government at this stage.

Mr. Chesson: Are you objecting to the old farmers paying their debts?

Mr. ANGELO: Not at all, but why not pass on to others the money received?

Hon. G. Taylor: And keep it in circulation?

Mr. ANGELO: That is so. When 10 farmers go off the bank, 10 more should be taken on. Quite a thousand new settlers could have been assisted with the money I refer to. Most of the banks in Western Australia have been lending more money than they have got in the State. This is a borrowing State and I am afraid one or two of the banks have not been lending money on that basis. I am afraid the Commonwealth Bank has more deposits from the State than they have loaned out to people in Western Australia. That does not apply to most of the other banks, whose loans exceed the deposits. That is why I think it is rather a bad policy for the Agricultural Bank to start pulling in its horns, just at a time when we are trying to develop our wheat industry and overtake the harvest returns in the other States.

The Minister for Railways: You are mixing up the Industries Assistance Board and the Agricultural Bank.

Mr. ANGELO: But it is all coming in.

The Minister for Railways: But you forget the Industries Assistance Board.

Mr. ANGELO: Which is not operating.

The Minister for Railways: What about the soldier settlers? There is a considerable sum going out still.

Mr. ANGELO: But it would not be anything like the amount I have referred to. However, I may be incorrect on that point. It is an extraordinary thing that the Governor's Speech did not mention the amount lent by the Industries Assistance Board, but merely referred to the assistance extended to settlers through the Agricultural Bank.

The Minister for Mines: Was not that more than in other years?

Mr. ANGELO: I will guarantee that the amount repaid was double that received in any other year.

The Minister for Mines: That may be, but you do not answer my question.

Mr. ANGELO: Through my association with banking, I know that hundreds and hundreds of men want assistance to-day.

The Minister for Railways: The Agricultural Bank does that business.

Mr. ANGELO: I do not know why the Agricultural Bank should not be allowed to do it on the security of the wheat.

The Minister for Railways: But that cannot be done under the Act.

Mr. ANGELO: Some method should be adopted to overcome the difficulty, even if it means amending the Act to enable the Agricultural Bank to assist young fellows going on the land.

The Minister for Railways: Will you give us your support if we introduce a Bill to establish a rural bank, in order to do that?

Mr. ANGELO: Yes, I will.

The Minister for Railways: Then you may have the opportunity.

Mr. Marshall: What will happen to that P.P.A. bank of yours?

Mr. ANGELO: I am glad the Primary Producers' Bank has been mentioned, because we have lent out nearly three times the amount we have received from people in this State. If every other bank had done what we have done, money might not be so short just now. Every penny we can borrow from the Eastern States is coming to Western Australia.

Mr. Lindsay: We are short of money in the various banks.

Mr. ANGELO: That is why I am mentioning this matter. Every day good decent young fellows come to me to ask for a few hundred pounds in order to put in additional crops, and fallow next year. They have good

land and want money to extend their areas under wheat.

The Minister for Railways: The Agricultural Bank has not the statutory power to do it.

Mr. ANGELO: And I want to get that statutory power for the bank. With the fine country we have in Western Australia, there is room for 10 more banks, whether rural banks or banks of other descriptions. Let them all come! It was with grave concern that I listened last night to the report of the Minister for Lands regarding group settlement. It must be disappointing and disquieting to every member. If the Minister is quite satisfied—apparently he has not been working on the basis of his own judgment, but considers he has been well advised by the officials—that it is necessary to cut the loss, I agree with him. Let the first loss be the last loss. I do not think it would pay us to carry on unprofitable blocks. I made a suggestion to the Premier the other night that members should be given an opportunity to visit some of the group settlements to find out for themselves how they were progressing. His reply was that members had had every opportunity. I have not had any such opportunity during the last two years. I made several requests to the ex-Minister for Lands that he should permit me to go with him when he was visiting the groups. He promised that I could do so, but Mr. Angwin was a busy man and probably did not think of it when the opportunity arose.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: A lot of the trouble has arisen from too many members going to the groups.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Members can go down at any time.

Mr. ANGELO: That is what the Minister said, but what is the good of going down unless we have a responsible officer with us to explain the scheme and what is being done? If we go down individually, it means that these valued officers will be dragged away from their jobs 50 times or more. On the other hand, if one comprehensive visit were arranged, they would be dragged away but the once. As to the Peel Estate, I have been around that area two or three times but I have not been able to find out what is happening there. I could not find anyone to explain matters to me. It is possible to go there without seeing very much at all. Some time ago Mr. Angwin pro-

duced some large heads of maize that he said had been grown on the Peel Estate. On the following Sunday I went down to see where the maize had been grown, but could not find the holding. In fact, one man said that the maize had not come from the estate at all! That was rather disquieting.

The Minister for Mines: I saw the maize there myself. It was 6ft. high.

Mr. ANGELO: I am glad to know that it was there. The present Minister for Lands told me that if we could arrange for a number of members to take the trip he would make an officer available to explain the scheme to us. We should have no difficulty in forming a party for that purpose.

Mr. J. H. Smith: In the Manjimup area you can see maize growing 14ft. high.

Mr. ANGELO: Some criticism, by way of a question, was indulged in regarding the despatch of the chairman of the Main Roads Board overseas in order to learn his job. I do not agree with the attitude adopted on that point and I am glad Mr. Tindale, who is a good engineer, has been sent abroad. What experience could he secure of road-making in Western Australia? To learn the latest road-making methods it is necessary to acquire the knowledge from those who are making roads, and then compare the various methods so as to decide upon the best. I am certain Mr. Tindale is not wasting his time and that when he comes back, the saving he will effect will far outweigh the expense of his visit.

Mr. Davy: The criticism was that the Main Roads Board were pushing on with the work before his return.

Mr. ANGELO: I was not referring to the hon. member's criticism. There was also an adverse comment on the appointment of an Engineer-in-Chief from outside Western Australia. I fully concur in that appointment.

Mr. Sleeman: It was not so much the appointment of the Engineer-in-Chief as of the numerous other subsidiary officers.

Mr. ANGELO: Perhaps some of those could have been appointed from within the State, but in a country such as Western Australia, which depends so largely upon engineering ability, we should be prepared to pay to secure the best advice. We have lost hundreds of thousands of pounds through not having competent engineers. I am certain the Wyndham Freezing Works could have been erected for a quarter of the sum that they cost, and that the £200,000 lost in

the Fremantle harbour would not have gone astray had capable engineering knowledge been available. I hope the Minister controlling the road grants will never lose sight of the fact that Western Australia has received assistance on the basis of area as compared with population, and that the North-West is a very large area to which the same treatment should apply.

Mr. Marshall: They got the money on the area plus population basis, but they have not allocated it on that basis.

Mr. ANGELO: That is what I want them to do. The arguments that enabled the Minister for Works to get that quota for Western Australia should not be forgotten when he is allocating money for the vast areas of the North, including the Murchison.

Mr. Marshall: It is obvious that he has overlooked that point, and will continue to do so.

Mr. ANGELO: The Speech mentions the new steamer on the North-West coast. She is a very fine vessel indeed. I have been travelling to the North for the last 40 years, and so have had some experience of the vessels on the coast. The "Koolinda" stands alone as the most comfortable and serviceable we have ever had on the coast.

Mr. Sleeman: She beats all the private enterprise boats.

Mr. ANGELO: I do not know that, with the exception of the mail boats, there is anything in Australian waters to compare with her. I have heard some suggestion made of trading concerns. I want again to say that the State steamers are not a State trading concern. Ever since I have been in the House I have contended that the State steamers are developmental utilities.

Mr. Griffiths: Practically they represent your railway.

Mr. ANGELO: That is so.

The Minister for Mines: You were in the House when the State Trading Concerns Bill was passed, and you insisted on the State steamers being included in that measure.

Mr. ANGELO: Nothing of the sort. Later an amendment of the Act was brought down to enable the then Government to sell the State trading concerns. I gave notice of an amendment that the State steamers and the State ferries should be cut out of the schedule. Had that been done I could have voted for the sale of the State trading concerns except the steamers and ferries. That is what the Minister is referring to.

The Minister for Mines: No.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. I gave notice of an amendment that the State steamers and State ferries should be cut out of the schedule. It was the only way to save them if the Bill had passed.

The Minister for Mines: Were you not in the House when the original Act was passed?

Mr. ANGELO: No, it was before my time. Reverting to the "Koolinda," the only thing I am afraid of is that they are trying to make too much use of her.

Mr. Coverley: They are not making enough use of her.

Mr. ANGELO: They are trying to run 14 trips yearly, thus giving her only three or four days spell in Fremantle. I am afraid she will not be kept up to the mark if they do that. That is why I think it so necessary that we should have a second vessel. It would give us a fortnight's service and more time for each boat to be overhauled in Fremantle. Moreover, if the vessel can stand it, I do not see how the officers and men can stand it either, for they are up every night and it is no holiday for them in Fremantle, because they are unloading and loading when there. Moreover, with two boats we could have a proper fortnightly service, which would permit of the issue of return tickets. The last two occasions on which I have travelled by the "Koolinda," she left hundreds of bales behind at Carnarvon because she was already full. It shows how well she is justified. Again, we have often heard it said that we have not the officers and crews to run these boats. If anyone wants more competent officers and better crews than are to be found on the "Koolinda" and the "Kangaroo" he is pretty hard to satisfy.

Mr. Sleeman: There are plenty more like them in Fremantle.

Mr. ANGELO: I daresay. On the last trip several Nor'-Westers were aboard. They had never travelled on a State steamer before, having an objection on principle. However, when they left the "Koolinda" they all expressed themselves as being quite satisfied with her.

Mr. Coverley: She has made a lot of converts.

Mr. ANGELO: One viewpoint stressed by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) the other night, I cannot agree with. He said we should drive off the Singapore boats from our coast, or words to that

effect. As an old resident of the North I realise what we owe to those Singapore boats. But for them the people of the North would have been very badly off indeed.

Mr. Sleeman: They know what they owe to us, too.

Mr. ANGELO: I do not think they have made very much profit.

Mr. Marshall: During war time, when there was not so much profit, they took the boats off quickly enough.

Mr. ANGELO: They left us 75 per cent. of their boats.

Mr. Sleeman: Apparently you stand for black labour.

Mr. ANGELO: The question is, can we spare those boats from our coast? I say we cannot. At present the Singapore boats are making a trip every week during the cattle season, and there are four of them. Then we have the "Kangaroo" and the "Koolinda," or six boats per month in all. How are we to replace the four Singapore boats if we drive them off the coast? What would the metropolitan market do for its beef supply? We require to have at least five State boats before we can afford to lose the four Singapore boats. As for the coloured labour, if we drive that away the boats will go too, and then God help the Nor'-West, and God help you people down here who are dependent on the North for your beef. The member for Fremantle made a point about the money spent in Australia by the officers and men of the State boats, as against the others. I think every officer on the Singapore boats is a married man and that all their families live in Fremantle.

Mr. Sleeman: How many of them in all are there?

Mr. ANGELO: I suppose each of the boats has 10 or 12 officers. And those boats are keeping up a jolly good connection with Singapore and Java, which I do not think the State boats ought to do; because if they once go past their own shores they become trading concerns. At present, while exclusively on our own coast, they are developmental utilities.

Mr. Clydesdale: And when they carry our produce up to Java they are not developmental utilities!

Mr. ANGELO: There is not very much being carried up there at present. Let us get a second "Koolinda," but do not let us

do anything to drive away the Singapore boats, for we want them all. Let us get all the cargo and passengers that we can for our State boats, but beyond that let us do nothing to drive off the Singapore boats. It may be easy enough to drive off Holt's boats.

Mr. Davy: How could we drive off these vessels, even if we wanted to? It is not a State function.

Mr. Sleeman: No, but it was on the recommendation of the Leader of the Opposition, a State member, that the last boat was granted permission to trade on this coast.

Mr. ANGELO: We have seen the results of the Navigation Act in Tasmania and other places, and I say we ought to let sleeping dogs lie. By all means let us get a second "Koolinda." I am hopeful that all the steamers we can get will be required before very long. I was in Carnarvon in July when a telegram arrived stating that the result of the year's financial operations was a surplus. I was very much delighted with that, for I realised the fine advertisement it was for Western Australia to be able to tell the world that after so many years of depression and struggling, caused by the war and its aftermath, we had been able to balance the ledger for the first time. But, listening to the Treasurer the other evening, I began to get a little doubtful as to whether we really did have a surplus. The first item mentioned by him, which he acknowledged to have taken into revenue, was £58,000, the balance of the Goldfields Water Supply loan.

The Minister for Railways: What would you have done?

Mr. ANGELO: Left it in the sinking fund, as would any other financier except a political financier. It is a special fund created to be set off against our loans. When one particular loan happens to show a surplus, why not leave that to be offset against another loan that is short in its realisation?

The Minister for Railways: We had deficits for years because of our contributions to that fund.

Mr. ANGELO: Previous Treasurers knew there would be a surplus in that fund. Why did not they grab it?

The Minister for Railways: Because they could not.

Mr. ANGELO: They could have stopped paying in to the fund.

Mr. Panton: No. A Bill was passed through both Houses to allow of that being done, but the Home authorities objected.

Mr. ANGELO: Then why did not the Treasurer use it to set off against the accumulated deficit?

The Minister for Lands: Why not rejoice?

Mr. ANGELO: Because I do not think the correct thing was done.

The Minister for Lands: You did not want a surplus.

Mr. ANGELO: Nothing would please me better than to know it was a genuine surplus. I am beginning to doubt it.

The Minister for Lands: You are very much disappointed.

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier said that owing to investments made by trustees the surplus was created. In June of last year there was a surplus of £204,000 in respect of this particular loan. Yet that comes down to £58,000. It looks to me as if there has been a tremendous sacrifice made to get hold of the £58,000 in time to include it in last year's figures. Why not have left the £204,000 in the sinking fund? I am certain that no financier would have done what the Treasurer did. The sinking fund was created for a special purpose.

Mr. Panton: And that special purpose was fulfilled.

Mr. ANGELO: But it was not intended for a particular loan.

The Minister for Justice: There was a specially heavy sinking fund of 3 per cent. on that loan.

Mr. ANGELO: If the Premier wanted to take that £58,000 out of the sinking fund he should have put it against the deficit in the same way as he says he applied the £200,000 obtained from the Federal Government.

The Minister for Agriculture: What would you have done?

Mr. ANGELO: Used it in the same way as the £200,000 of Federal money was used—set it against the deficit.

Mr. Marshall: You assisted the financial manoeuvres of the Carnarvon meatworks, and they have closed down.

Mr. ANGELO: They never operated and so they could not have closed down. The Minister knows that those meat works were erected on the strong advice of departmental officers.

The Minister for Agriculture: On your advice. You approved them.

Mr. ANGELO: What I asked the Government to do was to send up the most competent officials they had to report whether the works ought to be built and, if so, to select a site and suggest designs.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is very unfortunate that everything up there, such as fish works, etc., has been a failure.

Mr. ANGELO: I did not have the slightest hand in any fish works, and the Minister knows it.

Mr. Marshall: You did not discover until recently that you had so many sharks up there.

Mr. ANGELO: I have become accustomed to sharks in the last few years. Take the item of £150,000 that should have been paid to the sinking fund trustees. I cannot make out whether that has been debited to interest or not.

The Minister for Agriculture: What would you have done with the Primary Producers' Bank?

Mr. ANGELO: I should certainly not have anticipated some other arrangement with another bank to carry me over and refrain from paying the interest due. Speaking on this item, the Premier told us that general revenue did not benefit by that sum of £150,000. He said it had been placed in the suspense account to meet losses that we were bound to have on account of group settlement. Then the following discussion occurred:—

The Leader of the Opposition: Where did you debit it?

The Premier: It has been set aside.

The Leader of the Opposition: Held in suspense?

The Premier: In a suspense account.

The Leader of the Opposition: Where did you get it?

The Premier: We have refrained from paying the amount.

The Minister for Agriculture: We have not paid it into revenue.

Mr. ANGELO: But what is it debited to?

The Minister for Agriculture: It is put in a suspense account.

Mr. Pantou: Put in a jam tin.

Mr. ANGELO: But where did you get it?

Mr. Pantou: You want to know too much.

Mr. ANGELO: At a later stage in the debate the following discussion ensued:—

The Leader of the Opposition: I think the Premier cannot have debited this £150,000 to the interest bill; otherwise the interest bill would be greater.

The Premier: No, it was not paid.

The Leader of the Opposition: It was not paid to the sinking fund trustees; it is just held in suspense. It remains, of course, in the revenue.

The Premier: It does not benefit revenue.

Still later, the Leader of the Opposition further questioned the Premier as follows:—

The Leader of the Opposition: Then where did the Premier debit the amount?

The Premier: I say that the general revenue did not benefit by the £150,000.

Mr. Pantou: Did you take all that down in shorthand?

Mr. ANGELO: What do members make of it?

Mr. Griffiths: A good old smoke screen.

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier estimated that his interest bill last year would be £212,000 more than that of the preceding year, but as a matter of fact it was £3,000 less. Consequently the Premier paid in interest £215,000 less than was paid in the previous year. Would that have happened if the £150,000 had been debited? I contend it would not. Last year the Premier was called a prophet because he got within a few thousand pounds of his estimate, but here on this one item of interest he is out £215,000. I should like the Premier's assurance that the £150,000 was debited as it should have been debited. He may have put it into a suspense account in anticipation of the agreement with the Federal Government.

The Minister for Justice: The Premier will tell you the whole system of finance when he brings down the Budget.

The Minister for Agriculture: But you will not understand it.

Mr. ANGELO: I cannot understand this.

The Minister for Agriculture: We cannot understand your methods.

Mr. ANGELO: I admit that I cannot understand this. I have a knowledge of finance extending over more than 20 years. I was in a bank for a good many years and amongst the positions I held was that of bank manager. Still, I confess that I have not much knowledge of political finance.

The Minister for Agriculture: But you have other knowledge.

Mr. ANGELO: I should like to know whether the £150,000 has been debited to the interest account as it should have been. If it has not been so debited, I consider there has been a breach of faith with the trustees of the sinking fund and the public of Western Australia. The suggested agreement with the Federal Government has not yet been ratified by Parliament, and it would be

quite wrong for the Premier to anticipate the ratification of an agreement and suspend the payment of £150,000 to the sinking fund.

The Minister for Justice: It has not been suspended at all.

Mr. ANGELO: Then where the dickens is it? It is not shown in the interest account.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is where the profit in the mica proposition is.

Mr. ANGELO: It is all very well to drag the mica fields, red herrings and other fishy things across the trail, but that will not satisfy me. I want to know where the £150,000 is.

Mr. Panton: We are not going to tell you.

Mr. ANGELO: If it has just been held in the revenue, it might have to be paid this year, and if that is so, instead of there being a surplus of £28,000, that item alone would make a deficit of £122,000.

Mr. Clydesdale: That is what is annoying you.

Mr. ANGELO: Not a bit of it. The Government have £2,250,000 of Federal money for which they are paying 1 per cent.

The Minister for Agriculture: For what purpose, groups?

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. The Government are charging the group settlers 6 per cent. for that money.

The Minister for Agriculture: We are getting nothing for it.

Mr. ANGELO: But the Government are debiting it up to the settlers and crediting revenue.

The Minister for Agriculture: Debiting it up?

Mr. ANGELO: Will the Minister tell me the Government are not getting 6 per cent.?

The Minister for Agriculture: We are not getting it. What you call an interest concession does not exist. It is lost and gone.

Mr. ANGELO: But last year the Treasury must have debited those people with 6 per cent. interest amounting to £135,000 and for that the Government are paying 1 per cent., which is £22,500. Where is the £110,000 difference? I hope that is held in suspense account and has not been taken into revenue. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, the Premier received £189,000 more than he expected under the heading of reimbursements, and paid out less in interest

and sinking fund by £215,000. That is a difference of £405,000. The Leader of the Opposition wound up his speech by asking the Premier to explain the position frankly, and I certainly hope that will be done.

Mr. Clydesdale: As clear as mud.

Mr. ANGELO: The Premier also claimed that by placing £200,000 of the Federal grant to cover the reduction of 33 1/3rd per cent. in the income tax, he had lost £30,000. He said the reduction had cost him £250,000.

The Minister for Justice: He certainly got £250,000 less by way of taxation.

Mr. ANGELO: I admit that, but he admitted that the income tax receipts amounted to only £345,000, so that his loss was only £172,000.

The Minister for Agriculture: We anticipate getting a greater amount from income tax every year.

Mr. ANGELO: That is what the Premier said he actually received. The figures show that the Premier, by taking the £200,000, made £28,000. In short, he made his surplus out of the £200,000 that he set aside to cover the reduction of income tax.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: What about the dingoes?

Mr. ANGELO: Another thing I should like to know is how the other £200,000 of the £560,000 of Federal money has been dealt with. That was to have come off the deficit. I should like the Premier to tell us whether it was credited to the amount already funded or taken off the bank deficit, or just how it was dealt with.

Mr. Griffiths: Was it not to come off the funded deficit?

Mr. ANGELO: We were promised that the £200,000 was to come off the deficit and I want to know how it was applied. The other £58,000 from the sinking fund should have been applied in the same way. The sinking fund was created as a set-off against the State's indebtedness. While the Premier admitted having received more revenue by £1,800,000 than the Mitchell Government received in their last year of office, he was able to show an alleged surplus of only £28,000. The year 1922 was the peak year of the deficit, and the shortage in revenue was then £732,000. That was the time when, thanks to Sir James Mitchell's bold policy of development and increased production, the State turned the financial corner. In the following year Sir James reduced the deficit

to £405,000, and in his last year of office he got it down to £229,000. That meant that the deficit was reduced at the rate of £225,000 a year.

The Minister for Justice: We could have done the same.

Mr. ANGELO: Yet the present Premier acknowledges that he received nearly £2,000,000 more in the way of revenue than Sir James Mitchell received in his last year of office, and all that can be shown is a surplus of £28,000. On the results achieved by Sir James Mitchell and at the same rate of progress the present Premier should have a surplus this year of £400,000.

The Minister for Lands: You had the super tax.

The Minister for Railways: Of 15 per cent.

Mr. ANGELO: That was mighty small when it comes to a question of millions.

The Minister for Railways: Take 15 per cent. on a million.

Mr. Davy: Why on a million? We never have a million in taxation.

The Minister for Railways: It was off every tax, not only the income tax.

Mr. Davy: What else was it off?

Mr. ANGELO: The Treasurer, whilst acknowledging receipt of a bigger revenue, claimed that its receipt also meant higher expenditure. That is correct up to a certain point. When a business increases and the receipts become greater, the overhead charges generally remain the same. In the case of this State there is the same Parliament, there are the same departments, and the same heads of departments.

The Minister for Railways: How much has the same Parliament cost us?

Mr. ANGELO: Mighty little. The whole cost of Parliament is only a flea bite. There are the same heads of departments, and practically the same civil service.

The Minister for Lands: Look at all the advantages accruing from medical services, education, hospitals, charities, etc.

Mr. ANGELO: The cost of these does not run into £1,800,000.

The Minister for Lands: Then there are the police, the civil service and teachers, and so on.

Mr. ANGELO: By this time we should have seen a surplus of £400,000, that is taking it at the same rate of interest and the same rate of progress as was achieved by the previous Government in the last three

years of administration. There are lean years and fat years. We have to provide for the lean years. We have had two or three good years lately in this part of the State. If we can build up a little surplus and catch up some of the leeway, we should do so. I am disappointed that the surplus was not greater. If I were satisfied that the £28,000 surplus was a true and genuine one, it would not be so bad.

Mr. Clydesdale: How does it compare with the other States?

Mr. ANGELO: I am not comparing it with the other States, but with what was achieved by the previous Government that was in power. It is right that the Treasurer should give us a frank explanation to clear up these points, more especially as to the item, £150,000. If that has not been debited to interest and is still kept in revenue it is a liability for this year, should the agreement not be confirmed by Parliament. It is only fair to the people of the State that a full explanation should be given as to these amounts, and that we should know exactly where we are with regard to last year's figures.

On motion by Mr. Panton, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.5 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 16th August, 1927.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, leave of absence for three consecutive sittings granted to Hon. J. E. Dodd on the ground of urgent private business.