

Mr. TONKIN: I am sick and tired of sending figures to Ministers. The wool is pulled over their eyes. They have experts like Air Vice-Marshal Wrigley. Inquiries are held, but there are no results. They "pass the buck." If these were times of peace, this sort of thing might be allowed to go on; but in war-time we have to do something if we are to justify our existence. There may be a perfectly reasonable explanation, but on the facts it is most difficult to find. There is urgent need for immediate inquiry. This case is typical of dozens and dozens that I know of. What is the use of writing to the departments? I have spent hours typing reiterated statements and sending them on to the departments. I got no further. As a last resource I am making these things public. I suppose the Censor will come down on me, but these matters ought to be known throughout the length and breadth of the Commonwealth.

We are asking the people to pay additional taxation, and yet we throw away £35,000 in one single contract! This man in Western Australia is capable of doing and prepared to do 100,000 of these articles at 14s. 7d., but United Metal Industries in Queensland are receiving 25s. 5d. for the same article. Because we had not the necessary set-up here and therefore might be somewhat dearer than other States, we could not be considered. If these matters are referred to the Prime Minister, he cannot do more than call for reports from his officers. Departmental inquiries, I repeat, are complete wash-outs. I would not waste time on them. They discover nothing. One could not prove to a departmental board of inquiry that the world is round. For effectual investigations we must have a judge, a man with the judicial mind, one knowing the laws of evidence; and we must have experts in the particular branch with regard to which a protest is being made, experts as far removed as possible from the many tie-ups there are. We must endeavour to set up a permanent tribunal to which anyone who feels that he has a grievance or a case for inquiry can go.

I am not by any means advocating that every complaint should be investigated, since undoubtedly there will be some of a frivolous nature. I have here complaints, straight-out statements made to me, of bare-faced bribery. I refrain from giving the details here, but I am prepared to give them to a

tribunal such as I have suggested. We need a tribunal of responsible men to examine allegations and decide whether, *prima facie*, they have sufficient merits to warrant further investigation. If that should be the decision, let us have every inquiry irrespective of anything highly-placed officials may declare. How can a full-time war effort on the part of the people be expected when men in responsible positions give ample evidence of incompetency? Various manufacturers have said to me, "Mr. Tonkin, we think such and such a man is a fifth columnist, for he does nothing but retard us." They mention a name and ask does it not sound like a foreigner's. A man says he knows a number of firms who are perfectly satisfied that the Air Force is a complete wash-out, and the worst of the services. Another man said, "I do not take the Air Force seriously; I would be bankrupt if I did." And he is a man in a big way in Perth. The Minister is having it put over him properly.

So it goes on, and I am as a voice crying in the wilderness. There are hundreds and hundreds of matters crying out for inquiry, but no decent inquiry can we get. I have given members something to think about, and I hope I shall have their co-operation in an endeavour to take a step which will remove some of these abuses and thus make it easier than it is at present for us to carry on the terrible struggle.

Members: Hear, hear!

On motion by Mr. Seward, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.13 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 12th August, 1942.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2).

MINING, NORTHAMPTON COPPER ORE.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: Has the Government been advised of any action taken, or proposed to be taken,

by the Federal Government as a result of the reports stated to have been submitted by the Western Australian Mines Department to the Federal Government last year regarding the development of copper ore in the Northampton district?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: No.

RABBIT SKINS, ROYALTY.

Hon. W. J. MANN (for Hon. L. Craig) asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What is the reason for the royalty of 1s. 6d. per lb. on rabbit skins? 2, Is the Government aware that this royalty is seriously affecting the destruction of rabbits and consequently the supply of skins? 3, Will the Government take steps with a view to the withdrawal or reduction of the royalty?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, This charge is a Commonwealth matter which is at present under discussion by the Minister for Agriculture with the Minister for Commerce. 2, The price of rabbit skins is now 50d. per pound. Trapping was undertaken when values were much lower. The Department views the manpower position as the main factor affecting production. 3, Answered by No. (1).

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [2.20]: Although there was no ordinary election this year, we are starting this session with two new faces. We have lost two of our oldest members who will be greatly missed as they devoted themselves to criticising the policy and the administration of the Government. They also helped very materially in the moulding of legislation. So we regret the House is changing; but, on the other hand, we have two new members who have already made their mark in the sphere of local government, and we look forward to their assisting in the work which this Chamber will have placed before it. The function of the Legislative Council is more particularly that of criticism and ventilation of public grievances, more so perhaps than the other House, and my remarks may be taken as reflecting to some extent what has been said, and is being said, with regard to the war effort and recent developments that have taken place.

It is only a few weeks since we met previously and yet in that period two events have occurred which will have a marked effect upon the future of Western Australia. The first is the passing of the unified taxation legislation by the Commonwealth Government. That undoubtedly will greatly affect the future of this State. In the past, we have been more or less dependent upon the Commonwealth Government for finance. The position in which we now find ourselves, as a result of the passing of that legislation, is that we shall undoubtedly become entirely dependent upon the Commonwealth Government. The State Government, with other State Governments, will find the path of finances becoming more and more troublesome. In this respect I would like the State Government to take up a more aggressive attitude, because of the problems with which we shall be confronted. It is far better to face them now than allow them to grow until we find that, because of our depleted revenue, we cannot meet our capital commitments on loan works. We should continue to impress upon the Commonwealth Government how much the State is losing, and will lose, as a result of the legislation to which I have referred.

The other matter concerns our goldmining industry, which is rapidly drifting into a state of suspended animation. That, I think, is the best way to describe it. Each week men are being taken away from the mines and each week mining activities are being curtailed, and we shall very soon approach the basis upon which the agreement was made with the Commonwealth Government as a result of representations made in Canberra. How long this condition will continue will depend to a large extent upon the development of Commonwealth finance. It is interesting to note that financial theories are now beginning to have their repercussions. As an illustration, the note issue has now long passed the £100,000,000 mark. I notice that the references which have been made to the Federal note issue for some time past have not been as definite as they were; they are becoming more vague, and it looks as though the authorities are not game enough to let the public know the figure to which the note issue has increased and the amount in the hands of the public. It is a disconcerting development.

We saw a paragraph in the Press this morning referring to the fact that the Fed-

eral authorities have found it necessary to increase the reserve behind the note issue in order to maintain it at the 25 per cent. mark, which is the statutory limitation. There is another feature in connection with that reserve. In the last published statement dealing with the note issue reserve, we found that although the note issue had exceeded the £100,000,000 mark, the amount of gold behind it was less than £100,000. The remainder consisted largely of British sterling and sterling securities. It would be interesting to know what the increase, which has now been made, consists of; whether the authorities have found it necessary to increase the amount of gold behind the note issue, or whether they are still securing sterling support for it.

I draw attention to developments that have taken place since last December. We know our banking system is built on an inverted pyramid with a gold basis. The gold lies at the bottom of the pyramid. Consequently the pyramid, which rests on gold, is also supported by confidence; but when public confidence begins to disappear, we can look for trouble. The reserve behind our note issue consists mainly of English sterling securities. I would like to know how we can measure that. If members look at the developments which have taken place since the commencement of the war they will realise the tremendous amount of wealth belonging to the British Empire that has now been lost. When we remember the tremendous investments in China; the large sums invested in Malaya and Burma which have been—we hope only temporarily—lost to the British Empire, we begin to question the extent to which sterling has been affected. That has a material bearing on the relationship between the note issue and the reserve behind it. These aspects will have to be considered. The Commonwealth Government will have to revise its policy before long. A greater amount of gold will have to be provided than in the past. The position in regard to goldmining may, therefore, be materially altered as the result of recent developments.

We hear a great deal about the new order. We hear expressions of vague ideas as to how it can be achieved. The most vocal and noisiest references to the new order are definitely Soviet in type and, from what I have seen of them, are equally definitely destructive. Because of that, much of

the talk today needs to be critically examined. Those who are so enthusiastically expecting it, will have to come down to earth in order to meet the circumstances associated with the new order today. A good many people do not realise that under the system of planned economy, which must perforce be established in Australia, we have a new order established, and it will continue as long as the war lasts. A good deal of restiveness has been caused by the restrictions imposed, but they will have to be continued if we are to carry on the war successfully. Grave reasons exist for believing that the war situation has been approached in this country largely from the standpoint that it will be of only short duration. That is evidenced by the way in which a good many things which we took as a matter of course are now being interfered with, and the way in which it is necessary to revise our ideas about manpower in order to maintain essential industries. We are now entering upon a period when we will have to retrace our steps so that the essential requirements with regard to foodstuffs and other things can be provided for the community.

Some time ago I addressed a number of young people upon the question of the new order. I asked them a series of questions, and I would like to ask the people who are today predicting a new order the same questions, because it appears to me that until they are answered we cannot get the right sort of angle upon the new order that we all expect. The first question is: What is this new order going to be? Is it going to be German-Russia or British-American? The first two are so similar in their effect on the welfare of the citizen that we can regard them as the same. Another question to which I would like to know the answer is: Why is it that those workers who enjoy a very high rate of wages so frequently maintain such a low standard of living in their homes? It is a material question. In a number of instances people whose incomes can only be described as low maintain a high standard of comfort in their homes, whilst others who are receiving incomes which we regard as high are living in conditions that would be a disgrace to anybody; even to people on the lowest wage paid today. These factors come into operation when considering the new order. The basic wage is fixed today upon a certain formula and that formula embodies percentages with regard to

rent, food, clothing and other necessities. I ask this question: If Germany so controls her people that they are working for practically sustenance only, how can Britain and Australia keep pace with her financially in meeting the commitments of the war?

Hon. A. Thomson: That is a very important question.

Hon. H. SEDDON: How can we maintain the high standard of wages and conditions that we now enjoy? We also have to consider Japan, and here the same question occurs. How can we hope to maintain our war economy and fight against people who have established a very high degree of industrial efficiency and are numerically so much stronger than ourselves? How can we expect to maintain those conditions and at the same time successfully wage war against that nation? Germany has also obtained the wealth of the occupied territories and the benefit of the work of many of the people in those territories. How is that going to affect our war economy, because those things have not been faced in Australia either by the Governments or by the people?

I now wish to refer to two aspects of the new order with regard to this State. Western Australia has two problems to face today. The first is how to carry on under the control of the Commonwealth Government, and the second is that the war has taken out of the hands of the State Government to a large extent the type of loan works upon which it may embark. Despite the finance of the Loan Council, in practice money will be found—and I think rightly so—only for those works which directly contribute to the war effort. Consequently, the direction of our loan expenditure will be largely determined by war requirements. Looking at the first problem, while we finished the year with a surplus, that result was due entirely to the artificial prosperity brought about by war expenditure.

Whichever way we look at the question, we find that the community is becoming more and more dependent upon the expenditure of war money in this State and we are becoming more and more absorbed into the war economy which, of course, will be the economy of the whole of the Commonwealth. To the extent that we may be independent of that, to that extent shall we be able to adjust ourselves more quickly when the war is over. Yet with that prospect ahead of us and with the demand being

constantly made for thrift and economy on the part of the people, with the constant badgering of the people to subscribe to war loans and to make war savings, we find that the State Government, although it has achieved a small surplus, has already established a record in that it has the highest expenditure of Consolidated Revenue in any year since the State was first established. This is a time when people are being asked to readjust their businesses in order to provide manpower for war purposes. The effect has been that many businesses are seriously cramped in the effort to carry out the bare essentials associated with their activities. Yet we find the State Government with so high an expenditure for the year, whereas we might reasonably have expected that it would have shown a material reduction.

On that aspect I would like the Chief Secretary to make a note of several items. Take first of all works expenditure. Loan expenditure is devoted to war activities, and consequently any work undertaken by the Works Department will come under the same heading, and one would think it was a matter more of Commonwealth than of State finance. In the whole of the circumstances we would expect to find the expenditure of the Works Department materially reduced. The goldmining industry is in a state of suspended animation. We are told that there is a great programme ahead for the development of metals required for war purposes, but that is largely in the air; it has not got down to the basis of practical production. Therefore we should expect in the Mines Department a considerable reduction of expenditure. The Railways today are being worked very largely for war purposes. I suppose the Railways have not been so busy for many years as they are today. Yet, in the statistics placed before us, there is revealed a loss for the year. These are matters upon which the public is entitled to have information. These are matters upon which the public will have to be given information before very long, because there has not previously been a period for many years when the public has been so critical of State Governments as it is at the present time. The Agricultural Bank is now simply a collecting agency and there again one would expect to find a considerable reduction in expenditure.

The Child Welfare Department is particularly one that should show a consider-

able decrease in expenditure. The Commonwealth Government has introduced child endowment, which must be of great assistance to people who hitherto relied upon the State Government for the maintenance of their children. A system of pensions for widows has been introduced by the Commonwealth Government. This again has had a considerable effect upon the Child Welfare Department. In fact, the whole State must have been very materially affected by the impact of the war, and one would have expected to find this reflected in the State expenditure and Consolidated Revenue.

The month of July has closed and July has again created a record. Our expenditure from Consolidated Revenue for the month was higher than it has ever been before. Certainly the deficit was not so large as it had been previously, but the expenditure was higher and consequently we find that the same trend that has characterised State expenditure for so many years is continuing, even now when we are engaged in war. As I have mentioned, the State Government is now being very critically viewed by the general public, and to the questions I have indicated, the Government will have to find answers. There is one phase that must be demonstrated, and that is the question of the efficiency characterising our State Administration. As regards efficiency in the Commonwealth sphere, I shall have something to say later on. Now, however, is the opportunity, as never before in our history, for the State Government to warrant its continuance by setting an example with regard to administration and thus justify the appeals that have been made to the general public to conduct its affairs with thrift and economy.

The Speech refers to one aspect of State activity, namely, the development of new industries. The alunite deposits at Lake Campion have been the subject of many references. I have not yet seen a report upon those deposits, and I think the time is long overdue when a report should be laid before Parliament to show exactly what is involved in the Lake Campion proposition. I say this because any attempt to establish a large-scale industry in Western Australia must obviously be affected by the price of fuel. As fuel must be a material factor in the development of the Lake Campion proposition, I should like

to have figures with regard to the expenditure that is contemplated in connection with the scheme. There is reference in the Speech to research in connection with charcoal iron. It is suggested that a blast furnace should be established for the production of charcoal pig-iron. While we have considerable forestry resources in this State and charcoal iron is the purest form of iron it is possible to get apart from electrolytic iron, the magnitude of output necessary for iron to be produced at anything like a satisfactory cost is so great that I cannot see how it will be possible to establish a blast furnace to operate on charcoal, and at the same time produce iron commercially profitable to Western Australia. The scheme is one upon which more information should be given.

The activities of the Department of Industrial Development with regard to the expansion of our industries have now been carried on for two or three years. Apart from the paper that was written by Mr. Fernie, no detailed report concerning this work has been presented. A considerable amount of Government money is being expended by the department and a report should be laid on the Table of the House stating the activities on which the officials have been engaged and indicating what is being done. The Speech contains reference to the fact that it is intended to extend the manufacture of steel castings, for which there is a big demand in Western Australia. One local firm has been engaged on the work for some time. I should like to know that the facilities which that establishment has made available have been fully utilised by the State Government. I hear that the fullest possible use has not been made of them and would like some information on the point, particularly before the Government embarks upon expenditure on a steel plant as portion of its activities in connection with the State Engineering Works. Steel plants are not built for nothing; they run into considerable sums of money. One would have thought that existing facilities would have been fully exploited before the extension of steel manufacture was contemplated. I hope the Chief Secretary will, in the course of his reply, give us some information on the point. Some opportunities have been presented to Western Australia

through developments consequent upon the war, although we hear nothing of them. Members will appreciate the fact that with the loss of tropical countries to Japan, the supply of many products that were part of our everyday life have been seriously curtailed or are now entirely absent from our use. There is tea, for instance.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is easily disposed of. We can do without tea.

Hon. H. SEDDON: There is no need to do without it if we make use of the opportunities we have in this State. Besides tea there are spices, rubber and oil. All those commodities might be exploited in this State. We have a capable botanist who ranks high in the botanical world. He has given a considerable amount of thought to some of the questions which have arisen. I should have thought we would have had presented to us something in the nature of a report dealing with the production of these commodities in Western Australia. Reference has been made in the Press to a plant that is extensively cultivated in Mexico. It is known as guayule or *Argentatum Parthenium* and is a plant from which rubber can be produced. It is grown in Mexico under climatic conditions very similar to those found on our goldfields. That is an avenue that might well have been exploited by the State Government. Large stretches of country suitable for the growth of the plant are available and if the exploitation of the plant was a success we would be independent of foreign sources of rubber supplies. The botanist told me there are plants in this State from which latex is produced. I should have thought that an opportunity existed for an investigation of this and other questions. We should bring the botanist and the chemist together to explore the possibilities of these plants.

Another matter I wish to refer to may be regarded as ancient history. For many years Governments have been requested in this House to make available opportunities for research work into fodder and other plants in dry areas, that work to be financed from royalties received from the cutting of sandalwood. If a small amount had been available in those years for such work we might have been in a position today to take advantage of opportunities that have been thrown at us in consequence of the war. Unfortunately it is too late to do anything now.

It is a pity that Governments in the past were not sufficiently far-sighted to undertake what may be regarded as one of the chief activities of any enlightened and progressive Government, namely, the development of research work concerning our own products. Plenty of opportunities are available for the exploitation of our natural resources, thus leading to the development of the State.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Unfortunately the money has been taken into revenue.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That has been the trouble. This is a part of the activities of State Governments that could well be maintained, one that would provide striking avenues for utilising the ability of our young men who are trained at the University. It would enable them to assist in the development of their native State. I know one young man who was trained at the University as an industrial chemist and now holds an important position in Victoria. As a result of the training he received here he was asked to undertake an investigation into certain products. He was taken over by an important Eastern States firm and is now doing splendid work, producing a commodity for which there is an almost unlimited demand for war purposes. That affords an illustration of the opportunities we have for our young men, if we can train them along the right lines, and also shows what opportunities we have lost through our young men leaving us when they should be engaged in developing the natural products of their own State.

Reference was made in the Speech to the decrease in the public debt. Mr. Moore kindly suggested that I might give credit to the Government for that achievement, and he put forward a claim for credit to be given to the State Government. The credit in that case is due to the Financial Agreement. That Agreement laid down the basis on which the debts of the various States should be met and the basis was that the Commonwealth Government would make a contribution to the sinking fund of one-eighth per cent. per annum. This was to be accompanied by a contribution from the State Governments of a quarter per cent. per annum. At the beginning of the last financial year there was a considerable credit in the sinking fund, and this sum, together with the amount made available during the year, in accordance with the Financial

Agreement, enabled the Government to retire a loan which became due. The circumstances were made plain in "The West Australian." If any credit is due, it is to the fact that the Government has honoured the Financial Agreement and has maintained the sinking fund in a condition whereby it is able to meet its obligations.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And the Loan Council refused to allow it to borrow as much as it wanted.

Hon. H. SEDDON: It did not get as much money as it required or asked for.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The States were refused the full amounts asked for.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: New South Wales received half of the total.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The Government on this occasion has made a virtue of necessity. The fact that it has been compelled to draw in its horns on loan expenditure, has enabled it to gain the credit which is really due to the operations of the Financial Agreement with regard to the sinking fund.

Hon. J. Cornell: That money would have been paid whether we had £5,000,000 or any sum whatever.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: To what extent was our proportion of the Federal debt increased in the same year? I think it was about fifty times the amount!

Hon. H. SEDDON: So far as the State is concerned I hope the good work will continue, and that in future all Governments will go on steadily reducing that debt, so much of which is unrepresented by any asset. I am prepared to give full credit in the future to any State Government that is able to maintain its obligations under the Financial Agreement. It seems to me as though the demand for money will be so severe that the Government will have its work cut out in that direction.

Liquor control is another subject of importance. It would be amusing were it not so contemptible to see the way in which the buck is being passed from one authority to another in regard to the manner in which the evils arising out of the liquor business are being dealt with. The whole thing is no credit to any of those concerned. The general public has very largely effected a considerable improvement in the position. First of all, opportunities are being offered by private individuals to young men who have left their homes, gone into camp, and whose only friends are those they have made

in their camp life. Opportunities are being afforded to those young men for social intercourse under decent conditions. Secondly, there is a strong opinion inside and outside the Forces in the direction of improving the standard of conduct which has characterised so many of our men in the past. I think that public opinion is growing, and that the men themselves, as Mr. Cornell pointed out some time ago, are taking matters into their own hands and insisting on their mates setting a standard which they consider is compatible with the reputation of Australian troops. So far as the Administration is concerned, the whole business does not allow of anything in the nature of approval. From the negotiations which have taken place, and from the fact that the various authorities dealing with the matter have passed the buck from one to another, not only is there nothing creditable in what they have done, but there is ample room for condemnation. This deals with the question of the new order from some angles so far as the State is concerned.

I will now deal with the new order from the Federal point of view. Anybody who has studied the literature which came out 20 odd years ago and since with regard to the developments in Russia must be startled by the parallel between what took place then and what is taking place in Australia today. The Government will argue that many of the things being done today are the result of necessity and have been brought about by the pressure of war on our country. To a large degree that is true, but one wonders when one sees what is being done, how much is due to war pressure and how much to political considerations. Certain measures have been proposed but have had to be withdrawn. We have established a planned economy, but we have tried to establish it after allowing an entirely different principle to operate for a long time.

When the war broke out, there was a rush to the colours. Men joined the Forces because they realised it was their duty to do so. At that time, there were complaints that the authorities were not in a position to take the men who enlisted, and we had instances of men being placed in an unfortunate position because they had left their jobs, passed their medical examination, and were then told to wait until the authorities could take them into camp. On the impact of war, a certain amount of compulsion took place, but still that system of allowing

men to volunteer continued. The result was that when the Japs came into the war and there was necessity for an all-round effort, steps taken by the Government to institute what was practically conscription so far as the defence of this country was concerned, met with obstacles which had been created by the previous system, and we find that many industries are today in a perilous position because men were allowed to leave their work and enlist, with the result that production materially dropped. Every day now we hear of short supplies in this and that industry which should never have occurred in a country like Australia, whose economy is largely based on primary production. An attempt is being made to iron matters out and put production on an organised basis, but serious mistakes were made, as a result of which the public is suffering. Rationing should have been introduced at an earlier stage. It has now been inaugurated on a severe scale. Anyone who, at the outbreak of war, had suggested the imposition of such drastic rationing, would have been laughed at. Nobody could have realised at that time that such a condition as we have allowed ourselves to drift into, could have arisen. That state of affairs has occurred because our war affairs have been allowed more or less to take care of themselves.

Many steps have been taken on the advice of economists, and once more the old truth has been driven home to the people that it is one thing to work things out in the study and the laboratory and another to put them into practical operation. It is found that when conclusions reached in that way are tried out, difficulties arise that were not foreseen, and that has occurred particularly with regard to the economic side of our war development. Under this heading, there are some very disturbing features. Rumours are coming to us about the misplacement of men. We are told that men have been called into camp and kept there more or less doing physical jerks instead of receiving a thorough training. That does not argue efficiency. We find there have been deplorable accidents among the men themselves.

I heard of an instance not long ago. Some of our Kalgoorlie men were in a unit that had to handle dynamite, and they were horrified to see the way the dynamite was being dealt with. They remonstrated with their companions, trying to point out the danger, only to be laughed at, until one day there was an accident as a result of which

one man suffered an injury he will remember as long as he lives. The men then began to realise that the miners knew what they were talking about. Then there was the instance of a very valuable aeroplane, which was kept grounded for a considerable time because piston rings were not available for the engine! These incidents indicate the state of affairs that has arisen, and it is up to the authorities to show that these difficulties are being overcome and that all-round efficiency is being aimed at. Let us make no mistake; the outcome of this war will be determined by efficiency.

Hon. J. Cornell: The only action of which the authorities will take note is enemy action.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Then it will be too late. As members of Parliament, we have opportunities to voice these criticisms which are being widely expressed in the community.

Hon. A. Thomson: This is the only place where there can be free and untrammelled speech.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes. Parliament is the only place where we have the privilege of free speech, and we are using it for the purpose of urging the authorities to place their affairs on a sound basis. The incidents I have quoted, being widely known, arouse uneasiness in the community, and it must be remembered that one of the biggest factors towards maintaining morale is confidence in those handling our affairs.

Hon. G. W. Miles: These matters are widely known.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Very widely known. These facts are disturbing. We know that when any big extension takes place in human activity there is bound to be disorganisation and inefficiency. The man who knows cannot be everywhere at once, and has to delegate somebody to do some of the work. The man to whom the work is entrusted has not his all-round knowledge, and consequently mistakes are made. However, we expect such mistakes to be ironed out. Time, which a few months ago we regarded as being on our side, is now definitely against us, and time is passing rapidly. Consequently it is necessary that there should be a smooth-running and properly organised machine to enable us to achieve victory.

Hon. C. B. Williams: How will we get that when politicians are biting each others heads off as to who shall be Ministers?

Hon. H. SEDDON: I do not know that that has much to do with what I am saying. I have referred to weaknesses in the machine, to which attention should be drawn. Much has been said about red tape, and I think there is a lot of truth in the statements made.

Hon. A. Thomson: There is a good deal of truth.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The man in charge of a job is the one who should determine whether supplies ought to be made available. We hear of a man in charge of an aerodrome being unable to obtain supplies and having to go himself to the store to get them. One feels that the sooner that kind of red tape is wiped out, the better it will be. These are matters the authorities should iron out, and we expect to find them properly dealt with. There is every appearance now that we shall have a long war—

Hon. J. Cornell: If we are going to win it.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is what I mean. Consequently we must set our plans for the long run and expect changes in the conditions under which we live. Federal financial policy does not reflect that point of view. Social services are being expanded and extensions are being made that could well have been delayed for a little longer. Increases are made without regard to the funds available. There is still an idea that the printing press can go on working without check. Unfortunately, the lessons experienced by other countries are not being heeded here. There is an idea that our system of price control, rationing, wage pegging and other necessary financial expedients can be adopted without any serious effect on the community. In that respect we are very closely following the lead given us by Germany, where there was very much more rigid control than exists here.

I shall read shortly something about the conditions that were established as being essential in Germany in connection with a controlled economy. They certainly obtained there at the time of the outbreak of the war, but the information we received indicates that Germany had about reached breaking point even with the control she exercised. It was only the extension of slavery and utilisation of the wealth of conquered countries that enabled her to carry on and even today she can continue only by expanding. That is one reason why she is making desperate efforts in Russia to get the material she so

urgently needs to continue the war. So far as controlled economy is concerned there was the greatest possible difficulty in maintaining existing conditions in Germany, and they were maintained only with very considerable privation amongst the workers themselves and the imposition of conditions of labour in comparison with which those prevailing here can only be regarded as paradise. I desire to refer to the publication two years ago of an article in "The West Australian" dealing with these points. It appeared under the heading of "How Hitler Prepared. The Economic Front." The article states—

In principle this economy is simple enough. It is the total conscription of the entire nation's manpower, and resources of capital and labour, of producer and consumer, of men, women and youths, and their co-ordination in a system ruled not by economic calculations, but by an iron discipline which still provides a certain paternalistic "socialism" for workers and leaves a limited profit-motive to the employers to spur their energies.

The main principles and measures of this economy were summarised in the article as follows:—

(1) Fixed prices determined by the price-stop decree of October, 1936, but adjusted currently by a price-commissar on a cost plus basis.

(2) Limited profits—limited by price control and by compulsory investment of all profits above six to 8 per cent. in Government loans, although this investment was subject to later distribution to stock-holders.

In Australia an attempt was made to fix profits at 4 per cent. but that led to a considerable outcry in the community and the realisation that the economists had made a serious mistake. In Germany the figure was from 6 to 8 per cent. and that allowed a gross dividend of 14 per cent.

(3) Compulsory investment of surpluses in nationally important enterprises.

That was in order to provide for the exploitation of their natural resources.

(4) The prohibition or control of new plants or shops or plant and shop expansion, in nationally unessential enterprises.

(5) The full control of industry by allotment of Government orders, raw materials and foreign exchange.

(6) Fixed wage rates based mainly on the deflated wage levels of the crisis low of 1932, but subject to minor adjustments.

(7) Job control, which conscripts workers for nationally important tasks and prohibits others from changing to jobs at higher pay.

(8) The abolition of the right to strike and the prohibition of independent labour unions except for the German Labour Front, which

is an agency of the National-Socialist Party and technically embraces both employers and employees.

(9) The rationing of virtually all food and of most other necessities under the slogan, "Cannon instead of butter."

Members will appreciate from what I have read that the Federal Government has had to follow to a large extent the course indicated in the extracts I have read. However, there are some very important gaps in the Federal Government's programme and they will be of even greater importance in the future unless we are to risk our whole economic structure tumbling down about our ears. We are confronted with the necessity for a long-sustained war effort. We have been waiting for offensive movement for a long time and all will join in the hope that the period of waiting has now finished. The news that has had a most encouraging effect on the community as a whole was that which we received about last week-end occurrences. We find the whole community is now looking up in enjoyable realisation of the thought that at last we are making a forward move. That move will have to continue. The locality where the fighting is taking place today is one where the progress of hostilities is not determined by the seasons. There the fight can be carried on all the year round.

A task has been started that cannot stop. That means that a call goes forth to every Australian and every member of an Allied nation who is participating, to put forth his maximum effort, that the whole of the nations will be brought into line. I know that the people will heartily support any determined action that the Government may deem necessary in order to place Australia on a basis of efficiency, and that is what has characterised Germany ever since it started hostile operations. We must not forget that Germany commenced preparing for the war nine years before hostilities commenced, which means that we have much leeway to make up. The spirit of the people is apparent; the willingness of the men is undoubted and in those circumstances are we to be dominated by what may be described as bureaucratic control or are we to allow the man in charge of the job a free hand and give him all the assistance he desires? The fewer Government Departments we have concerned in that effort the better it will be so that we can ensure that whatever the man in the field asks for or needs shall

be provided. We must ensure that there shall be smoother production in our workshops and better use made of the ability inherent in Australians generally. The more we can achieve these ends the nearer shall we be to the consummation of what we desire—the successful conclusion of a war that will bring into existence a new order.

In conclusion I hope that the present session will enable us to see changes we all desire and that we shall get rid of a lot of red-tape, thus getting nearer to freedom of action for our leaders. Let me give the House an illustration of what happened in connection with the construction of the Panama Canal, one of the biggest undertakings embarked upon by any nation. One of the principles laid down by Col. Goethals, who was in charge of the job, was that any man engaged on the work—there were 60,000 of them—who had a grievance could go to him and thrash the matter out. Every Sunday morning Col. Goethals left himself free in his office so that any man with a grievance could come to the head of the undertaking himself and explain the position—and there was no penalty attached to any such action. I want that illustration to be driven home because we should have some provision that men who are doing the fighting and have grievances to air could do so without the fear of penalties attaching to their action. If that were the position, a better spirit would animate our Fighting Forces. I leave the matter at that. I hope the war effort commenced last week will not stop and that it will be the forerunner of the eventual peace the community as a whole hopes for.

HON. C. R. CORNISH (North): At the outset of my remarks I wish to pay a tribute to the memory of the late Hon. J. J. Holmes whose place I have taken in the representation of the North Province. I knew Mr. Holmes for over 20 years and that gentleman was respected by all who came in contact with him. He did yeoman service for the North and for the State generally, and set me a hard task in endeavouring to follow in his footsteps. I hope that when I have finished my term of office as a member of this Chamber a similar tribute will be paid to my efforts. I desire also to extend my sincere sympathy to the relatives of our late member. I endorse the kindly references made by other speakers to the

late Hon. J. M. Macfarlane. Although I did not know him personally, from what I have heard of his work and read of his views, I realise that his services will be sadly missed. Finally, I wish to thank members generally for the cordial welcome they have extended to Mr. Gibson and myself on our election to this House. We appreciate those expressions of welcome very sincerely.

I agree with previous speakers who said that the country people were the backbone of the State and it is deplorable to think that our farmers are being driven from their holdings. We should do everything possible to keep the agriculturist on the land, for that is essential if we are to maintain our war effort to the fullest extent. It must be very pleasing to all to learn the wonderful season that is being experienced in the northern parts of Western Australia. This is resulting in a markedly changed outlook and, in fact, the present is regarded as the best season ever experienced in the North-West. It has put more heart into those engaged in the cattle industry. During the depression years the price of wool slumped to 7d. lb. Then followed seven or eight years of the worst drought in the history of Western Australia. Now there is the war to add difficulties to the pastoral industry, although two good seasons have wonderfully improved their holdings. Pastoralists have commenced to build up their flocks again, but the fly is proving very troublesome. With the shortage of labour they are finding it impossible effectively to deal with that pest. An increase of 10,000 bales of wool is estimated for this year compared with last year's output, and that, members will agree, is very gratifying.

I trust the mining industry generally will be able to carry on and that sufficient men will be left to maintain operations. I hope that existing mines will be kept in a condition that will enable them to operate in the post-war period. There are many gold-fields in the North-West awaiting development, while other minerals including iron, asbestos, copper, lead and tantalite, to mention only some of the types available, await exploitation. With regard to copper, I understand that boring operations are at present being carried out at Whim Creek where there is a large deposit. I trust the Government will be able to lend encouragement to the opening up of the fields. Copper deposits are to be found throughout the North, and

at Uaroo station during the 1914-18 war I visited a mine where, in addition to lead, the ore contained quite a lot of silver, copper and gold. From that mine ore had to be carted 84 miles by camel teams, unloaded into trucks, conveyed five miles by horse tram and unloaded from trucks into lighters and from lighters into the boat for shipment to Port Kembla for treatment. In time of war that was all done at a profit. If it could be done at a profit under those conditions surely the output could be utilised in peace-time.

In the Pilbara district nearly all types of minerals required in Australia are to be found, and yet the fields there have been lying idle for years. It requires a war to awaken the public to the possibilities of the deposits in their midst. Western Australia has also a long coastline with its wealth of marine life, including whales, sharks, dugong, turtles, and so forth. To see the whaling station at Point Cloates rusting away is a pity. Two or three years ago American and Japanese ships fished the waters there for whales and had remarkably good seasons. I spoke to a Norwegian captain who told me he had fished for whales all over the world and had never been to a place that was more handy or where the whaling was better than at Point Cloates. Nevertheless, at present the whaling station there with its expensive gear is rusting away year by year.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Abandoned through Labour legislation.

Hon. C. R. CORNISH: I believe that is so. Wherever whales are to be found sharks abound in their thousands. Those sharks represent a valuable asset. Their hides make the finest and toughest leather procurable; from their livers wonderful oil is produced and naturally the rest of their carcasses can be utilised for fertilisers.

Hon. L. Craig: The flesh can be sold as schnapper.

Hon. C. R. CORNISH: That applies to small sharks. In the fish-markets from 1s. 6d. to 2s. a pound is paid for fish. The other day a Carnarvon fisherman told me he had sent one fish to the markets in Perth and it had been sold for £7 19s. 6d.

Hon. J. Cornell: That was a big schnapper!

Hon. C. R. CORNISH: It was a proper. The flesh of that fish makes pleasant eating and, of course, goppers grow to a tremendous

size weighing upwards of 800lbs. Shark Bay is another ideal fishing ground. At present fish is sent down to Geraldton from where it is taken by rail to Perth. I have been shown details of an ideal method for transporting fish by which the truck is refrigerated as it proceeds. It is fitted with a gas producer but a truck fitted under those conditions is only allowed to go as far as Geraldton. One important feature about the conveyance of fish is that the temperature in a refrigerated car must be maintained at the right figure, otherwise should the temperature fluctuate the fish will deteriorate. Owing to the difficulties of transport at present, adequate supplies of fish, which have a wonderful food value, are not available in the Perth markets.

Ministers are to be commended for having authorised the investigation of irrigation prospects in the northern parts of the State. Wherever plenty of water is found in the North, possibilities for intense culture should exist. The banana industry at Carnarvon, after passing through trying years of drought, is now being established firmly. Though it is still in its infancy, I am sure that, with improved transport and better marketing facilities, Carnarvon will produce enough good bananas at a moderate price to supply all the homes in this State or, in fact, Australia. It surprises me to learn that no onions are available in this part of the State at present owing to shipping space being unavailable for their importation from eastern Australia. At Carnarvon there are hundreds of acres of land which, with energy applied, will grow first-class onions and most of the other table vegetables, especially beans and tomatoes. Tropical fruits enough to supply Western Australia could also be grown in the Carnarvon district—mangoes, pawpaws, pine-apples, guavas, and custard apples for instance. Mango trees, though difficult to establish, have grown as big as gum trees and bear wonderfully without requiring any attention whatever; indeed they act as wind breaks or shade trees.

The people of the North have shown a wonderful spirit in staying at their posts and carrying on with their daily duties in spite of the proximity of the enemy. The Government did an excellent job in maintaining supplies of food and other necessities of all kinds in view of the transport available. The North, which had the heat and flies,

now also has the Japs. The lot of the far Nor'-westers has never been enviable, but it is peculiarly unenviable at present.

The cattle stations of the North are carrying on under heavy disadvantages, and the tasks they set are certainly jobs for men. The Murchison, part of which is included in the Province I represent, is now supplying some fine cattle and helping materially to overcome the shortage of beef. The pearling industry has received extremely severe setbacks, and those interested in the industry have my sincere sympathy, as they have lost practically everything. On the law of averages the North can expect a run of good seasons for the future, and with the return of peace and normal conditions better things will be in store for that part of Western Australia. A great deal can be achieved *there with the sympathy of the Government and of the people generally.* I have much pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan): I shall try to put in concrete form today some thoughts I wish to express. This is the first opportunity I have had to contribute to a debate on the Address-in-reply. My interpretation of the time-honoured custom is that it is intended to give the private member an opportunity to say how he would have the country governed. I realise that, given such liberty, one might waste a great deal of time in destructive criticism, because in our present democracy, and with human nature as frail as it is, to destroy seems much easier than to initiate. For this reason I have hesitated to contribute to the present debate, because in all criticism there must be some destruction in order to prepare the ground on which one may build. Our very democracy, as we know it, seems to be destructive. The democracy which was so beautifully described by a newcomer in our midst, the new Chinese Consul, seems a democracy that would rather build than destroy; but it would almost appear in our present-day democracy that anyone who tries to initiate progress must expect the slings and arrows of criticism, and sometimes he who slings missiles and shoots arrows believes that he is a true champion of democracy. It is for this reason that I have hesitated to speak during this debate, because, knowing of this weakness, I did not wish to criticise without being able to offer some constructive advice.

The first matter which I would bring to the attention of members and the Government is of a Commonwealth nature. I realise that it is one over which we have but very little control; but I would ask that this subject be given consideration by the Government, and that if Ministers think it wise to do so, they should make representations to the proper authorities. I refer in particular to the Repatriation Department. The department which we now know as the Repatriation Department came into being after the last war, and as a result has an organisation with 20 years of experience behind it, so that mistakes in rehabilitation of returned soldiers should not be allowed to occur again. The fact must be appreciated that probably three-quarters or perhaps one-half of the male population of a large age-group will be possible claimants for pensions or for treatment from the Repatriation Department of the future. The policy of the Commonwealth Government in the past has, in my opinion, been to pay totally inadequate salaries to its medical officers. Such a salaried service will never appeal when a man can make two or three times that amount by adopting private practice instead. Let it not be thought for one moment that I am attempting to deery the man who gives up a lucrative practice to undertake work of this nature in the Repatriation Department, but I do say that when a department grows as this department will grow, it should be able to call from the entire medical profession the brains that it desires and needs and should be able to call upon the men best fitted to carry out the work of the department. It should be able almost to entice such men into its service.

Again, the department must realise that if it takes a man from private practice because of the clinical acumen and skill and experience which he has acquired, and which are necessary for the work of the department, it cannot expect him to retain that skill and that acumen if he is associated with files and boards continuously day by day. He must be given an opportunity to keep his clinical acumen by constant attention to, and practice in, medicine in all its branches; in fact, by keeping in continuous touch with sick patients. I suggest that such a man, no matter what his specialty may be, on appointment to the Repatriation Department should automatically receive an appointment fitting his specialty to some

public hospital or repatriation institution, so that he may continue, as it were, in active practice while still carrying out his task in the Repatriation Department. I do not want to see grow up again the feeling that medical officers of the Repatriation Department are not truly in line with the practising profession. I want the department to realise the absolute need for its medical officers to attend all clinical meetings of the profession, so that those officers may realise that they are taking part just as actively in the practice of the community as if they were in what is known as private practice. If a medical man in private practice feels that he needs post-graduate work, if the man who is in constant touch with modern methods of treatment or is in touch day by day with sick patients feels that he needs post-graduate work, how much more, then, does the man who attempts the work of the Repatriation Department, deprived of private practice, need post-graduate work! I suggest that time should be set apart for all medical officers of the Repatriation Department, or in fact of all Government medical departments, to have opportunities for post-graduate study. I suggest that a minimum basis of three months in every three years is essential.

Further, I want to see assessment of pensions made a matter of separate study. To say that every medical man can rightly assess disabilities and assess pensions is simply absurd. The physician cannot in any way rapidly gain a knowledge of the assessment of joint injuries, nor can the orthopaedic specialist who practises in joints readily assess disability arising from bronchitis. That is the job of a physician. I want to see whether it cannot be arranged that the assessment of pensions shall be a separate branch of the study of repatriation. I would prefer a committee to examine a man from every aspect, psychological as well as physical, determine what job he could do and then assess the pension. I do not want to see again a rapid assessment of pensions, the man being then told to find what job he can. Surely we are not asking too much when we say that this should be given special and separate study, so that the man who has offered his life and services and is to be repatriated, should be given the opportunity to secure a pension and a task that fit together.

Again, may I suggest that the Repatriation Department be asked to give closer study to the indexing and keeping of records? I admit quite freely that the file of each man is exceedingly well kept, but there is in this department at present—and there will be more in the future—a large number of clinical records and details which should in future prove of immense value in the study of medicine and the effects of treatment. There should be some really good cross-indexing system and I will explain, if I can, why. Shall we take James Smith, an ex-service man, who consulted me complaining that at an early age he had developed gout? He had lost a limb in the war. Searching through the German journals, I found it had been discovered that a large number of men who had lost a limb in the war developed, as a result of disorganised muscle balance metabolic diseases, one of which is gout. When I suggested that this man's gout was due to war service, one of the staff then present said that my suggestion filled him with ribald mirth; but, strange to relate, I do not think it possible for the department to answer the question whether numbers of our men who lost limbs suffered from such diseases, or whether such men, suffering from such diseases since their return from the war, have also lost a limb. The record of what happens to a man after injury should be just as important to the community as the actual treatment of that injury. All this would, I realise, involve additional office expense, but the return would outweigh the cost.

Wars and pestilences in the past have led to progress, and I think that if we are to have a long war we should harness it in the best way possible to the needs of the advancement of society. I am sure that if the Government will take up this matter of the expansion of the Repatriation Department, it will receive not only my thanks but the thanks of many men from the last war and many men who know not yet that they will be dependent upon the Repatriation Department for their future requirements. It may be said that I need not worry about the salaries that are to be paid to the Repatriation Department's medical officers, because in the future there will be nationalisation of medicine; but I point out that in a scheme that has been propounded by the National Medical and Health Research Council, salaries for the

future have been laid down, and the present salary which the Chief Repatriation Medical Officer is receiving in this State would classify him, under the new heading, as a mere junior specialist. He is the man who will be asked to take charge and whose voice will virtually be the last voice in the men's appeals before tribunals and appeal boards are reached. This matter is somewhat urgent, re-organisation of this department is needed leased so many of its medical officers for service in the present war that it is now relying upon men who have passed or are nearing the retirement age. If the work increases, as it will do, these men will find the strain more than they can carry. A rapid reorganisation of this department is needed at an early date.

I now turn to a subject on which some members of this House have spoken—the mining call-up. There is an aspect of the industry which has not, however, been touched upon. I have already spoken to the Minister for Health on the matter and I know he will forgive me if I mention it here so as to bring it under the notice of members. There is a rather complicated aspect of the life of a man working in a mine, and I shall attempt at this stage to stick fairly closely to notes in order to be quite definite. Many men working in our mines have already been called up. Those who have silicosis in an advanced stage will not be accepted for Army service. There are those who show on their 35mm. micro films sufficient evidence of silicosis to warrant a re-take on a 17 by 14 film. This means that they are automatically boarded, and if there are signs of silicosis to any defined degree, they are classified accordingly and either rejected or placed in a classification at a lower level. Some may be taken into the Army. There is another group, however, about which I am more anxious. A 35mm. film is not the film of choice on which to take an X-ray of a case of silicosis, and I have no doubt whatever that some early cases of silicosis will be missed on this small film.

It should be remembered that once silicosis has been established and has progressed beyond a certain degree, it will go on progressing to the detriment of the victim, whether he works in a mine or leaves it and carries on some other occupation. I have seen a few cases where in after-life I have been able to tell that the men worked in a mine many years previously, and yet they

are not suffering from silicosis. They left the mine before the silicosis had reached a progressive stage. There are many more, however, who come to me suffering from shortness of breath and the other disabilities of silicosis. They left the mines on an average 16 years previously without any disability, so far as they were aware. At the stage at which they left the mine, however, the silicosis was active.

Here is the point I wish to make: Men of this class are being called up and some will be taken into the Army. Nothing can be found on a physical examination, so they pass on to have a 35mm. film taken. There is insufficient in the film to warrant a 17 by 14 film being taken, and they are accepted for Army service. Had those men continued in the mine, they would, when the effects of silicosis had overtaken them, have received a State pension. If the men join the Fighting Services and, on their return take up some civil occupation, it is possible still that progressive silicosis will cause them disabilities at, roughly, the same date. Such men would not be eligible for State pensions, nor would they be eligible for a repatriation pension, as their disability would not have been war caused. Here I would like to make some suggestions. All these men have had a 17 by 14 film taken within 12 months of their call-up. Arrangements should be made with the Army authorities that this film be seen as part of the man's physical examination. This could be done by the Army Medical Board. I know that in making this suggestion I am looking for additional work, as I happen to be a member of that board. Secondly, a proviso should be added to the Act to cover such cases. If a proviso were agreed to that such men called up for Army service should be allowed to participate in a pension for silicosis, even though they never returned to a mine after their war service, the Commonwealth Government should be asked to pay its share, because the State will not have had the insurance premiums over all those years. It might be more simple to ask the Commonwealth to make a grant covering the State's disabilities if such pension be paid.

There is another matter of Commonwealth origin about which I would like to express my views, and that is the call-up for the Civil Construction Corps. This call-up extends to men of the 45-60 year age group. At 45 years of age, a man is start-

ing to go downhill physically. He has reached an age when the military authorities will no longer accept him for field service except he be a staff officer. But in the call-up for the Civil Construction Corps, there is not even a fixed medical examination, though I admit a man can ask for one. I do not think it has ever been refused, but there are men who feel that by asking for such an examination they are attempting to evade service. I agree that in the work to be done by the Civil Construction Corps a lower standard of physical fitness may be acceptable, but to take a man of 45 to 60 years of age from a sedentary occupation, or from the type of work to which the usual business man is accustomed, and ask him to do continuous heavy labour is, in many instances, to court disaster.

The organisation which the Army has had functioning since the outbreak of war could examine these men and place them in the classes necessary for the purpose. Day by day I find it my task, in private life, to advise men of 45 years of age and over to slow down on physical exertion, and to take less violent exercise than they have been accustomed to in the past, but here we are asking men, without option—beyond that of asking for a medical examination—to live under circumstances to which they are not accustomed and to do work for which they may not be fitted. No man objects, in these times, to doing his bit, but the physically unfit man should not be called upon to do work for which he is not fitted. When the time comes that men in the Civil Defence Corps break down or are injured they will only receive two-thirds of the pay they were getting whilst working. That discrimination is not warranted. If these men are called up to do this work with little option, they should be regarded as doing work of national importance. They should be classified in the same way as are the younger men—the younger men for service, and the older for construction. Should they be injured, or break down, then they should receive exactly the same monetary consideration as the men in the Fighting Services. We should not ask for less.

I must draw attention to another aspect. The sickness rate amongst these men must increase beyond that which one would expect had they remained at their civil tasks. Under the arrangement made practically the same conditions as apply under the State

Workers' Compensation Act have been applied to these men. That means that they will receive treatment in civil hospitals. This will undoubtedly increase the amount of work placed upon the shoulders of those medical men not on full-time military service. I doubt if in some of the districts any increase in the sickness rate can be handled without serious breakdown in the health of the practising members of the profession who are undertaking an enormous task. The following considerations should be given in the call-up of men for this work:—

(1) Consideration to their examination and fitness for work;

(2) Consideration to their compensation being equal to that of the men in the services; and

(3) Consideration to the protection of their health, not only in their own interests, but in the interests of that section of the public which at the present moment is doing everything it can.

It has been suggested that some of us might be tempted to speak for too long, and I would at this stage be inclined to finish, were it not that I feel this is the first time for many years that a medical man has been able to criticise the Government from a psychological point of view. I would be wrong to be silent about some of the things that have happened in recent days. I may become rather critical without offering any practical suggestions, but I can show the lines upon which some of the modern legislation should be amended or moulded. I have been more than a little interested in the attempts made to control liquor consumption. I freely admit that there was a stage when panic legislation was not only wise but necessary, and whatever was done certainly produced an effect. But we have now had time to sit down and look quietly and sanely at the methods by which we could control such questions. What do we see? Only a few days ago, the Prime Minister stated that he would ask the Premiers for control of the liquor question, not from the point of view of prohibition but from the point of view of the war effort and national morale. Taking this as their cue I should have thought that the Premiers at the recent conference would have asked one question: Is alcohol necessary for the war effort? That is the prime question, but I have not yet seen a reply to it.

The goldmining industry has been virtually closed down for some time in this State because it has been regarded as non-

essential. There must be some consistency in assessing what is essential and what is non-essential to our national effort. What is non-essential must go. I presume from the consideration given to the alcohol question that the manufacture and consumption of alcohol bear some relation to the war effort. If there is that relation then let us harness it, and harness it properly. If we are to harness the liquor trade, it will need sane legislation. One of my main objections to a lot of the present legislation covering alcohol and allied matters is that it tends to make the ordinary man in the street, who has no desire to break the law, feel like a sneak going about his ordinary means of living. If I take some friend into my home I can supply him with alcohol with his meal, but because my house is now occupied by the Allied Forces and I live in a hotel I cannot provide him with alcohol with his meal and I am not certain, if I provide him with it in my bedroom, that I am not breaking the law.

That is the situation at present as I see it. Having responded to the call of the Prime Minister, the conference of Premiers attacked this question and the momentous decision to close the hotels for one hour per day was reached. Could anything be more futile than that? Yes, it could! Imagine a body of intelligent men even considering the cutting out of mixed drinking in hotel lounges. Can we imagine a nation getting down to a more degrading state than having lounges for each of the sexes so that they can dive furtively in to have a drink of alcohol? I trust that this was not seriously considered, but it did get into the Press report. Can we imagine a law that prevents me from taking my wife into a hotel lounge to have a drink of alcohol? We need to get some sanity into this question. There is no practical necessity for a hotel or bar to be opened before noon. Morning drinking of alcohol is to be deprecated from many angles. By opening in the morning at nine o'clock and closing at six p.m. the man who would like a glass of alcohol with his meal is deprived of it, and he is the man who would not misbehave if given it. This is simply making arrangements for the chronic alcoholic to have the glass of alcohol at nine o'clock which has become so necessary to fit him to commence his day's work.

Hon. J. Cornell: In some States they get it at six o'clock.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: They do here too. That is the position at the moment. It is ludicrous. Nobody has a right to drink alcohol before midday, purely from a health point of view. One must realise that alcohol is more a sedative than a stimulant, and I was glad to hear Mr. Hill say that the other day. It is a poison that attacks the liver. If alcohol is taken even in moderate doses at regular intervals, the poisonous effect will remain. By closing the opportunity for getting alcohol from the evening to midday, we would automatically provide for everyone sufficient time to get rid of the deleterious effects. If we opened the hotels from noon to 2 p.m., that is the time when alcohol should be taken—with food. It is a time at which an individual who wants alcohol may take it without detriment to himself. To drink alcohol between those hours is quite reasonable. But can anyone tell me why any person should be drinking alcohol between the hours of 2 and 5 p.m. and thus lose his capacity for effort? There is no adequate reason. If the hours were fixed from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. or from 5.30 p.m. to 8 p.m., alcohol could be partaken of during the mealtime. I would allow alcohol to be served in the diningroom of a hotel during the hours at which food was supplied, and for any breaking of the law I would provide heavy penalties.

The whole question of penalties in this business is one I deplore because I feel that we in Australia have always used alcohol unwisely. I do not believe that the real sin lies in a man's getting drink but in the fact that we have not been able to control his drinking. If a man will drink alcohol in his home and then tell his children it is wrong to drink it, he certainly not only has a wrong psychological aspect himself but is giving the children a wrong psychological aspect of the use of alcohol. I have never deprived my children at any stage of their lives of a small quantity of alcohol, and I am quite convinced they will never grow up wanting, as so many children do, to experience the effect of this wrong thing that mother and father like so much.

Hon. J. Cornell: He is a wise man that can forecast the future of his children.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I can forecast the future of many children if their psychological aspect starts from a wrong standpoint. We should never tell children that social errors are sins. It is not a sin to drink

alcohol. It is a social error to get drunk or to abuse alcohol. Having abused alcohol, the road to sin is easier of access, but it is not a sin to drink alcohol. Time after time in Germany I have seen whole families sitting down to their beer in beer-houses.

The Honorary Minister: And nobody drunk.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Nobody drunk. On the three occasions I visited Germany, I do not think I saw a drunken man. Yet I saw many families enjoying beer in the beer-houses. They were not there to see how much alcohol they could consume in the shortest space of time; they were there to enjoy a glass of alcohol and a convivial evening with their friends.

Here I have mentioned what I think is the biggest cause of our present difficulties. In those European countries I have visited, I found that the greatest proportion of alcohol was served to the customer when he was seated. I honestly believe that the bar in Australian and British hotels is the worst enemy of alcohol. Here a man stands, and it would seem to be a race as to how many glasses of alcohol can be consumed in the shortest space of time. It has grown into a habit to go in company into a bar, start off with a round of drinks, and see that everybody shouts a round before he leaves the hotel, so much so that one of the commonest expressions used amongst Australians is, "Come and have a quick one." Nowhere else where a reasonable attitude to alcohol is adopted would one hear that expression used; time is taken to consume alcohol.

Hon. J. Cornell: Have you seen the Yanks and Canadians in action?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes, going fast; they do it well. Can anyone tell me why a hotel bar or a shop selling alcohol in any form should be entitled to have a screen, usually advertising some alcoholic beverage, placed right across the front door so that nobody in the street can see inside and so that what is happening inside is protected from public gaze? If we allow these screens in front of doors and more or less allow men to misbehave and automatically say that because we have screens we expect them to misbehave, we should not be surprised if they go wrong. Is there any more reason why a milk-bar should not be shut off from public gaze? Tear down these screens! Let the daylight enter into these places!

I do not know that I could explain why a hotel should have a monopoly of the sale of alcohol. Would anyone reasonably suggest that we should set up a row of shops with a monopoly of the supply of tea? Yet I do not think that would be either more or less reasonable. In Singapore I could go with my wife or friends to Robinson's or Little's, purchase what I wanted, and my wife and her women friends could have tea and I, if I chose, being on holidays, could have a glass of alcohol. Is there any real reason why some of our big emporiums or, in fact, why any respectable shopkeeper, if it suits his trade, should be denied the right to sell alcohol? My present feelings regarding the psychology of this whole business is that it is due to wrong education. We start off wrong psychologically and keep it up for the rest of our lives. The drinking of alcohol is not a sin; it is the abuse that is the sin, and I feel that responsibility for this sin lies equally in this Chamber as in the street. If we cannot suggest some means whereby we can adequately control the drinking of alcohol in our State, we have reached a very poor legislative level.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And if it is brought under the National Security Regulations we will be deprived of having a say.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is what happens now.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The chronic alcoholic will be always with us and I do not think we can attempt to legislate for him in the regulations we envisage, but the problem of the chronic alcoholic is not one for this form of legislation. It is one for the psychiatrists to deal with. It is a disease, and no regulation short of prohibition will cure the chronic alcoholic. My real grudge is that social legislation of a modern character appears to be on the same level as medicine was in the mediaeval ages. While medicine, medical investigation and medical knowledge have progressed by leaps and bounds I do not believe that social legislation has advanced beyond that stage. In mediaeval times medicine attempted to cure the symptoms of disease. Social legislation is doing that very thing today. I should like to see some really earnest study given to social legislation.

I do not wish to say a solitary word against the vice squad, which has a difficult job to do and is doing it well. It consists of picked men, and I think we can

rely upon them to do their job in the spirit we desire and for the good of the nation. I congratulate the Government on what it has done to assist in the formation of the vice squad. I know quite well that at certain times in the history of the world steps have had to be taken that would never be contemplated at other times and while I should not like to see a vice squad operating in ordinary times I regard it as essential at the moment. But I do not like the state of affairs that made the formation of a vice squad necessary. I doubt if we have given sufficient time to the question whether we have not been to blame in allowing that state of affairs to occur.

What I do not like about the whole thing is the finger of scorn or the spirit of complacency in some high places. It seems somewhat like the story of the Pharisee again. I do not believe that the sin exists only on the street. I think it exists in the minds and hearts of everyone who has been prepared to allow this sort of thing to go on. Prostitution is something that has been present in society's midst since the dim past. There has been published a series of volumes entitled "The Ocean of Story" devoted to Hindu mythology and almost the whole of the first volume is given over to the subject of sacred prostitution. All we have been able to do in thousands of years is to push that prostitution out of the sacred temples and drive it underground.

Hon. J. Cornell: The oldest profession was not responsible for the appointment of the vice squad.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The fact that we have allowed it to go on has contributed materially to the necessity for the vice squad. I want to see whether the House during this session cannot give much more considered thought to social legislation. Times like this will naturally demand certain regulations and stringencies that would never occur at other times. If one goes back to the time of the Black Plague one realises that then, with a sense of insecurity, not knowing what day was their last, the people of England behaved exactly in the same manner as our own people are behaving today. But I think it is up to us to see what we can do to improve matters.

Going back a little further into history one recalls what happened in those days when bodies were dug up for anatomical dissection. The public of England was

thoroughly aroused to a sense of duty in this matter when—rather curious to relate, having relation to what I have just said—the body of Mary Patterson was found in Dr. Knox's surgery. She having been murdered and being a lady well known, England was on that particular occasion aroused to a real sense of duty in regard to the Resurrectionists, and from that time it was not long before the study of surgery was made possible by some law of real worth. I trust that something of the same sort does not have to happen here before there is some reform. I hope that what has been revealed as a result of the vice squad's investigations will make us realise that it is our duty to see that the present state of affairs is altered.

I do not believe for one moment that to charge women with vagrancy and—because we have no other place to send them—to commit them to gaol; or even to treat them for disease and send them back to the community, is a cure. It is very far from being so. We must do more than that. We must re-establish such women in the eyes of society. We must re-establish them in their own esteem. We have to make them realise that we are on their side and take them into some institution, on which we are prepared to spend money, for the purpose of teaching them a trade, and then send them back into society. We must not send them to gaol for three months with or without treatment, and then release them unprepared to fight their battle in the world outside. It is up to us to help them and we must do so. There are many aspects of this question on which I could touch. This whole problem of alcohol, prostitution and misbehaviour is one which has basic primary causes. To a large extent it is all due to lack of education.

Hon. L. CRAIG: And discipline.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes. One of the things we have never been able to teach our young people is how to enjoy their leisure hours properly. There are many aspects of the social side of legislation to which we have paid not the slightest heed or attention, and our duty stands out clearly today. I would ask every member of the House to read a book—it will cost him only sixpence—called "Health in the Soviet Union." This book has been written not by a tyro or by a man capable of being led away by false impressions. It was written

by Dr. R. S. Ellery, a man to whom many members possibly owe a good deal of pleasure derived from reading articles from his pen in the red page of the "Bulletin," and who today is probably the leading psychiatrist in Melbourne.

The book to which I refer contains the story of his investigations of health matters in Russia. I would advise members to read it and after they have done so we might form a small committee to see whether we could not adopt some of the suggestions that appear in the book. There are many matters which are discussed in this book and at which we have from time to time tried in some small way to nibble. He indicates that Russia has tackled those problems firmly and I feel that we, as a State, should see whether this is the time when we, too, could do something along the same lines, and thus endeavour to advance in social legislation.

I propose now to touch on a very tender point. Russia tackled the problem of abortion with courage. That problem is here with us today and we are not tackling it, because of prejudices that have always been with us and have always faced us when we have started to introduce social legislation. Russia said, "If you are going to practice abortion in a widespread manner and cause trouble and disability to our womenfolk, let us legalise abortion." That was done until the public was educated sufficiently and in 1936 abortion was declared illegal. I am not going to say that I know, because if I said I knew I would be breaking the law. If I even said I was aware of it I might be breaking the law; but I do say I believe that there is in this town today one unregistered person doing abortions. It has been said that she does as many as four per day and I know that on one occasion she charged £25. Are we not just laughing at things?

There is not a single member of my profession today who will do an abortion. We say, "No, it is against the law. We can perform an abortion only if it is to save your health." Every time we refuse to perform this operation we feel like guilty criminals because we know the person will have it done outside. Some years ago a few of us tried to start a birth control centre where advice could be given, but we met with so many prejudices that within 30 days we gave up the task as hopeless. I hope I have said quite a lot that will arouse in the minds

of members a realisation of the need for a really definite tackling of a job that is not beyond us if we have courage, and I ask that during this session something will be done about a problem that is still in our midst.

On motion by Hon. H. V. Piesse, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.39 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 12th August, 1942.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (4).

SHORTAGE OF BRAN.

Mr. McLARTY asked the Minister for Agriculture: What steps, if any, have been taken by the Department of Agriculture to overcome the shortage of bran in this State?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied: Investigations by departmental officers are now in progress.

RAILWAYS.

Diesel Service to Ongerup.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has consideration been given to the request of the Gnowangerup and Tambellup Road Boards for a weekly Diesel electric service to Ongerup? 2, If so, has a decision been made? 3, If so, what is the decision and have the boards concerned been advised? 4, If the decision is against the request, what are the reasons?

The MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, The request was declined. The Gnowangerup Road Board has been advised and advice is being sent to the Tambellup Road Board. 4, A satisfactory service by Diesel-electric car is not practicable at commen-

surate cost; an improvement is being effected by an alteration in the steam train service on this branch.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT.

Medical Register Committee.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Industrial Development: What are the names of members of the Medical Register Committee under the Workers' Compensation Act. Of these members—(a) Who are medical practitioners? (b) Who are nominated by the Governor?

The MINISTER replied: 1, The names are: Chairman, Mr. Justice Wolff; Members, Doctors Frank L. Gill and M. Kasner Moss, and Messrs. Wilfred L. Carter and Geoffrey F. Keating. (a) Doctors Frank L. Gill, and M. Kasner Moss. (b) Messrs. Wilfred L. Carter, and Geoffrey F. Keating.

NATIVE ADMINISTRATION ACT.

As to Carrolup Station.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for the North-West: 1, Are male natives who are sent to Carrolup compelled to work when physically fit for work? 2, What classes of work are available? 3, If work is not compulsory in the cases mentioned, will he explain why?

The MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. 2, General farm work for male natives. Male and female natives are also required to do institutional duties. 3, Work is compulsory for all able-bodied natives.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [2.20]: I desire first of all to express my regret at the absence of the Premier, and to voice the hope that he will shortly be restored to health. I am pleased to see the Minister for Works back in his place, and hope that he has fully recovered and will not experience any further illness. When we last met a few months ago we were confronted with a serious position in relation to the war. As a matter of fact, at each successive meeting of this Parliament for the last three years we have been faced with an increasingly serious situation, and it behoves every