

**Legislative Council,***Wednesday, 7th August, 1929.***LEAVE OF ABSENCE.**

Leave of absence for six consecutive sittings was granted to the following members:—

The Honorary Minister: motion by the Chief Secretary on the ground of urgent public business.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: motion by Hon. J. Nicholson on the ground of urgent private business.

Hon. E. Rose: motion by Hon. J. Ewing on the ground of urgent private business.

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

**QUESTION—GOVERNMENT STATISTICS.**

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, With reference to the table of production issued by the Government Statistician in the "Quarterly Abstract"—for what reason are the figures shown in the columns headed "Pastoral and Total Production" altered for the years 1919 to 1926, inclusive, in the issue for March, 1929, as compared with those issued previously? 2, In view of the fact that production figures are important for purposes of comparison, will the Government endeavour to have them brought to a closer date than two years ago?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Owing to the large discrepancies between the quantity of wool exported and the quantity shown in the statistical returns, as being produced throughout the States of the Commonwealth, it was decided by a conference of statisticians to adjust the figures as far back as possible in order to make the production figures agree with the exports. This accounts for the adjustments in the value of production shown under the heading of "Pastoral," on Table 30, page 22 of the "Statistical Abstract." 2, The figures given in the above table do not refer to a period of two years, but are brought up to the 28th February, 1928, for "Agriculture"; to 31st December, 1927, for "Pastoral," "Mining," and "Dairying," etc.; and to 30th June, 1928, for "Forestry and Fisheries" and "Manufacturing." It is not possible to give complete figures for 1928-29, for all forms of industry until about the end of March next.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.***Sixth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [4.38]: One of the most important things we have to contend with in this State and in Australia to-day is unemployment. Certain statements have been made by the Premier, by Mr. Bruce, by Mr. Gullett and by Dr. Earle Page regarding production. For the benefit of the House I should like to read an extract from what the Premier said on that matter, as follows:—

The increase in the area under crop and a reduction in the cost of production would make the position to-day, with the lower price, what it was two years ago with the higher price.

Sir James Mitchell: Wheat will not fetch a lower price this year.

Mr. Collier: No, but this was threatened. It was difficult to say what was the cause of the high cost of production.

Sir James Mitchell: Taxation.

Mr. Collier: That was a contributing cause. The high tariff was the chief cause. The tariff piled up year by year and the primary producer, unlike the manufacturer, was unable to pass it along. He hoped the Federal Parliament would not continue to pile burdens on the producer through the Customs.

I agree with the Premier in that statement. Mr. Bruce has made similar statements, and so also have Dr. Earle Page and Mr. Gullett. But they fail to carry out the views they express. The Premier himself believes that to be the main cause—and I agree that it is the main cause—of unemployment. It is all because of the high tariff, the mad-brained policy they have gone on with in Australia. It is necessary to have a tariff, for it is impossible for us to have free trade. But we have the Prime Minister saying this is an Australian

policy. I say it is not an Australian policy, that it is a Melbourne and Sydney policy and is not in the best interests of Australia.

Hon. H. Seddon: Do you think freetrade will put the position right?

Hon. G. W. MILES: I am not advocating freetrade. I have made that clear. I am in favour of a modified, a scientific, tariff. Mr. Bruce has said that there will be no reduction in wages. I say Mr. Bruce is talking with his tongue in his cheek. There will be no reduction of wages until there is a reduction in the cost of living. And the cost of living can be brought down by a modification of the tariff. When the cost of living comes down and the Federal Arbitration Court is abolished, we can have round table conferences between the employers and the employees, who will there fix the rate of wages. But eventually, when we can buy as much for 15s. as we can now buy for 25s., wages must come down to enable the primary producers to produce their commodities to sell on the world's markets at a profit. As Sir Edward Wittenoom pointed out last week, it is the high wages that cause unemployment. When the basic wage was raised by 2s. the other day, I met on the steamer coming down the coast a gentleman who takes a great interest in the affairs of State. He said it was a pity they had not made the basic wage £6, that then there would have been no employment at all. The tariff is the main cause of unemployment. Then the Arbitration Court fixes wages on the cost of living. I say the standard of living in Australia need not be altered. The standard of living is quite all right. I will point out presently that people do not appreciate the conditions under which they are living in Australia to-day. If these costs come back, as they should do, the primary industries will get a chance. I have had the pleasure of telling Federal Ministers to their faces that in my opinion some of them should retire from office and let us get a sane policy for Australia. The Premier says the high tariff is the main cause of unemployment. Yet he will turn round to-morrow and support the Federal Government and Mr. Scullin, who are out for a 100 per cent. tariff. I have told the Federal Ministers that in my opinion they should retire from office and let the high tariffists have a go. They said, "Then we

shall be out of the frying pan into the fire." I said, "The sooner the crisis comes, the better." Had not the price of wheat recovered itself recently we should have had the same crisis as they had in Melbourne in the nineties. Just after Mr. Pratten's death I said to a Minister, "I hope you will not appoint another Pratten." The Minister in question defended Mr. Pratten and said he had put 40 items on the free list. I asked how many hundreds of items there were on which he had increased the tariff. I said he had killed all the primary industries we had except wheat and wool, and that if wheat and wool went back in price the country would be on the rocks as Victoria was in the nineties. The Commonwealth Government have just had a deficit of 2½ millions, and yet some of the members of the Government have been made Privy Councillors. These men are sinking their own convictions in order to retain office. That is what the Premier is doing to-day.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I do not think that is fair.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I think it is fair. The Premier says this is the main cause of unemployment, and then he supports a party which wants to place 100 per cent. tariff upon us.

Hon. A. Lovekin: He cannot help himself.

Hon. G. W. MILES: He can.

Hon. A. Lovekin: You ought to be fair.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I am fair. These gentlemen retain office and yet they know this is not the right policy for Australia. It is the cause of our being in our present position. I have not been in touch with prices of general commodities for many years, but last year I had the opportunity to buy some goods for my boys who were starting on the land. Notwithstanding the mechanical aids now in use on farms, it is impossible to get on without the horse. I found that collar check was 5s. 6d. a yard wholesale in Perth. I bought some last week and found it had gone up to 6s. 3d. a yard. I happen to have kept some price books that were in use in Marble Bar 25 years ago. I looked through the books and found that at that time in Marble Bar we were retailing collar check at 2s. 6d. to 3s. a yard, against 6s. 3d. wholesale in Perth to-day, notwithstanding that Marble Bar is one of the towns furthest from the centre of Government in Western Australia. Fur-

thermore, we were selling boots 20 per cent. cheaper than they are being sold in Perth to-day wholesale. We were selling socks at 2s. a pair whereas they are 3s. 3d. wholesale in Perth to-day. The same can be said of foodstuffs. Prices have gone up in 25 years to the extent of between 50 and 150 per cent. We cannot produce gold, tin, copper, asbestos or pearl shell at a profit to-day. In the North we have all these minerals, pearl shell, fish and so on, industries that cannot be run at a profit. This is how people in the back blocks are penalised: At Maud's Landing and Shark Bay there are no declared ports, and there is no Customs officer there. Notwithstanding the tariff, it pays the producer in that part of the State to import direct from the Old Country. Some time ago an application was made to permit cement and piping to be landed there. The residents communicated with the Customs authorities but without avail. Then the Pastoralists' Association approached the authorities. Ultimately the member for the district (Mr. Angelo) took the case in hand, and sent it on to me. I interviewed the Collector of Customs, and after I had been with him for five minutes I found that he could do nothing. The taxpayer offered to pay the expense of a Customs officer to go to these ports so that the stuff might be landed there, but the Customs people said this could not be done. They were evidently afraid that some Chinaman might be smuggled ashore. All this would cost the taxpayers concerned an extra £270. We have put the matter in the hands of one of the Federal members, who has written Mr. Gullett. Mr. Bruce talks about bringing down the cost of production, and yet these are some of the things the producers have to contend with.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It would have been better if Western Australian cement had been purchased and sent up there.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Put the Federal Government out of office.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Prime Minister said that the Australian policy of protection was based upon the belief that such a policy tended to accelerate our development and increase our national prosperity. Protection up to a certain point might do that. He then went on to say:

This policy the people of Australia have endorsed on many occasions, and it has become an integral part of the structure of our economic life. Because of its permanence and its profound bearing upon every material activity of the Commonwealth, it is essential that from time to time we should inquire into the methods by which we are striving to apply that policy, in order that we may satisfy ourselves that it is achieving its objects. It is not enough for us to affirm confidently that protection is the only policy for Australia. We should be intelligently and fully informed as to every aspect of its operation; we should be able to assess its benefits and its costs, not in general terms, but with all possible exactitude.

The remarks I have just quoted I have taken from the leading article in the "West Australian" of the 19th July, when it was commending Mr. Bruce for having appointed the Commission to inquire into the effects of the tariff. The "Big Four" are men with brains and business training. They pointed out that we have gone mad on protection, and that it was time we got back to a scientific tariff.

Hon. J. Cornell: What is a scientific tariff?

Hon. G. W. MILES: It is one that does not cripple the primary industries for the benefit of the secondary industries. Let them both march hand in hand. The Commission stated—

The subsidies to production through the tariff are £36,000,000, which would average all round 26 per head of population. But if the £36,000,000 is distributed among States in proportion to the quantity of protected industry the amount per head—

This is what I particularly want members to bear in mind—

—will vary greatly from State to State:—  
New South Wales, £5 5s.; Victoria, £7; South Australia, £3 7s.; Queensland, £8; Western Australia, £3 6s.; Tasmania, £4; average £6.

This report shows how the high tariff affects the smaller States. Take the Queensland sugar industry. We are penalised to the extent of 2d. a lb. on sugar in order to keep that industry going. It would be the best thing for Australia if that industry were abolished. Most of the money is going to Italians who are sending it back to Italy. The sugar companies are issuing bonus shares at the expense of Australia. That is not the worst feature of the matter. I have an article from an Eastern States paper dealing with Trade in the East, and the opportunity there is for Australia to get some of that trade. It points out that we

should send our goods there, grade them, and see that they are true to label. That is, of course, necessary. We appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the meat industry of Western Australia. I said to two members of that commission that they must not forget one aspect of the industry when making their report. One of the main disabilities under which we are suffering in the North is that there is no reciprocity of trade with the East. If people go along that coast they will find within three or four days' sail 40 million people. Within a few more days' sail of us there are 100,000,000 coloured people. Our natural markets are in the East. Until we have an Australian and an Empire policy we shall only be struggling on, instead of developing along right lines. Within ten years there will be no market for our surplus sheep in the North. The owners will have to cut the throats of and boil down the sheep unless we get some reciprocity of trade with the East. One member of the Meat Commission says there is only a limited market there. I do not blame him, although he has made a fortune out of that market. He has the space on the ships engaged. If there is only a limited market it is because there is no reciprocity of trade with the East. We grow rice artificially in Australia and put a tariff on that commodity. We had a tariff on sugar. The main disability with sugar is that we are not able to trade with our neighbours as we should do. If we were prepared to take some of their sugar, rice and bananas there would be reciprocity of trade. This disability is one reason why I should like to see our sugar industry wiped out. The land now utilised could be adapted in Queensland for the growing of butter, cheese and bacon. Everything is artificial. I am a member of the Executive of the Gold Mining Association. Three years ago we waited as a deputation on the Federal Treasurer with reference to a bonus on gold. This affects goldfields members more than it does others, but it also affects the whole community of Australia. The president of the association put up a case, and other members also spoke. I was then asked if I had anything to say. I replied I had nothing further to add except that I would anticipate the Federal Treasurer's reply. I said he would reply that the matter would be referred to the Prime Minister, who would say

that it was economically unsound. My reply was that while Australia was being run under an economically unsound policy, we were entitled to a bonus on gold just as was given to any other industry. The whole thing is a farce. It is absurd to think that we can go on with a handful of people in Australia and expect to hold the country. I agree that we should do everything possible to keep the race pure, but we will not even trade with other people. We say by the tariff we are not prepared to trade with them. How are we going to finance this country? We must get men strong enough to face the position. Notwithstanding Mr. Lovekin's interjection, I say Mr. Bruce and Dr. Earle Page are not carrying out the Australian policy. Dr. Page in particular knows, as does Mr. Bruce, that it is economically unsound to continue this mad-brained tariff.

Hon. J. Cornell: We will have to put them out.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes. When the crisis comes, people will say we need a Mussolini to get the country out of its trouble. Australia will reach the same position as Italy reached. Mussolini could not control Italy unless he had the people behind him.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: And whom would you have in place of the present administration?

Hon. G. W. MILES: The people would be educated and would know the reasons why the Government went out. The public will be forced to see things as they are. If wheat goes back in price again, we shall see the same retrenchment in the State and Commonwealth services as we saw in Melbourne in the Nineties. Governments will be forced to recognise that they must evolve a sane policy for Australia. It is the duty of the leaders to see that we have an Australian and an Empire policy instead of a Melbourne and a Sydney policy, which is strangling every primary industry in Australia.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Do not vote for them at the next election.

Hon. G. W. MILES: If we paid every man who is making matches in Australia his salary, and import our own matches, it would be an economical proposition. Take the case of the shovel maker. Mr. Gregory has said that if we were to pension off all our shovel makers and were allowed

to import those articles free, it would be a sound and economical thing to do. The position is that a man who wants to start a secondary industry in Australia does so around about Melbourne or Sydney. His case is put up and he shows how many people it is his intention to employ. As Mr. Gregory pointed out only the other day, the effect that the starting of industries in this manner will have on the rest of Australia is not considered at all. That is the position in a nutshell, and I repeat that both the Premier of this State and the Prime Minister and his Ministers also, should put their heads together, drop all party politics and squabbling, and endeavour to establish Australia on a sound economic basis. In this morning's paper we find that the effect of the Financial Agreement to which we agreed a little while ago is to cut down our loan expenditure by a million pounds. Instead of being able to borrow five millions for developmental works that are so necessary in a State like Western Australia, we will be permitted to borrow only four millions. We sacrificed our credit for the benefit of the Eastern States by accepting the Financial Agreement. So it was when we federated; we put ourselves in the hands of people who had no Australian or Empire vision, but had a vision only for their own particular State. I would like to show what effect the existing condition of things has on our primary industries. Let us take the wages that are paid to-day. I do not deny for a moment that every man is entitled to the full value for the work he does; at the same time I expect him to do a fair day's work for the money he receives. Through the tariff and the Arbitration Court lumpers' wages for the handling of wheat amount to 3s. 3½d. per hour, working eight hours a day. With wheat at 4s. a bushel at the farm—and that would have been the price if there had not been the recent recovery—the exchange value for the lumper's day's work would be approximately 6½ bushels. At to-day's price, however, the quantity would be 5¼ bushels. The man handling fruit gets 3s. 0½d. per hour and in his case the exchange value would be approximately 2½ cases of fruit per day. The man handling wool receives the same rate as the man handling fruit, and with wool at 1s. 3d. a lb. the exchange value would be in his case 19 lbs. of wool. That is the position at the present time. I cannot understand all the talk about economy of production when things of this sort are brought about by the

mad-brained schemes that we have in Australia to-day. Some will tell us that America thrived on a high tariff; but America did not start on anything like a high tariff until she boasted of 50,000,000 people. A country like Australia should have a moderate tariff and should get her goods from the Old Country. We should also have some form of reciprocity of trade with the Old Country. There is a howl just now because the Labour Government in England are talking about doing away with preference. We give England certain preference but we could give the Old Country much greater preference and cut out a good deal of our trade with foreign countries, and particularly America. America has a tariff against all our commodities and yet we send millions of money to America each year.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Forty-four millions.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes, as much as the value of the whole of our harvest.

Hon. J. R. Brown: No, it is 33 millions.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Hon. members can imagine what this means. Unfortunately, I have only South Australian figures before me in respect of that State's trade with America, but I intend to quote them. There are 100,000 motor vehicles in South Australia, and assuming that 75,000 of them are running at a cost of £2 a week, it means that £150,000 a week is sent out of that State, mostly to America. That represents no less an amount than £7,800,000 a year, which is more than the value of the whole of the wheat harvest of South Australia. I admit, of course, that some of the motor vehicles are used for purposes of development. But do the people generally appreciate the position which is the result of a high tariff and the standard of living to-day? We find at the present time that everyone wants to live in luxury, that magnificent theatres and picture houses are being built all over Australia. Years ago a man would put his savings into a home; to-day the average man mortgages his home to buy a motor car, and let us not forget that a motor vehicle depreciates 30 per cent. as soon as it is taken out of the shop. We find men earning £7 a week buying motor cars on the hire purchase system. They pay so much down and £2 a week. Then there are the running costs which amount to 25s. a week. There is the house rent to pay, which can be put down at 25s., totalling £4 10s., and so they are left with £2 10s. a week

with which to clothe, feed and educate the family.

Hon. J. R. Brown: And yet you say wages are too high.

Hon. G. W. MILES: My desire is that a man should be able to buy with 15s. what he has to pay 25s. for to-day. Perhaps the reply to this will be, "Look at the money that is in the Savings Banks to-day." My answer is that the money in the Savings Banks should be double what it is, and it would be, too, if the workers were as thrifty as they were in the old days. Let me quote a case that was mentioned to me not long ago. To a worker who was going to his home someone said, "That is a fine building over there," drawing his attention to a new theatre. "Yes," was the reply, "but if I had my way there would be none of those built in this country." He added that he used to take his wages to his wife but he found that the family were spending what he earned in getting elaborate costumes for themselves and going to picture shows. He thought he would put a check on their extravagance and told them that he would pay the accounts. He made the necessary arrangements with the local storekeeper, but to his surprise his wife got three dozen eggs on credit from the shop, took them to another shop and sold them. This was done to get some spending silver for picture shows. We are certainly living in a mad age and I am afraid people do not appreciate the position we are in. Money is being squandered in every direction. I want the working man to get a fair deal all round, and I will always do my best to help him in that direction.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Well, let him alone.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The hon. member says, "Let him alone." Let me assure him that there will be 10,000 men out of employment if we do not mend our ways. I have pointed out that every time there is an increase in wages, there is less work.

Hon. J. R. Brown: I do not agree with that.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Of course not; neither does Mr. Kenneally, who speaking in the Town Hall the other evening, said that if the hours were shorter there would be more work. That is absolutely wrong. The more work there is done, the more work there is created. What I wish to emphasise is that these are the conditions under which men engaged in cultivating the land are working at the present time. They are going from daylight to dark. The other fellow is not

satisfied with 48 hours; he wants 44, and then he clamours for 40.

Hon. J. H. Brown: Less than that.

Hon. G. W. MILES: That is what the hon. member would like. We had a Bill before us a couple of sessions ago setting out that the coal miners at Colliie should work 35 hours a week. What was the position? The coal miners said they were satisfied and the owners declared they were satisfied with existing conditions. Who pays for all these things? The producer. The Government impose higher freights to let a section of the community work perhaps 44 or 40 hours a week instead of the usual 48.

Hon. A. Lovekin: And the railways do not pay.

Hon. G. W. MILES: How can they pay when such conditions exist? But I shall have something to say about the railways a little later on. Another matter that has been brought under my notice is that if a man is out of work, unless he is a financial member of a union he cannot get employment.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Quite right, too.

Hon. G. W. MILES: A case has been brought under my notice where a married man in the Wagin district tried to get employment and was asked whether he was a unionist. We are told that the first preference is to unionists, the next to married men, and then to those who have been the longest out of employment. It is a disgrace to think that a democratic community will tolerate anything of that sort. I have pointed out the reason for unemployment and here we have the Minister yesterday, in reply to a question as to whether the Government would give us an opportunity to amend the Workers' Compensation Act, saying that the information that had been published by the insurance companies was not correct. In any case it is the duty of the Government to give Parliament an opportunity to discuss the existing Workers' Compensation Act.

Hon. E. H. Gray: For what purpose?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Unless we do get that opportunity, the result will be the end of the Collier Government when the elections take place, because people will not further submit to being robbed as they are being robbed under the existing Act.

Hon. A. Lovekin: We can put up an amendment ourselves.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Something will have to be done to remedy the position.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What about calling a conference of doctors?

Hon. G. W. MILES: We do not want to give, as has been indicated, the opportunity to Southern Europeans to cut off their toes and fingers for the purpose of robbing the people of the State, and neither have we any desire to permit unscrupulous doctors to continue the practices they have resorted to for some time past. Personally, I regret that I went as far as I did when the Bill was before us a couple of years ago, and then gave it my support. We made the Workers' Compensation Act too liberal altogether, and it is the duty of the Government now to give us the chance to reconsider the Act and particularly the second schedule. Notwithstanding the reply of the Minister to Mr. Lovekin's question yesterday that the Government did not consider the statements made by the insurance companies to be correct, I cannot reconcile that answer with what has been stated by the officer in charge of the State department who admitted that he received in premiums £100 to cover clearers and paid out £358, and that he received £100 in premiums for municipal workers and that the liability in respect of those was £135. In view of those facts and what has been disclosed by the insurance companies, the Government should in fairness to all men, women and children in the State, give Parliament an opportunity to again debate the Workers' Compensation Act.

Hon. J. R. Brown: What would you do with it?

Hon. G. W. MILES: With regard to the railways, my opinion is they should be run on business lines. One of the first things would be to make a decent contract for coal and see that the coal miners do a fair week's work so that we could get coal at a fair price. The railways could then economise and show a surplus instead of a deficit.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The railways are getting cheap coal now.

Hon. G. W. MILES: They could get the coal cheaper if the men only did a fair week's work. No matter what industry one might represent, a man working only five days a week cannot do as much as a man who works six days a week.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The Colliery miners are working under different conditions.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I grant that, but the people who have to foot the bill and pay the extra charges are working from daylight till dark.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Are not you an advocate of contract labour?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The coal miners are working under contract.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Then some alteration of the system is needed.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The miners are paid by results.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I have mentioned the matter of motor competition with the railways to some of the heads of the department. Motors are all right in their way, especially if they are British rather than foreign motors, but I consider they should be used as feeders to the railways and not in competition with the railways. During the last year I have had occasion to travel up and down the country within a hundred miles of Perth and I have been impressed with the large quantity of petrol being sent into the country and the large quantity of wool being brought down to the city on motor trucks. Both of these are high-class freights and it would be economy for the Railway Department to lower their freights and cut the motor competition out. There are certain lines in the carriage of which motors cannot compete with the railways. Those lines include coal, timber, wheat and super. If coal were obtainable at a reasonable price, there would be no need to raise any of the other railway rates, but a reduction in the freight for petrol and wool would enable the department to cut out the competition. If the railways were a private concern, there is no doubt that the rates would be lowered in order to compete with the motor traffic. Not only are we losing those high-class freights, but the State has to find money to keep the roads in order so that the motor traffic may compete with the railways. Every taxpayer has an interest in the State railways. Yet we sit down and no effort is made to enable the railways to compete with motor transport. It has been said to me by railway men that to do as I suggest would not be good railway practice. If it is not good railway practice, it is sound commonsense and good business to alter the methods so that the railways can successfully compete.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The private railways in Great Britain can compete.

Hon. G. W. MILES: But ours are State-owned railways, of which the hon. member is an advocate, but though the railways are owned by the State we sit down and do

nothing, allowing motor transport to compete successfully with them. It is neither commonsense nor businesslike to allow that to continue.

Hon. W. J. Mann: It is the taxpayer who is competing with the railways.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The taxpayer?

Hon. W. J. Mann: Yes.

Hon. G. W. MILES: But the people of the State have to pay the extra taxation occasioned by the competition of motor transport.

Hon. C. B. Williams: On the part of the few.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes. In addition, as I have stated, we have to provide money to keep the roads in order so that the competition may continue. It would be sound business to lower the high-class freights, by adopting a zone system of a hundred or a couple of hundred miles from the metropolitan area, if necessary, to wipe out motor competition.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Then you would have a bigger deficit on the railways.

Hon. G. W. MILES: There would not be a bigger deficit; there would be more freight for the railways to carry. Consider also the passenger service. No effort has been made by the railways to compete with the taxi competition on the Perth-Fremantle Road. Instead of the department bringing down their fares, the trains are run almost empty. It would be better to have a train carrying 100 people at a fare of 1s. than 20 people at a fare of 1s 6d.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What about cutting out first-class carriages?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Do that if it is desired, but economy has to be effected. There has been talk of obtaining motor coaches for our railways. With such coaches a quick service every ten or fifteen minutes and reduced fares would enable the Railway Department to compete with the motors on the roads. It is idle for the heads of the department to tell me that this is not good railway practice. I cannot use the language I should like to employ to describe what I think of that.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Go outside and come back again.

Hon. G. W. MILES: If the Minister takes a note of nothing else I have said, I should like him to jot down my opinion that the most dangerous vehicle on the road is the push bicycle. Such vehicles should carry a tail light, which is more important than a head light. Yet there has been no

prosecution of boys, girls or men for riding push bicycles without a tail light. I have had the experience of running down a push cyclist, due to his carrying no tail light and to my having been almost blinded by the dazzling lights of another car. Now, when I am approaching another car I slow down so much that it would be impossible for me to overtake anyone who was walking along the road. The push cycles are the most dangerous vehicles on the road.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Quite right.

Hon. G. W. MILES: They are supposed to carry a red reflector, but in nine cases out of ten the reflectors are not carried. The regulation reflector, however, is not large enough, and I think every push bike should carry a red tail light, just as a motor bike or motor car has to do. Sooner or later there will be a number of accidents due to the Traffic Department's failure to enforce even the regulation that exists to-day.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They have prosecuted quite a number of people for riding push bikes without a light.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: The great fault is that you issue too many licenses to people to drive.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I wish to indicate how this State could be run on better lines and how more employment could be provided if that were done. In the present financial position of the State the work of improving the foreshore near the Causeway could very well be allowed to stand over for another 20 years. In the Press the other day we read that the man occupying the prominent position of manager of the Commonwealth Bank had advocated a bridge across the Narrows at a cost of a couple of hundred thousand pounds. This, of course, is not the fault of the Government, but there are other things for which the Government are responsible.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Living in South Perth as you do, you ought to advocate the building of that bridge.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Government have undertaken the reconditioning of the Canning stock route right from Wiluna to Hall's Creek, and that work is an absolute waste of public money. I have inquired of the members for Kimberley, Pilbara, Roebourne and Gascoyne, and not one of them knows who asked for that money to be expended. The first we heard of it was an



announcement by the Minister for Works that the stock route was to be reconditioned at a cost of £10,000 or £12,000. That is another wilful waste of public money. I wish the Minister to take a note of this and let the House and public know at whose request that expenditure has been incurred and what the object of undertaking the work is. I say emphatically that members of the district through which the stock route passes have never been consulted as to whether the expenditure was necessary. It is the duty of the Government before undertaking the expenditure of public funds to confer with the members for the district and not to put in hand work of that kind at the request of private citizens and possibly for one or two individuals.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You have not a store in that district?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Never mind whether I have a store there or not; I shall tell the hon. member something of the district in which I have a store. Whereas formerly we had one engineer in the North-West, there are now three engineers, though we now have only half the population we had a few years ago. The work was done equally well with one engineer. It was the practice to call for tenders for repairs or renovations of jetties, buildings, etc., and one engineer was able to cope with the work but to-day there are three engineers. I was motoring at Port Hedland, and everyone who knows Hedland is aware that it is situated on an island connected with the mainland by a causeway. Much to my surprise I found that the solid limestone rock—not a made limestone road—had been blasted out and a concrete way put in for motor traffic. I was with the ex-chairman of the Hedland road board at the time and I inquired of him, "Who asked for this concrete way?" He replied, "The Main Roads Board." I said it was a wilful waste of public money. I pointed out that the Main Roads Board was dependent on funds paid by taxpayers of the Federal Government, that the State had to find some of the money, and that the road boards also had to tax themselves. Such money could be more advantageously expended on providing crossings over the different creeks. Out from Marble Bar the natural roads are far better for motor transport than is the Perth-York-road with all its corrugations. In one place there is a stretch of

country where a road 20 feet wide has been formed for three miles, but for 50 miles at either end there is only a narrow track. On that road one would not be likely to meet one traveller per day. Even if a traveller were met the country is level enough for one vehicle to pull off the road, as people up there do, and have a cup of tea together or something of the kind. I am quoting these instances because of the insinuation that I was complaining about expenditure outside my own province. I am referring to expenditure in my district and where my business is. It is proposed to put a bridge across the Fortescue River at Roy Hill, which is about 400 miles inland. Two or three engineers have been up there to make investigations and I suppose there is already a debit against the work of a few hundred pounds. In that part there may be a rainfall once a year or once in two years. Before the bridge will be of any use it will be necessary to construct approaches at either end, but it is possible to ford that river on a hard bottom as the people have been doing for the last 50 years.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Do the local people ask for those things?

Hon. G. W. MILES: I do not know who asked for them, but I maintain that it is the duty of the Government to inquire into those works and inform themselves of what is going on. This is what happens, and I think the hon. member should know: Whenever a Minister goes to the North-West I make it my business to go also, but this year two or three of them have gone up there, and I have been unable to keep pace with all of them. I was there a few years ago when the road grant was under discussion and I heard the Minister for Works tell the people that he had obtained the money on an area as well as a population basis. As a matter of fact all that the Minister for Works did was to assist the Prime Minister to get the grant on that basis in opposition to New South Wales and Victoria. The proposal was made by Mr. Bruce. The Minister for Works said to the local authorities, "There is a sum of £2,000 for each road district. If you do not spend it this year, you will not be able to get it next year." So some of the road boards, without fully considering the matter, expended the money regardless of whether the work was necessary.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: It was a case of hop in and get your cut.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes. That is happening all over Australia, and that is what is bringing the country into the position in which we find it to-day. I have pointed out various occasions when money was spent at nobody's request. The jetty at Roebourne was blown away some years ago, and the Government have waited all this time without supplying the necessary facilities. I understand they now propose to start the work some time before next March. In further reference to the money that is being spent and squandered on the Port Hedland concrete work, I may mention that the foreman happens to be a cousin of mine. I offered him a position. He is without business training, but a good straight man and an honest worker. My terms were £400 a year and an interest. He said, "I have not been used to business; I will see Mr. Young." He is getting £8 a week with a couple of men under him, and he is told that he is to be made a permanent man. I have told him that anything I can do to prevent his job becoming permanent will be done. That man could earn good money at well sinking, concrete work, making tanks, or concreting troughs, things which would assist in the development of the country and so make work for the unemployed of to-day. If money is spent in developing the country as it ought to be developed, that work will create other work. Last night Mr. Wittenoom and Mr. Stewart referred to the opening up of country in the South by the Manjimup-Mt. Barker railway and the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook line. If the money being spent on the foreshore and on the Canning stock route and other works that are not required were spent in opening up the country, the result would be additional opportunities of employment, especially as during the last few years it has been discovered that by fertilising and top-dressing the country and growing clover there, magnificent pastures can be established. In addition, there is the Brookton-Dale River line. The country served by that was settled 80 years ago, or more than 80 years ago. An Act authorising the railway was passed in 1923. I happen to have some special knowledge of the country in question, because I bought a property there for my boys. One of the reasons advanced in support of the price asked for the property was that the

railway had been authorised. Now we have the Government talking about the 3,500 farms scheme. We should go very cautiously before embarking on that scheme, especially in view of our experience with the group settlements. In the area proposed for the 3,500 farms scheme we do not know what the rainfall is. As Mr. Wittenoom said last night, one cause of unemployment, additional to those I have mentioned, is that the migrants mostly are not suitable for remaining on the land when they have been put there.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is not so.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I know it is so as regards a percentage of them. Moreover, a percentage of group settlers have left the groups, and must be absorbed. The class of migrant coming to this country is not the best type. How can we expect to get the best type of man when we say, with open arms, "Come out and we will finance you, the 400,000 people of Western Australia will finance you and put you on your feet"? Such a policy is wrong. It may be right to a certain extent, but the Government would have done much better if they had adopted the scheme, put up Mr. Hedges some years ago, of partially developing wheat areas by clearing the land, making roads and fencing properties, and then getting in men with some small amount of capital so that they would have some equity in the properties. That is a sound scheme. It was put up and turned down—I do not say turned down by the present Government, but still they continued the scheme of the previous Government. A scheme was put up to introduce men with some money. A number of British army officers were being demobilised in India, each of them with £2,000, and they were anxious to come here. We were told that they could go and grub trees. There is a saying that finance is government and that government is finance; but I would add that if any private firm ran its business in the same way as the Government run the country, it would be insolvent within 12 months. That remark applies not only to the present Government but to previous Governments. We have had business men, or supposed business men, at the head of our affairs, and they have allowed red-tape methods to go on and statements to be issued covering up departmental accounts in such a way that the public could not understand the returns. In connection with group settlement the Gov-

ernment borrowed money—some of it, I believe, at 1 per cent. By interjection I asked what became of the interest charged to the group settlers. It appears that the interest, instead of being held in suspense, is brought in from year to year as revenue. In that way deficits are reduced. The deficits ought to be increased by the total of interest so applied, whatever it may be. When we set about writing down the debits of the group-settlers, we shall have to write off about £4,000,000. The proper way to carry out these transactions would be not to put that money into revenue or credit it to revenue, but to hold it in suspense. It would be a different thing if a bank was dealing with a client who had some equity in the property. Then the interest might be debited to his account and taken into revenue. But to debit a man owing £1,000 and having practically no assets with interest at 8 per cent. and then to take that interest into revenue would be absurd.

Hon. A. Lovekin: It is only taking borrowed money into revenue.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Of course. That is what we have been living on. The high cost of production is caused by the tariff, and the Arbitration Court. We have been living on the surplus we get from wheat and wool. To-day it is estimated that the shortage in the Australian wool clip will mean 20 million sterling. That is one of the reasons why the Federal Loan Council say that expenditure must be cut down 20 per cent. No wonder we cannot raise money for public purposes if all Government transactions are carried on in the same way as group settlement. Each Ministry has done the same thing from time to time. The system should be altered immediately. Statements of accounts should be put before the people in the same way as a company or a private individual submits a balance sheet and profit and loss account to the Commissioner of Taxation. Another thing I wish to point out is an anomaly that has existed since the war. I have drawn attention to it time and again, and I now make another appeal to the Minister. I refer to the surcharge of 20 per cent. on wharfage. As I have said previously, the people in the metropolitan area and the hinterland of Perth pay the wharfage only once, but people who repurchase goods from Perth, either for the north or for the south, pay that wharfage out plus 20 per

cent. over again, and when goods reach their destination, they again pay wharfage, plus 20 per cent., making three payments in all. The way the country is being run by the Government, the banks, and the insurance companies is strangling Western Australia. The anomaly to which I have referred can, however, be remedied. It represents an utter injustice to the people who are doing the developmental work of Western Australia. I have pointed out this disability in connection with cement and other stuff delivered at Maud's Landing. It applies to every outport of the State, and everybody behind the outports as well pays that taxation three times as compared with the people of the metropolitan area. The Government are running a centralisation policy for the benefit of the people in the metropolitan area. I entirely agree with the argument advanced by my friends from the South-East Province as regards opening up the Albany harbour. I also agree with them that lines should be constructed to give that port the natural trade of its back country. That should be done instead of spending money in the metropolitan area. The same remarks apply to the port of Geraldton, though a little is being done there. Still, I went round the Geraldton harbour works recently with a practical engineer, and he said he would like to have the money that was being wasted there.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why not include Esperance?

Hon. G. W. MILES: I included Esperance when I said "all the outports." The Government, instead of going out into the doubtful wheat areas, should develop the Brookton, Cranbrook and Armadale areas, where, as in my own case, settlers are carting super 14 miles. Some of the settlers have been there for 70 or 80 years, and are carting 20 miles to-day. The land in question has a regular rainfall of from 20 to 25 inches per annum. My suggestion would also mean the cutting down of railage for the farmers. Those are directions in which money could be expended instead of being devoted, as it is at the present time, to unnecessary works such as the causeway, the Canning stock route, and so forth. Another point into which I should like the Minister to inquire was reference to the good ship "Kangaroo." I have always opposed State trading concerns, and among them the State Shipping Service; and my contention is that the Government should sell their ships and subsidise

a private shipping company, at the same time fixing freights and fares. Then we would not have the masters of ships dictating to the Government as to when they will and when they will not go into a port. If they are working for a private shipping firm, they will do what they are told; the man at the head of affairs will know what can be done, and will see that it is done. We have been told that the State Shipping Service takes the place of the State railways so far as the North is concerned, and that the Government are out to assist the development of the North. The "Kangaroo" has been State owned for years, but only during the last year or so has she ever gone into Port Hedland. The argument advanced has been that there is not sufficient room for her at Port Hedland, that she is too long. But privately-owned ships longer than the "Kangaroo" have been trading there for a number of years.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Which ships are longer than the "Kangaroo"?

Hon. G. W. MILES: The "Gascoyne" is about the same length. Eventually, however, the "Kangaroo" has been brought into Port Hedland. It seems that the captain has been brought to book by a Labour member we have now. The "Kangaroo" had never been into Port Hedland prior to the last 12 months or so. The ship was chartered by the Shell Oil Company to bring petrol from the Far East. The Government charged an extra 2s. per case for the "Kangaroo" to go to Port Hedland to discharge a consignment of 2,000 cases of petrol or whatever the consignment represented. I would like to ask the Government for an explanation. If that is correct, I would like to know why that extra charge was made? Why should the people of the Pilbara district be made to pay that extra charge on every case of petrol landed there? This charge was advanced by the company in explanation of their having to charge the Port Hedland residents more for their petrol than the Beadon residents, seeing that the latter did not have to pay the extra 2s. per case. If the Government are sincere in their claims that they desire to assist the people outback and to develop the North, they should see to it that such anomalies are adjusted, and no extra charge levied for going into Port Hedland. It should be remembered that at intervals good freights are available from Port Hedland, such as the wool that is being lifted now. Another point concerns the

water supply at Port Hedland. The circumstances under which water is supplied to the pearling luggers represents another anomaly. At present it is necessary to catch rain water, because the local water is somewhat brackish. There is some talk about water being brought in from the Turner River, but nothing definite is known about that yet. As it is, they are hauling water from Poonah and the residents are charged 1s. 6d. per 100 gallons.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is cheap.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Yes.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I have had to pay 2s. 6d. per gallon in other parts of the State, so I suppose 1s. 6d. is relatively cheap. On the other hand, a charge of 3s. is made to the pearlers when the luggers come alongside, and then on top of that they are charged 5s. per hundred gallons for their water supply. Why should there be that difference? Surely it should be the policy of the Government to develop the pearling industry. Why should the pearlers not be placed on the same footing as the local residents? Fancy asking the pearlers to be taxed to the extent of 5s. for what the resident of Port Hedland gets for 1s. 6d. Another matter that I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister is that there is a boring plant in the North-West at present. While it is in that part of the State, I trust that an opportunity will be taken to test the reefs at Marble Bar, Barton, Yandicoogina, Warrawoona, Nullagine, and the Conglomerates at depth. It is an expensive matter to get such a plant to that part of the State, and I hope the Minister will do what he can to have these reefs tested at depth while the opportunity is there. Of course we realise that when mining and other activities go down, the population of centres affected decreases accordingly. Throughout this State as mining has declined, the population of mining towns has gone down even to vanishing point. The population of Marble Bar has gone down, and the people did not complain when, in the interests of economy, the warden's services were dispensed with, nor did they complain when the doctor was removed. Now the doctor at Port Hedland also acts as warden and doctor for Marble Bar, and the whole district. Under existing conditions in the summer, the train runs out from Port Hedland on Wednesday and returns on Thursday. This is an absurd arrangement. If the doctor has to attend to patients and transact court work at all, it does not give him

anything like sufficient time to carry out his duties. More than that, the local tradespeople have not sufficient time within which to deal with their correspondence. If the doctor requires to stay longer than is possible if he is to catch the train back, he is forced to take a motor car or some other conveyance in order to return to Port Hedland. That is false economy. The least the Government could do would be to allow the train to run right through on the winter time table—up on Wednesday and back on Friday—which is the most satisfactory. If that improved service is essential in the winter months, it is certainly more important to have it during the summer season when the rains fall in that part of the State. During the summer months it would be quite impossible for the doctor to go through to Marble Bar by motor car. While on the question of taxing the people outback from the standpoint of insurances, and other imposts, I consider the insurance companies should adopt a system of making the people in the cities pay rates a fraction higher than at present and reduce the rates in country districts. I think it is extortionate to extract from 50s. to 90s. per cent. from the country people, and I believe the alteration could be brought about without the insurance companies losing any money. Under existing conditions the rates represent another tax upon the industries of the country. In my own case, my small business necessitates payments to the insurance companies to such an extent that they hold over £30,000 at the present time. That money has to be added to the cost of products and, of course, it has to go on to the primary industries, which are penalised to that extent. I appeal to those members who have influence with the insurance companies to see that the rates are reduced so that the people in the back country can receive a fair deal. I appeal, too, to the bankers of the State to give the country residents a fair deal as well. For instance, the rate of exchange on cheques from Perth to Albany and Geraldton is 1s. per cent.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: I think it is 6d. per cent.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The information I have is that it is 1s. per cent. I also find that the exchange to Kalgoorlie is 5s. per cent., to Meekatharra 7s. 6d. per cent., and to Broome 10s. per cent. Thank God, we have not got a bank at Marble Bar now, but when we did the rate of exchange there was £1 per cent.! I regard those rates

as so much daylight robbery. It is the duty of the Associated Banks to revise those rates. I should think they could fix a rate of exchange of 1s. 6d. to 2s. per cent. for the whole State. Thus it will be seen that the insurance companies, the banks and the Government all impose additional charges on the people outback and, in my opinion, the position should be adjusted. As it is now, the people outback are urged to produce, yet they are burdened with all these various disabilities. In the past, gold, tin, copper, asbestos, pearl shell and many other forms of wealth were produced in the North, but to-day not one of them can be recovered at a profit. Even the pearling industry is struggling along on the strength of a few pearls that may be recovered now and again. There is another matter upon which I would like some information. I hope the Minister will tell us how the Government arrived at the imaginary pleuro line between East Kimberley and West Kimberley. The position is that the West Kimberley people can bring their cattle down to the Perth market, whereas the growers in the East Kimberley district are required to sell their cattle to the Wyndham Meat Works. The latter are unable to avail themselves of the Perth markets and the good prices obtainable here.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Is it not a matter of safeguarding against tick?

Hon. G. W. MILES: No, the line, which is purely an imaginary one, was drawn on account of pleuro, but that disease occurs now as far west as Broome. Why cannot the people in the East Kimberley district send their cattle to the metropolitan market in common with their fellow growers from West Kimberley? The former have to accept £1 or £5 a head from the Wyndham Meat Works, whereas the grower in the West Kimberley district is able to secure £10 or £12 a head for his cattle. This anomaly is a real injustice, and I cannot imagine any reason why the pleuro line should be maintained between the west and the east in the Kimberleys. It has been pointed out to me that trainloads of cattle are arriving at Kalgoorlie from Broken Hill and that in the years to come we will draw our supplies from that part of the State. It is predicted that railway communication between Broome and Camooweal will enable us to draw supplies from the Northern Territory and that when our southern

system is linked up with the northern areas, cattle will be brought down from the North in good condition. Some little time ago Sir Sidney Kidman told me that in Australia we knew all about the handling of fat sheep, but we did not know how to handle fat stock. He told me that in America they trucked fat stock for thousands of miles and took them out of the trains and put them into paddocks every 24 hours. In the Great Southern, where the rainfall is most suitable, pastures will be thoroughly established and then the stock breeders will grow their stock in the back country and bring them down south for fattening purposes. That is what is done in America and in the Argentine. I hope something will be done to open up other areas where pastures can be established. I would like to see the septic tanks removed from Burswood and sewage farms established as in Melbourne and Adelaide. If that were done, it would enable us to derive revenue from the farms, and cattle could be put on the pastures for fattening purposes to meet the requirements of the metropolitan area. In my opinion it would be an economic proposition. In conclusion I hope that less assistance will be given to men without experience or without capital. I hope the Government will consider carefully whether they should go on with the 3,500 farms scheme, which certainly requires to be handled with great caution. We have our Great Southern districts that must be properly opened up with railways and other conveniences, and we have there an assured 20 to 30-inch rainfall. I believe the railways should be constructed as to lead to ports that can derive the trade that should come to them naturally from the back country. If we cut out the waste I have referred to, something will be done to restore a proper equilibrium in our national affairs. I hope the Premier, the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer will get together and devise a sound and economic policy for Australia, combined with works that will absorb the unemployed and be of a reproductive nature.

**HON. E. H. H. HALL** (Central) [5.58]: Before addressing myself to the motion, I take the liberty to support those speakers who have expressed their pleasure at the manner in which you, Mr. President, represented Western Australia and this Chamber on the occasion of your recent visit to the Old Country. I appreciate your acknowledgment of the efforts

made by the early pioneers who arrived here 100 years ago. Members of this Chamber feel gratified at the notice accorded you by the Press of Great Britain and I feel sure the State will benefit from the visits of men such as yourself, Mr. President, to Great Britain. I may also be pardoned for a reference to an announcement that appeared in the "West Australian" yesterday regarding another member of this Chamber, Mr. Mann. I certainly think he should be congratulated by his fellow members on the honour conferred upon him by the Provincial Press Association. He has been selected to proceed to the hub of our Empire, there to represent a very important section of the community. I feel sure he will emulate your example, Sir, and use every opportunity for advertising the undoubted resources of this vast State. As a comparatively new member, I should like to congratulate Mr. Miles on the excellent address with which he has favoured us this afternoon. It is not, perhaps, the hon. member's forte to indulge in great oratorical flights of eloquence, but that he has given us a sound practical commonsense speech this afternoon, gained from his wide experience, will be the verdict of every member of the House. To me the most important matter in the Governor's Speech is that of land settlement. It is through land settlement that we look forward to the continued prosperity and progress of our State. The reference is as follows:—

Progress in land settlement has been maintained during the year. A total of 6,114 applications for land under Conditional Purchase was received, and 164 applications for pastoral leases. The applications approved for Conditional Purchase purchases totalled 2,602 for an area of 2,616,762 acres, and for pastoral leases 199 for an area of 14,777,802 acres. The number of new settlers was 1,433.

I do not think we can be very much gratified with a report such as that. Why were so few applications approved? In confirmation of that report, I read in the "West Australian" on the 30th July this paragraph—

Mr. Philip Kelly, who represents Darwin in the Tasmanian House of Assembly, arrived in Perth yesterday by the Great Western express on a visit to his brother, Mr. J. F. Kelly, of Noggerup. Mr. Kelly, who was an Honorary Minister in the Lyons Government, represents a mining and agricultural constituency. He said that a great deal was heard in Tasmania about the development in agriculture that was taking place in Western Australia, and on the train he travelled with several young men of excellent type, who had come over to take up land in this State. It seemed to him that the

only drawback was that land was not made available quickly enough by the Government.

Mr. Kelly is supported in that assumption by this statement in the Governor's Speech. The officials of the Lands Department are doing their best to cope with the applications, notwithstanding which I am afraid that something is wanting in the department to expedite the handling of those applications. The attention of the Government should be drawn to the complaints being made by holders of agricultural land that the values placed on those lands are altogether too high.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Many men are taxed on valuations which they consider altogether too high. It is only human that people should complain of taxation, but as proving that these complaints are genuine, I have been assured by scores of men out developing properties that they are perfectly willing to sell, if the Government can bring along others who will pay the prices at which the properties are departmentally valued. Here is another matter: I with three others have put my life savings into a block of land 50 miles out from Yuna. We took up this selection after it had been forfeited by the previous owner. It consists of 20,000 acres. We took over in May, 1927, and one month later, before we had a chance of getting any returns whatever, we were hit up for £5 10s. 7d. each in land tax. The same thing was repeated in June, 1928. Incidentally I cannot congratulate the Taxation Department on the colour of this departmental form. When a steamer is in quarantine she flies the yellow flag, of which this form reminds us. But this recalls to me the fact that in addition to all that land tax, we were charged £4 13s. 7d. each for vermin tax. I think that matter deserves the attention of the Government.

Hon. J. R. Brown: How long have you been sleeping on the matter?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: As I have said we took up the land in May, 1927, and in the following month there was served upon each of us a demand for £5 10s. 7d. land tax. It is my duty on behalf of those I represent to bring matters such as this under the notice of the Government. We have not had any possible chance whatever to get a return from this land before we are hit up like this for land tax. Some consideration

should be shown to men who are willing to go away out far from any railway facilities. We have not asked the Government for one penny; yet before we are able to get any return whatever for our money, we are hit up for land tax.

Hon. V. Hamersley: You were jolly lucky to get the land. Are you all unionists?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Turning again to land settlement and the slow rate of progress we are making, as shown in the Governor's Speech, I want to direct the attention of the Government to another phase of this question. I had not been in the House long before three people from my district approached me with a view to getting the Government to compel people to work the land they hold. I approached the Minister for Lands and on the 17th July, 1928, I received this letter from the Minister himself:—

I am in receipt of yours of the 11th inst., and the matter referred to therein will be the subject of investigation.

Then on the 19th April, 1929, I received this communication from the Under-Secretary:—

With further reference to your letters of the 11th and 17th July last, to the Minister for Lands, on the subject of holdings in the names of — and —, I have the honour by direction to inform you that there is an area of 42,598 acres held by the following parties:—

Here are given the names of 15 holders. The letter continues—

—The land was approved on various dates from April, 1924, to January, 1927, and a recent report as a result of your correspondence shows that there is an undoubted deficiency in the expenditure up to date; but some £1,500 has been spent on improvements, and there is further extensive work in progress which it is anticipated will be completed by the end of the current year, and so will put the question of improvements in order to the satisfaction of the department. The hon. Minister thanks you for drawing attention to the matter, and will follow it up in due course.

I sincerely hope the Minister will follow it up, because it is against the best interests of the State for men who have such huge holdings as these to neglect to do a fair thing by the district in which the land is held.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You will become very popular with some of the farmers up there.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes, I have been called all sorts of names over the action I

have taken. But if members of Parliament or members of local authorities are afraid to do their duty, there is a worse time ahead of us than even the picture painted by Mr. Miles. The next point in the Speech is that of soldier settlement. Only yesterday we saw in the "West Australian" a report upon soldier settlement by Mr. Justice Pike. What has he to say, dealing with all the States? It is that gentleman's strongly held opinion that in the main the holdings granted by those in responsible positions, by those in whom we had every right to expect accurate knowledge, the holdings granted to the men whom we wished to see re-established in civil life, have been too small.

Hon. J. Cornell: It does not apply to the wheat areas in this State.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am going merely on the report of Mr. Justice Pike, and asking why it is that in two areas in the Central Province which have been looked upon as second to none, namely, the area around Nabawa and that at Yandanooka, why it is that so many returned soldiers—not one or two men running round the country with racehorses, but men industrious and highly respected—have been practically told to get off their blocks. I have in mind one man who was forced to get off his block. The trustees held a sale and called for tenders, and it is now something like two months since the whole of that man's effects were sold up. He is still waiting on the block, wondering what is going to become of him.

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

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Before tea I was referring to Mr. Justice Pike's report on soldier settlement, and mentioning some individual cases that were known to me around the Nabawa area and Yandanooka. I am of opinion that some of the returned men are entitled to more consideration than they have received. It is stated in Mr. Justice Pike's report that 70 per cent. of the returned men have made good. I am only stating a well-recognised fact when I say that whilst we are very pleased at the high percentage of those who have made good, we are not so much concerned about the men who have succeeded as about those who have failed to succeed. I do not know whether want of success has been due to the causes set out by the judge, whether want of area

or lack of experience accounted for the position.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You do not suggest want of area at Yandanooka.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Some 70 per cent. of the original soldier settlers have made good, and the report pays a tribute to them. Where sufficient area was granted, the soldiers have been doing well and are making a good living. That may not apply to Yandanooka. Some men have failed through causes over which they had no control. In the case of other individuals, the departments concerned should cause inquiries to be made to find out whether the failures have been due to any lack of effort on the part of the individual. If I were asked for an opinion as to whether such and such individuals have in certain instances not been given proper consideration, I should say that such was the case. I wish to say something about the Land Board operating in Western Australia. I have in mind a migrant to this State who finally settled on a farm near Mullewa. He took over the holding from two ladies, one of whom died and the other went to England. The transactions were conducted in a perfectly legal manner by well-known lawyers in Perth. Before the surviving lady went to England she visited the Lands Department and made an affidavit, which was published in the "Sunday Times" some months ago. In answer to certain questions, she stated she had been informed that the improvements that had been done on two blocks were sufficient to cover the third. Notwithstanding that reply, and owing to the innocence of the migrant settler, the third block which he was in process of purchasing was forfeited on application by another party. This person who applied for forfeiture was, though not a Minister of the Crown, a very close relation of one.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Do you suggest that the person should be penalised because of that?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: No. This happened to be the son of one of the Ministers. He was already in possession of a well-developed farm on the other side of the line. As I said, the third block was forfeited and the Minister's son became possessed of it. He is a single man whereas the migrant is married. The latter was induced to come to the country to try his luck, with his wife and family.



Hon. E. H. Gray: What area was he holding?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The area had been in possession of two ladies for many years. If they were entitled to hold it, so also was the migrant with his family.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Many of these migrants get land indigestion.

The PRESIDENT: I shall be glad if the hon. member is allowed to proceed with his speech.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: It does not give me any pleasure to refer to this matter. I knew the Minister concerned many years ago on the goldfields, but I have my duty to do irrespective of whether I please or displease.

Member: Who is the Minister?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Minister for Country Water Supplies. The Minister's son and this migrant went before the Land Board. To the astonishment of everyone who knew about it, the board awarded the location to the Minister's son.

Hon. E. H. Gray: One had 2,000 acres and the other had none.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: It is not to the credit of the State that such things should be done. Naturally the migrant complained bitterly of the treatment meted out to him. There are always two sides to a case. I know only one, and doubtless the Chief Secretary will be able to tell the House the other side. If newcomers are to be shot at by people from whom they have a right to expect consideration, harm will be done to the credit of the State. I have now ventilated this matter. I have done so through the Press in no underhand manner, and with the sole idea of letting people know that such actions will not be allowed to pass unnoticed.

Hon. E. H. Gray: This migrant had more land than he could develop before he applied for the other block.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The hon. member cannot know much about the subject. I now come to the question of railway construction. It does not concern me that members may look upon this as a hardy annual. I have a duty to perform to those who sent me here. The railway construction policy of the Government should be combined with the proposal to establish the 3,500 farms scheme. I wonder why this and past Governments have failed to realise their responsibility and duty to all the people of the State

when they have continued to penalise the holders of land along the Midland Railway by not purchasing that line. Dealing with the position the "West Australian" said the other day—

When the company was formed in 1890, the Government agreed to grant it 12,000 acres for every mile of line completed. As the length of the line is 277 miles, the total grant was 3,324,000 acres. Most of this has been sold, but the company believes that development is being retarded by the fact that no spur lines have been built along the 277 miles of the route, whereas there are 11 spurs and connecting lines along the 280 miles of the Great Southern railway between Spencer's Brook and Albany.

Here we have 277 miles of railway as against 280, and 11 spur lines compared with none. The people of the Central Province, between Geraldton and Perth, who have settled and developed this land, have not been fairly treated by the Governments of Western Australia. Every Government is as much to blame as the present one. Seeing that the policy of members of the present Government is not altogether favourable to private enterprise, it may be that they are a little more to blame than their predecessors. One would have thought they would have tried to buy this railway. One has only to travel along the Great Southern to note the progress that has been accomplished there since the private line was taken over by the Government many years ago. The settlers along the Midland line have laboured under great disabilities in that no Government assistance is meted out to them. That is in itself sufficient to bring under notice the handicap from which they are suffering. To think that we have 277 miles of railway without a single spur line with which to develop the intervening country east and west is surely enough incentive to the Government to make an effort to purchase the railway outright. The Government have put up to the Federal authorities a scheme for the foundation of 3,500 farms. The area is apparently well suited to the scheme. At the same time we have not the information about that area that we have about the country east and west of the Midland railway, that could be so much more highly developed if spur lines were constructed into it. I am not desirous of impeding or delaying the opening up of any part of the State, but I think conditions should, as far as possible, be made equal for the people throughout all parts of the State, and the opportunities are not equal to the

settlers along the Midland Railway line. It may truly be said that those men who took up land there knew well that they would not be eligible for Agricultural Bank assistance. But two wrongs do not make a right, and the best interests of the State could be served by the Government purchasing that line. If the present Ministry remain in power after the next elections—we cannot expect much to be done during their remaining period of office—I hope they will give the question of the purchase of the line the consideration it undoubtedly deserves. Again, before huge sums of money are spent in opening up new areas, I think those areas that have already been opened up, and which have not railway facilities, should be considered first. Mention has been made of the railway to Karlgarin and we have been told that the people have been carting their wheat 40, 50 and 60 miles. How on earth they can do so and keep out of the bankruptcy court amazes me. That brings to my mind that there are places in the Central Province, perhaps not 60 miles from a railway, but where settlers have to cart a considerable distance. I refer to the Dartmoor and Balla areas, where the Government have had surveyors classifying the country, and where, I am credibly informed, that in a few weeks' time there will be three more survey parties sent out to cut up additional areas for selection. Surely the Government do not intend to throw open that land without definitely promising intending settlers railway facilities. It will only be courting trouble, and certainly will not be fair to those intending settlers unless they can get a definite promise of railway communication. Then, whilst we are thankful that the Government felt justified in repurchasing the three estates—Mendels, Kocatea and Wongundi—even those properties are too far removed from railways—those, too, should be given consideration before the Government contemplate spending hundreds of thousands of pounds in opening up new areas. That is another reason why the question of the purchase of the Midland line should receive consideration. One has only to look at the map to have it brought home that a line should be built, and would have been built years ago, to connect Mullewa with Mingenew and so shorten the distance from Perth, if the Midland railway had been acquired by the State. But is the progress of that part of the State to be held up because it is connected with the capital by a private railway? That is the question the Govern-

ment must ask themselves if they are desirous of doing their duty to the Central Province. Speaking of the Midland line brings to mind something that has been going on far too long. It might surprise hon. members to know that for several years all wool that goes to Fremantle from the Murchison, wool that comes from Yalgoo, Meekatharra, Cue and Magnet, goes right past Mullewa and past the Wongan line, and when it arrives at Geraldton it is re-consigned, not untrucked, to Fremantle, so that it might enjoy the advantage of what the Midland people call the port to port rate. We were told by the Leader of the House the other night, and we have it in the Governor's Speech also, that the railways experienced a deficit. The paragraph in the Speech mentions that after the payment of working expenses and interest on capital, the loss on the operations of the State railways for the year was £179,000. Yet we find that the Midland Railway, almost since the initiation of the port to port rate, has turned the corner and has commenced to pay dividends. It may be that the Commissioner is overridden by the Minister when it comes to a question of policy. This may be a question of policy, but I can hardly understand that the Minister or the Government would willingly consent, as a matter of policy, to losing such freight as has been lost by continuing the foolish scheme to which Mr. Miles made reference earlier in the evening. We have been told continually that motor traffic is successfully competing with our railways. Mr. Miles suggested that the Railway Department should reduce their freights, and in that manner cut out motor competition, and re-establish the railways in their former place. That would be doing the greatest good for the greatest number. If the Midland Railway Company can pay working expenses and show a profit by carrying to Fremantle wool grown on the Murchison, why cannot the Commissioner or the Minister individually or collectively go into the question and stop the great loss of traffic? I have no doubt that the Chief Secretary will have some reply to make to these remarks. It is nothing new: it has been going on for years, but it is our duty to keep on pointing out these things in the hope of stopping the leeway that has been experienced in the past 12 months by the railways of the State.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Do you want the Government to buy the Midland Railway

which is obsolete, and for which they are asking three times its value?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The next matter on which I wish to touch refers to harbour boards. Mr. Wittenoom expressed disappointment because Albany's request for a harbour trust had been turned down by the Government. I can well understand Albany's disappointment. I daresay that when the harbour at Geraldton is an accomplished fact we shall make similar representations to the Government. I fail to understand why the Government will not hand over to a local authority the conduct of the affairs of the outports of the State. There is a small matter that occurs to me in connection with the upkeep of the Geraldton jetty. It is known that the policy of the Government is day labour; they are not in favour of piece work or contract. I venture to suggest to the Government that if they could see their way clear to let out by contract the maintenance of the Geraldton jetty, instead of doing as they have been doing, having repairs effected by day labour, they would show a considerable saving in the year. We have heard that a good deal depends upon the reduction of the cost of production, and the other morning in the "West Australian" I was pleased to see an article of some length in which the remarks of the Premier on this particular subject were reported. I was glad to find that Mr. Collier realised the necessity that existed for this very important reform. Although he is a Labour Premier, in voicing such an opinion he is simply keeping in step with others who occupy leading positions throughout Australia.

Hon. H. Seddon: Has he not acquired a farm?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Prominent men have given this matter considerable thought, and I would like the House to bear with me whilst I read a short extract from the remarks of Sir George Fairbairn in addressing a meeting in Victoria. These remarks were published on the 28th June last—

Addressing the members of the Australian Women's National Club to-day, Sir George Fairbairn advocated the introduction of the piece-work system into such industries as were adapted to it.

To-day he said, with the exception of the wool industry, no exporting industry in Australia was paying, and even wool was approaching a price that would make its production unprofitable. There was no fear of the banks failing, owing to the lesson learned 37 years ago, but nevertheless a crisis was coming.

The present financial depression, according to the partisans of Labour was due to the capitalistic system, but with the baby bonus, State school education, wages boards, various insurance projects and the old age pension, it seemed to him that Australia was building for Socialism.

The most serious problem, Sir George Fairbairn continued, was the cost of production. As an instance, sugar, an essential in every home, as produced in Queensland cost £37 a ton, and in the world's markets outside Australia it was sold for £9 10s. a ton. If the financial situation in Australia was to be improved an inquiry into the Tariff must be undertaken. He was of the opinion that arbitration had failed, for immediately people were in court they were at war, whereas with a round table conference many important situations could be dealt with satisfactorily. Inefficiency in both men and women was one of the dangers of the hour. The piece-work system would save the situation, for it would react on wages and so reduce the cost of living.

We find our Premier in accord with Sir George Fairbairn and it was mentioned also by another member last night that we had an excellent opportunity here of trying to bring about this desirable end. Many years ago I was travelling from Melbourne to Sydney and my cabin mate was one of H. V. McKay's men. In the course of conversation I learnt that he was going to the Argentine and that he had a couple of harvesters and a couple of men with him. It had been found necessary to send men from Australia because McKay's American opponents had been playing the game low down; they had been getting to the men who were working the harvesters and inducing them by means of gifts to say that the machines could not stand up to the work. My friend added that McKay's were not going to take that kind of thing quietly. That was 25 years ago. The Sunshine harvester is a machine of which we in Australia might be justly proud. When those people came with their splendid manufacturing organisations and their brains to establish the industry here, how were they greeted by the workers? When Mr. Miles was referring to the Premier this afternoon, Mr. Lovekin interjected asking him to be fair. The only thing I could think the hon. member meant was that the Premier recognised the necessity for reducing the cost of production, but that he was unable to give effect to his wishes.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Then why criticise him?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Because there is a right thing for him to do. I honestly be-

lieve that if the Premier, who it must be admitted is a man of ability, were to go to the people of Boulder and tell them that no longer would he tolerate being dictated to by outside irresponsibles.—

Hon. C. B. Williams: Talk sense.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am talking sense as it appeals to me, though it would not appeal to the hon. member. If the people recognised the ability that Mr. Collier undoubtedly possesses they would send him back to carry on the affairs of the State.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You think he has a ring in his nose and can be led about, but he cannot.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: My remarks might also be applied to other members of the Cabinet, but while the tail is allowed to wag the dog, we shall have the inconsistency of our leaders expressing the wish that things should be altered and yet allowing them to continue as heretofore.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I thought the Chief Secretary was looking rather worried.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Premier expressed the hope that the cost of production should be lowered, and he is backed up by men who see the trend of events. I was astounded to read the other morning the remarks made by a gentleman recently appointed to a rather important Government position. He was brought from Melbourne. Where he was before I do not know, but I take it he is an Australian. He has been put in charge of adult education and he gave voice to the theory that only fools and horses worked. The gospel of work we have been taught to believe is good for young people in a young country where there is so much work to be done, but this gentleman would have us believe it is all a myth and that people should be given plenty of leisure so that they may have a good time. The Government should take up the matter with that gentleman. Some years ago Professor Murdoch wrote an article in which he ridiculed old age, but I cannot believe that he meant it to be taken seriously. He said the very fact of a person getting old did not entitle him to any respect. He asked why we should show more respect for an old boot than for a new boot and why should we respect old age? I do not think for a moment that the worthy Professor was serious and I find it hard to believe that the recently appointed Government officer was serious when he put

it forth to the young people that it was not necessary to care much for work. We do not wish to revert to the system under which people worked for 12 or more hours per day. There are many people in the agricultural areas, as the House has been told by other members, who work very long hours even to-day, but to ridicule the idea of work, as this gentleman did, was quite wrong.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Who was the gentleman?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: He was recently appointed to take charge of adult education in this State.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Did he indicate how long he worked?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I do not think he did. I am wondering whether he intended his remarks to be taken seriously. I do not wish to fall into the error committed recently by a returned traveller who ran foul of the medical profession, but according to this morning's paper Dr. Atkinson said, "When you have a cold, the best thing to do is to go to bed and keep warm." When many of the farmers read what the doctor has said, they will wish they were in the city where they could give effect to Dr. Atkinson's advice. It is a peculiar thing for the doctor to broadcast throughout the State. School children would perhaps be better at home when they have a cold, but if men and women with work to do are going to coddle themselves up and go to bed every time they get a cold, there will be a tremendous lot of work that ought to be done remaining undone.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But he meant that when people were badly affected, approaching influenza or something of that sort.

Hon. J. R. Brown: The hon. member does not read between the lines.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I should like to touch on the matter of unemployment to which Mr. Miles referred. I am rather sorry that Mr. Gray is not in his seat, but perhaps my remarks will be passed on to him. The other night, Mr. Gray was guilty of libelling the majority of farmers in this State when he made the very sweeping assertion that the farmers had not played the game in that they had given preference of employment to foreigners. When the hon. member made that remark, he was talking of something about which he knows very little. I give the instance of a man who had thrown up his employment in the Midland Junction work-

shops and who told me on his farm on the Mendel's Estate that he was and always had been an out-and-out supporter of the Labour Party, but he had unsuccessfully tried to get Australians and Britishers to clear his land and had to fall back on foreigners. There may be farmers who would rather employ a cheap foreigner than pay a decent wage to an Australian or a Britisher. I do not deny that black sheep may be found in every flock, but for the hon. member to make a sweeping assertion, as he did the other night, is not consistent with his usual fairness, and I think in his calmer moments he will withdraw the accusation. Representing many farmers as I do, I considered it was my place to deny the hon. member's assertion. The Speech tells us that we will be asked to give consideration to a measure dealing with the establishment of a rural bank. I understand a similar reference was made in the previous Speech. Doubt was expressed by one speaker as to what was meant by a rural bank. I am not going to occupy the time of the House by telling members what it is, for the simple reason that I do not know much about it. If the Government can see their way clear to extend the scope of the Agricultural Bank and make it a bank of issue, they will have done something that will be for the benefit of the agriculturists. Men who have started practically off scratch or with very little capital and have got into difficulties have been taken in hand by the I.A.B. and the Agricultural Bank. Those institutions have stood by such men until they have reached a fairly good position. Then what has happened? Finding themselves tied up with restrictions and wanting to extend their operations, they have interviewed the Associated Banks and been taken over by them. The State has nursed those men through years of difficulty until they reached a position when they could offer fair security, and then the State's clients have been taken over by the Associated Banks. Some members may ask what is wrong with that. After the State has taken all the risk and the men have reached a stage when they have had decent security to offer, it is a pity that the State should lose them as clients. If the establishment of a rural bank means that the State will be able to retain such clients, it will have my hearty support. I notice that the people in charge of the Perth Hospital have followed the example set them by the residents of the goldfields and various agricultural towns by doing something to help themselves

in that they have initiated a system of weekly contributions. The contribution, I understand, is only 6d. a week, whereas on the fields years ago I paid 1s. and married men paid 1s. 6d. a week. Let us be thankful for small mercies; the Perth Hospital authorities have at last started on the right lines. Evidently Samuel Smiles' "Self Help" has been preached to them with very good result. Now that the people are contributing towards the upkeep of that institution—

Hon. E. H. Gray: Some of the people.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes, but I feel sure that with a little effort most people could be induced to contribute. As some people are contributing, will the Government follow the example set by the people in the outback: portions of the State by giving contributors a voice in the election of the hospital committee? That is what used to appeal to the people in the goldfields and agricultural centres. Every subscriber had a vote for the election of the committee.

Hon. C. B. Williams: To which goldfields are you referring?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I was at Laver-ton and Wiluna where I subscribed to the hospital fund, and subscribers had a voice in the election of the committee.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They are very small places.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The committee were responsible for the conduct of the institution; they engaged and dismissed everyone from the doctor to the orderly. We received assistance from the Government, and if I am not mistaken, it was a pound for-pound subsidy. I understand that the Government now find it difficult to continue the pound-for-pound subsidy to hospitals. If that is so, I am sorry to hear it. During last session I raised the question of legislative authority for the Morawa Road Board to tax themselves for the upkeep of their hospital. Evidently it has been ascertained that legislative authority is not required, as yesterday I had the privilege of introducing the chairman of the Morawa hospital to the Minister for Health and of receiving the Minister's assurance that road boards are entitled to strike a rate for upkeep of their own hospitals. Accordingly a hospital is to be built at Morawa. If the Road Districts Act does permit that to be done, there is a fine opportunity for road boards throughout the State to follow the example set by the newest road board in

the State, namely Morawa. Legislation dealing with a rural bank, health, main roads, and redistribution of Council seats I shall not touch on; and the Mines Regulation Bill I shall leave to Mr. Williams. Next I come to a matter we are all greatly concerned about, the Industrial Arbitration Act. All sorts of people occupying all sorts of positions, speak as with one voice concerning the Arbitration Court. It will be remembered that we had a visit from the gentlemen known as the "Big Four," men of great experience, who came here from Great Britain to investigate, and who reported, in a few words, that Australia's troubles were due to the Arbitration Court, the tariff and labour costs.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What are the troubles in England due to?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: An article I have here shows that the Country Party of Victoria have reached the same conclusion. I will quote from the article—

Mr. J. J. Weaver, in moving that in the opinion of the conference the Arbitration Court should be abolished, declared that the Court and the tariff were the causes of most of the serious economic problems of Australia. Mr. Old, M.L.A., agreed that the Court had failed dismally to promote peace in industry. It was not, and never had been, able to enforce its awards, and it was time the old wages board system was reverted to.

There is some force in the contention that one should not indulge in destructive criticism without offering something of a constructive nature. It is comparatively very easy to pull down, but it is not easy to build something in the place of what has been pulled down. Here we have a Victorian member of Parliament, belonging to the Country Party, declaring that the Arbitration Court is a failure, that the court never has been able to enforce its awards, and that therefore it is time wages boards were reverted to. That coincides with our experience in this State. When reading the opinions of men elsewhere, we should ask ourselves, "How does that fit in with our experience?" Here in Western Australia we know that if an award is given against the employer, he is forced to obey it. But what about the union? The union in such a case say, "We are not going to obey the court." What happens then? We may say that we are going to put the members of the union in prison. What happened in connection with the newspaper strike?

Hon. E. H. Gray: How long ago was that?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Never mind. What happened when the farmers' wheat was held up at the ports of the State owing to a difficulty between two unions? What action was taken then? None at all. If it is up to us to look around and observe, though not in any spirit of antagonism, if something is not giving satisfaction, we should seek a better substitute. It is suggested by some people that wages boards should be substituted for the Arbitration Court. For the life of me I cannot see why we have the court as at present constituted.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you refer to the State or the Federal court?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: To the State court.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That speaker was referring to the Federal Court.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Not so. I have here also an address by Sir George Julius, chairman of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research of Australia. He is not a party politician, and not a candidate for political honours, but a man who has made a study of this question. In the course of an address he asks—

Have we in the past legislated wisely for the country producer? Have we not hampered him unnecessarily? Have we made his tenure of land secure, have we encouraged him to improve his property, his stock, or his produce? We have certainly cut up many estates and attempted closer settlement, but in a great many cases we have done so without first satisfying ourselves fully with respect to the sufficiency of the reduced areas to earn enough under present conditions to support the workers on those areas. We have frequently handicapped the occupant after he has, in many cases, paid too high a price for his land by increasing his labour costs, the cost of his machinery and supplies, and his cost of living, so that in the end he finds himself unable to procure a reasonable return for his capital outlay and labour. Frequently he cannot even make a living, as he has lost his market as a result of the high cost of production.

There is an authority in absolute agreement with the Premier of our State as to the high cost of production.

I think that it may be said that in our legislation we have, in our efforts, however well meant they may have been, done everything possible to help the city worker, and done relatively little to help and encourage the worker on the land.

That is the considered opinion of a gentleman occupying the position of chairman of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research of Australia.

Hon. H. Stewart: He used to be in our Railway Department.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes. The report continues—

Country industries must be made more profitable. Upon them depended the whole of the export trade of the Commonwealth. The creation of a prosperous country population was the only means by which a satisfactory market for the products of city industries could be maintained. In Australia the cost of living had increased as fast, or nearly as fast, as wages, and the real wages of workers were little better than they were 20 years ago.

We have heard the same thing from Mr. Miles to-night; but Mr. Miles, of course, is a politician, and what a politician says is discounted by those opposed to him. Here, however, we have the independent testimony of a man who has made a study of the subject.

By an increase in the prosperity of the country industries, upon which the export trade depended, the market for city industries would automatically be increased, and it would be possible for them, or at least for some of them, also to thrive. But thriving city industries could not be built up unless prosperous country industries were ensured. No tariff or other artificial measure could in the end alter that fundamental fact. He by no means wished to urge the abandonment of a policy of protection in favour of free trade. He did not for a moment consider that a free trade policy, at least for a long time to come, if ever, would permit the development of secondary industries in Australia as they must be developed; but he did urge that the tariff policy should be most carefully revised. While it was designed to support worth-while city industries it should not be allowed to impose undue hardship and restriction upon the great country industries, which were the very life blood of the Commonwealth.

Hon. E. H. Gray: We all agree with that.

Hon. H. Stewart: Why not act on it?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes, why not act on it? What makes big wages possible? In that excellent account which you, Mr. President, have written of the early days of this country it is brought home to us with particular force. What happened at that time? Such little produce as the people could grow they had, but it was not much good to them, since there was nobody to buy it. We must keep down our costs of production so that we may be able to compete. If we had the big population that the United States possess, we would have a big home market to supply. But until our home market is worth while, we must compete in the open markets of the world, where all artificial aids are cut out.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: How do you suggest better conditions should be brought about?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: We are all friends in this Chamber. I say that to correct any wrong impression. Surely I am entitled to refer to the Leader of the House as my friend.

The Chief Secretary: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have said in this Chamber and out in the country that the hon. gentleman is my friend. I have known him since boyhood, and no one will ever get me to deny that our leader is actuated by the very highest of motives, just as much as any other member. It would never do for all of us to think alike. Still, let us give the other fellow credit for good intentions in exactly the way as we expect him to give us such credit. Mr. Stephenson asks what I suggest should be done to bring about better conditions. The hon. member knows far better than I can tell him what is the answer. It is, payment by results. My duty is to voice my opinions on these matters in order that the people whom I represent may know just where I stand and may be made aware that their view point is presented to the Chamber. Last night Mr. Wittenoom made reference to a harbour trust for Albany, complaining that the Government refused to grant a trust. I support the hon. member in his complaint. The residents of the district have set an excellent example to the people of the whole State. They have a secondary industry in the Albany Woollen Mills. I know that the Leader of the House wears a suit made of Albany material—I hope he will pardon me for mentioning the circumstance. May I also be pardoned for saying that I attended the opening of Parliament in a suit made of Albany material.

Hon. H. Stewart: Some of us have been wearing that material for the last six years, and we told you so last session.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The hon. member should tell it to the House.

Hon. H. Stewart: We did tell the House last session, and you have forgotten it already.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am taking the matter up from the other end. The other day I met a friend and said to him, "That is a very nice suit of yours; I hope it is made of Albany woollens." He replied, "I am very sorry to say it is not." I then said, "The suit I am wearing is." We must follow the example set by the Governor of the State and purchase more of our

own manufactures. We should purchase the products of our own State, of our own Commonwealth and of our own Empire. I do not want to labour that point beyond stating that we must cultivate that patriotic spirit to a greater extent. It is a long way from Albany to Wyndham, but I was wondering why it is that we do not use more of the products of the Wyndham Meat Works. I have previously pointed out that owing to the action of the Industries Assistance Board in years gone by in refraining from advancing money for sheep farming and confining their advances to wheat growing, the farmers in the Central Province lived on tinned meat, notwithstanding the herbage there was available for stock. In the early days the miners and others lived on tinned meat that was produced in New South Wales. Why cannot we get more of the produce of the Wyndham Meat Works in the southern parts? Why cannot we have tins of the Wyndham meat extract?

Hon. H. Stewart: The Navigation Act makes it cheaper to send the products of the Wyndham Meat Works all the way to England.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I believe that is so. Yesterday a report was laid on the Table of the House that should be perused by every hon. member as a duty. The report is that of the Auditor-General on the accounts of the Wyndham Meat Works. Mr. Toppin's report is as follows:—

The accounts of the Wyndham Freezing, Canning and Meat Export Works have been examined under my direction for the year ended 31st December, 1928, and I now enclose the balance sheet and profit and loss account, which are correct, in accordance with the books and documents produced, when read in conjunction with this report. The amount of £517,943 8s. 4d. was due to the Treasury on account of interest at 31st December, 1928, as shown in the balance sheet. This represents interest from 1st July, 1921, less an amount of £46,471 19s. 8d. debited to the banking account in this and previous years. This was the profit on working in 1923, 1924, 1926, and 1927 years. Capital expenditure during the year amounting to £6,045 10s. 11d. has not yet been recouped to the banking account from a Parliamentary appropriation. Of the amount of £88,269 0s. 8d., shown in the balance sheet as the value of products and materials, £66,013 19s. represents materials and £22,255 1s. 8d. products unsold. Stock was not taken of the materials on hand, which have been included in the accounts at stock book figures. The stock book was not balanced with a controlling financial account. The stock is valued at Wyndham landed cost, except certain material purchased some years

ago which has been included at a figure below cost to cover reduction in values and depreciation of the material. The value of Diesel spares which was reduced last year has been further reduced this year by £2,677 11s. 1d., representing 40 per cent. of the book value. The amount is included in the profit and loss account under the heading of materials. The chief engineer states that many of these spares had been used and not replaced, and that the market value had dropped since the spares were purchased. In the absence of records I cannot say how much should be debited to profit and loss on account of the spares used or depreciation in value. With the exception of the cost of the fire sprinklers, which is included at the actual expenditure, the capital expenditure for the year represents materials only. Wages paid to meatworks employees while engaged on capital works, amounting to £1,402 18s. 2d., has been charged to the profit and loss account. The difference (£998 9s. 2d.) between the value of cattle on hand at the commencement and end of the season, after allowing for the purchases and sales, was debited to the profit and loss account under the heading general expenses. Last year there was a credit balance of £544 15s. 8d. The difference in the result is due to a considerable reduction in the value placed on the stud and herd bulls. In the absence of more definite particulars, I am unable to say whether the whole of the reduction is justified. This year the profit and loss account includes receipts and expenditure in connection with the canteen, which was run this year by the meatworks management instead of being on a co-operative basis, as previously, but no accounts were produced to enable the auditor to check the financial result of the operations of the canteen. Further expenditure was incurred during the year on experimental agricultural work. This expenditure, which included £106 2s. 1d. for a tank and engine pump, has been charged to the profit and loss account included in the ordinary expenditure of the works. Apart from the amount of £3,441 13s. written off in 1926 as depreciation of moveable plant, etc., nothing has been charged to profit and loss since the inception for the depreciation of buildings, plant and machinery.

Hon. H. Stewart: If others were no worse than that, they would not be too bad.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am not a certificated accountant but I do not think any such report would be accepted by a board of directors without something being said about it. Dealing with the Workers' Compensation Act, I would like to quote from the "West Australian" which referred to the effects of compensation paid in an article published recently. In the course of the article the following appeared:—

Where the loss of earning power is the result of an accident sustained while the man is at work, public opinion has now accepted it that the loss arising from such an accident should not be borne by the worker himself. In earlier times the worker could only claim compensation from his employer if the accident proved to be the



result of the employer's negligence. Since then, legislation has been developed to the extent that now a worker may receive compensation unless the employer is able to prove that the employee deliberately and wilfully injured himself . . . . Assuming that this is the idea, it is quite obvious that a hard and fast schedule cannot achieve this end. The loss of a forefinger to a skilled musician would be much greater than the loss of a forefinger to an unskilled labourer. One effect of such a schedule might be that an unscrupulous worker would be induced to injure himself in order to receive the compensation provided by the Act. That this is by no means an exaggeration is shown by the large number of accidents affecting losses of fingers and toes which have occurred since the Act became law in 1925.

If that is the position and there is no distinction made between the loss of a finger by a man who is a musician and the loss of a finger by a labourer, to whom the loss of a joint would not interfere seriously with his earning capacity, I do not think it fair that the compensation should be the same in both instances. There is another glaring discrepancy between the old Act and the new Act. In the old Act provision was made for £1 for hospital expenses, but the Government raised that to £100 under the amended Act. It is time that question received some attention by Parliament.

Hon. E. H. Gray: As a country member you should be careful when making such statements.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: There is no need for the hon. member to lose any sleep over my actions. The next matter I will refer to is the appointment of justices of the peace. I was requested by the people in one centre to have a certain gentleman appointed. I asked some hon. members which department was concerned with such matters and was told it was within the province of the Premier's Department. I referred the matter to the Premier's Department and later was advised that it was not considered that a justice of the peace was necessary for that locality and attention would be given to the appointment of a commissioner to take declarations. After many months' delay I was told that the Premier was away and that the question had been referred to the Minister for Justice. I got into touch with the Under Secretary of the Crown Law Department only to be informed that his Minister was away and that the matter would be put before him when he returned. You will see that altogether too much delay occurred in this particular instance. While I do not wish to cast any aspersions on either the

Premier or the Minister for Justice, it does not seem to me right that the appointment of justices should be made a political matter.

Hon. J. R. Brown: It is not.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: There should be some other means of effecting those appointments.

Hon. J. R. Brown: All this about stupid justices of the peace!

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member is interjecting in such a way that it is impossible to hear the speaker who is addressing the Chamber.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He has had a good innings.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: These appointments should be removed from the political sphere and should not be made as a political favour. I am reminded that some time ago owing to the number of justices of the peace that had left the district, the Geraldton Municipal Council communicated with the Government and suggested the appointment of two or three men to take the places of those that had left. A couple of appointments were made but we were never advised as to why the recommendation of the local authorities was not carried out. Surely men elected by the people to represent them on a municipal council, a road board or in Parliament should have sufficient regard to the duties and responsibilities attached to their positions to see that proper recommendations were sent forward for appointments to such positions. It may be asked what system I would suggest in place of the present one. We have boards and committees for other purposes, and why should we not have a committee consisting of, say, the Chief Justice, with perhaps the Under Secretary for Law, to appoint justices of the peace?

Hon. E. H. Gray: You would not ask the Chief Justice to sit on such a committee?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Well, I would be satisfied with any committee that could be absolutely impartial in the making of the appointments. I do not think it right that a justice of the peace should be appointed by a politician. I cannot resume my seat without bringing up the claims of farmers from practically all over the Central Province to be protected against the emus. This matter was referred to in the "West Australian" some months ago as one affecting the

farmers around Northampton. In a letter to the paper I pointed out that the pest is very active far down the Midland and Wangan lines and as far up as Ajana. Those birds are creating a great deal of trouble. The Chief Secretary met us in Northampton some months ago, and has replied to the request then put before him. But the reply is not regarded as being at all satisfactory. In another place an answer to a question showed that there is in the central vermin fund a credit balance of £38,890. That being so, the Government would be well advised in the interests of all those men away out on the edge of settlement to take active steps to combat the pest. It is those men outback who have to bear the onslaught of the birds, whereas the farmers in the inner districts are not so greatly troubled. The emus cause a great deal of damage to the property of men away out from railways and water supplies, and all other facilities enjoyed by those nearer to the centre. I should like to see the Government take the matter into consideration and grant a bonus to assist in the destruction of the vermin. Another thing: When the Government are continually complaining that they have not money for this and that it seems a pity that avenues for obtaining revenue should not be eagerly availed of. Within the last few weeks a number of raids have been made on betting shops in Perth. It is clear that, notwithstanding jokes made at the expense of those who are not concerned, we must inculcate a proper regard for law and order. If a thing is wrong in Perth it is wrong also in Kalgoorlie. Why then are these raids by the police made only in Perth?

Hon. J. R. Brown: Why quote Kalgoorlie? Why not quote Geraldton?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I will quote whichever town I like. That this sort of thing obtains in all parts of the State is no secret. Why then should attempts be made to stop it in the city, and no action taken throughout the country towns? It seems to me it is hypocrisy of the worst kind. I do not think this question is being tackled as it should be. Again, why should betting be perfectly legal on a racecourse and illegal in the streets or in the shops?

Hon. E. H. Gray: It is not legal on a racecourse.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: At all events it is permitted on racecourses with general consent, and is there carried out without let or

hindrance by the police. Why then should it not be allowed in the town, instead of having this surreptitious betting, these men walking about the streets and taking bets? Curiously, I understand that they pay if you win.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Have you never heard of the scaler?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: On the racecourse, yes, but not in the town. But why the practice is permitted I cannot understand. We are losing revenue both ways. I cannot believe that these men, who must make a lot of money by conducting betting-shops, show the profits in their taxation returns. I suggest it would be just as well to give those men licenses and then, if people want to bet, let them. Tattersalls and the Golden Casket still go on. Here then is an opportunity to get some revenue to help the State.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Why not bring down a private Bill to license those men?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If the hon. member will assist me, I will accept his suggestion. Another phase of the racing question requires attention, namely, the proprietary racing clubs. In the W.A.T.C. we have a body conducting racing without any thought of profit or gain, but if my information is correct a well-known racing man from Melbourne owns or did own two proprietary courses in this State, and has made a large amount of money out of them. Are we going to stand by and see private men making huge sums of money out of racing while the State Treasurer complains that he cannot find funds for hospitals and other charitable institutions?

Hon. E. H. Gray: Why not have a Government racing club?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I recommend these matters to the consideration of the Government because the sooner we do away with this hypocritical attitude the better. I cannot resume my seat without mentioning the tourist possibilities awaiting development in this State. We have that which many other countries have not. In the summer time we may have too much of it, too much glorious sunshine, but for many months of the year we have a climate absolutely unbeatable. There are in this State great possibilities for tourist attractions, if only the thing be taken up in the proper spirit. I am sorry the Government have not seen their way clear to have a representative at the conference about to take place in the Eastern

States. I think the Government would be well advised to risk the expenditure of some money in opening up and developing the possibilities for tourist attractions in this State. I will support the motion.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 7th August, 1929.*

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

### QUESTION—RAVENSTHORPE SMELTER CASE.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Minister for Justice: What is the total cost to the State to date for legal expenses in connection with the Ravensthorpe smelter case?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: £5,921 3s. 3d.

### QUESTION—SANDALWOOD REGROWTH.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Premier: 1, What was the amount credited to the special account of the Treasury for the regrowth of sandalwood for the year ended the 30th June, 1929? 2, What amount was expended from this account?

The PREMIER replied: 1, £5,000. 2, £2,826.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Sixth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. RICHARDSON (Subiaco) [4.36]: I have listened very attentively to the speeches delivered by several members during the debate on the Address-in-reply, and while listening to them I had to admit to myself that it was somewhat difficult to maintain a really steady attitude so that one might dissect what was right from what was wrong. We were told on the one hand that everything in the garden was lovely, and we discovered from the Governor's Speech that the finances of the State were in a very satisfactory condition. We know that the last financial year ended with a deficit of £275,000, and to the ordinary layman that does not appear to be satisfactory at all. If, for instance, any large unexpected expenditure had occurred during the financial year probably the deficit could have been easily explained. If, on the other hand, the revenue had fallen off to a considerable extent under any particular heading, we would naturally be able to conclude that that had been responsible for the deficit. One reason given by the Premier for ending the year £275,000 to the bad was that the water front disturbance had caused a loss of £100,000 or thereabouts to the finances, but almost in the same breath he told us that during the year there had been no industrial trouble of moment to the State. I do not know how the Premier can reconcile those two statements, but they were made by him and we have to consider which is correct.

Mr. Sampson: He does not intend to try.

Mr. RICHARDSON: If the State made a loss of £100,000, it is only reasonable to suppose that companies and men of capital running businesses would naturally lose to a much greater extent than the Government. Therefore in that respect we must conclude that the finances of the State are not satisfactory. We know well that the railways showed a very heavy deficit for the financial year. The reason given by the Premier for the loss was a shortage in the wheat yield, but the Minister for Railways stated by way of interjection when the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) was speaking the other night that on every bag of wheat carried over the Western Australian rail-