

tion Court to deal with any business they might have.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Did you say that responsibility for the strike on the goldfields was due to our not passing the Bill last year?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I said this House must take some measure of responsibility for one of the troubles that had occurred on the goldfields quite recently, in that it had not amended the Arbitration Act last session when it had an opportunity to do so.

Hon. J. Cornell: I do not think it made any difference.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—
That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.16 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 20th August, 1935.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAY ENGINES AND HEADLIGHTS.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, How many locomotives are in use on the Government Railways? 2, How many are fitted with electric head lamps? 3, Does he realise that the use of old-fashioned kerosene lamps as head lights constitutes a very serious menace to road users (the beam thrown being almost invisible) and that only by road users focusing their own lights on railway crossings do many of the locomotives become visible?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, 396. 2, 217. 3, No.

QUESTION—BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.

Royal Commission's Report.

Mr. DONEY (without notice) asked the Premier: Will he give this House an opportunity to discuss the recently submitted report of the Royal Commission on Bulk Handling?

The PREMIER replied: When an hon. member asks a question without notice, it is usual for him to intimate to the Minister concerned his desire to ask such question. I therefore ask the hon. member to give notice of this question.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [4.35]: I join with hon. members in congratulating the Premier on his restoration to health after the very severe illness with which he was unfortunately afflicted last year. I sincerely hope he will for many years hence enjoy his usual good health. I also express my sympathy with the Minister for Employment who has unfortunately been laid aside as a result of a severe illness. My hope is that he will soon be restored to health, and be able to take up again the work on which he was engaged at the time of his affliction. I congratulate the newly-elected Minister for Agriculture upon his appointment. It must be exceedingly gratifying to him to have been able to reach that position in so short a time. The appointment is a very fitting one, seeing that the Minister has been so prominently connected with agriculture. He probably knows the requirements of the industry as well as any one in the House. I offer him my congratulations. I also congratulate the newly-elected members for Avon and South Fremantle upon their election. Judging from their speeches on the Address-in-reply, I think the debating strength of the House will be greatly added to by their election. It is not my intention to take up much of the time of the House on this motion, which is now in its third week. The first and most important matter that comes under my notice is the recent report of the Royal Commission on Bulk Handling. I would ask the Premier when he replies to the debate if he will kindly enlighten members on this side of the House upon the reason why the report, which was made

available to the Press on the 2nd August, and was laid on the Table of the House in another place on the 13th August, has been denied to members of this House until today. It appears remarkable that members on this side should have been denied access to the report, and that they should have had to rely upon newspaper reports for anything they might wish to say with regard to bulk handling. It certainly gives me great pleasure to see the result of the labours of the Royal Commission. I do not know of any set of men who had so many obstacles, deliberately or otherwise, placed in their path than those who conducted—

The Minister for Justice: Don't be nasty, and don't cast innuendoes.

Mr. SEWARD: I am only stating facts.

The Minister for Justice: You are casting innuendoes. You say that obstacles were placed in their way, deliberately or otherwise.

Mr. SEWARD: I will go further.

The Minister for Justice: There is no reason for you to make a statement like that.

Mr. SEWARD: I will continue my remarks, if I may.

The Minister for Justice: I hope you will continue them in a better strain.

Mr. SEWARD: I am making no innuendoes, but am stating facts. There is no doubt that these men have been deliberately hindered in their endeavours to bring about a system of bulk handling.

The Minister for Justice: By whom? Go on with the business.

Mr. SEWARD: I have told the Minister.

The Minister for Justice: It is a rotten thing to make a charge, and then make no attempt to substantiate it.

Mr. SEWARD: In the course of his remarks, one member stated the other night that the system as introduced was not as efficient as it was hoped it would be. If that is so, it was because the business had to be rushed in many ways, and Co-operative Bulk Handling, Limited, were not able to put up their scheme as they would like to have done. That is well known. When they constructed the last bins, they only obtained permission in August, when they were expected to be ready for the next harvest. Because of that, they could not get the scheme going properly in time. The report of the Royal Commission answered any accusations on the score that

the system is not as efficient as it might have been. I join issue with one of my colleagues on this side of the House when he said that, as usual, Western Australia lagged behind. I contend that in most things Western Australia can give a lead to the other States. We have certainly given the lead to them in the matter of bulk handling. Had it not been for the work of Westralian Farmers Ltd. and Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., bulk handling would not have been practical politics in this State for many years. They have evolved a scheme which was within the financial possibilities of the State, and have given a lead to the rest of Australia. They have given a facility to wheatgrowers which would not otherwise have been afforded. I wish to recall a few instances in connection with this matter, and to refer to the further delay that has been occasioned to the company in the carrying out of their work. On the 10th August, 1934, the Premier made the statement that the present inquiry would cap all previous ones. It is well known there have been many inquiries into bulk handling, one by a Parliamentary select committee, one by a departmental committee, and another by a previous Minister for Works. The last Royal Commission was appointed to cap all previous inquiries, to put the coping stone, as it were, on all the investigations. The Premier also stated that the Government had for some time been giving most serious consideration to the whole question of bulk handling. Twelve months later, although the report on bulk handling has been issued by those competent men who were appointed to deal with it, the Government find it necessary to relegate the report to another sub-committee for further consideration. It is extraordinary that Cabinet, after giving the matter serious consideration for 12 months, should have to refer the report to another committee. The only conclusion I can arrive at is that it is another attempt to prevent farmers from getting bulk handling facilities during the coming season. Unless Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited can undertake the construction of the necessary silos at the additional sidings within a few weeks, farmers will be denied bulk handling facilities for this year. If that does occur, the sole responsibility for the loss of these facilities must rest upon the Gov-

ernment. In commenting upon the appointment of the Royal Commission last year, the Acting Premier said the Government were mainly concerned about getting the truth concerning bulk handling. He said the matter required complete investigation by men who had not already made up their minds on the subject, and were fully competent to arrive at correct conclusions concerning bulk handling in this State. The finding of the Royal Commission, as reported in the Press—the only means of knowing what the report contains—is that it recommends that Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. be allowed to carry out their proposals for a State-wide scheme of bulk handling. One can only conclude that the findings of the Royal Commission were unpalatable to the Government, seeing that the report has now been relegated to a sub-committee.

The Minister for Justice: Why not talk sense, and offer reasonably fair criticism?

Mr. SEWARD: The Minister will be able to state the other side of the case when he rises to speak.

The Minister for Justice: You are talking nonsense.

Mr. SEWARD: I have stated the conclusions I have been forced to arrive at. I have had to depend upon newspaper reports, and have not yet seen the report of the Royal Commission. I do not suggest for one minute that newspaper reports are not correct. I believe they are correct. I warn the Government that the farmers are not prepared to be fooled in that direction. Certain sections of the wheatgrowers have been deprived of these facilities for two years, and consequently they are just about at a point beyond which they will not stand any more. If anything that is not very pleasing should occur, the responsibility will rest with the Government. The Minister for Justice may laugh, but if he were to take a run round the country and interview some of the wheatgrowers, as I did recently, he would find that it is not a laughing matter with them.

The Minister for Agriculture: A lot of the facts are not known to you.

Mr. SEWARD: If that be so, the report of the Royal Commission that would enable us to get the facts has not been made available to us; had it been made available, we might not make statements that may not be correct. I do not for a moment say that the statements are incorrect. The next mat-

ter I wish to bring under the notice of the Government, and more particularly the Minister for Agriculture, relates to the provision of laboratory accommodation. The member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) and other members, as well as people outside this House, have stressed the necessity for, and importance of, inducing the farmers to change over from wheatgrowing to mixed farming, which, of course, includes sheep raising. That advice is certainly good, but it must be remembered that because a man may grow wheat successfully, it does not mean that he can carry on successfully with sheep.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Can you wheat farm without sheep in this State?

Mr. SEWARD: I admit that sheep-raising represents an auxiliary to wheat farming as part of ordinary mixed farming. But the point I want to stress particularly is that simply because a man can grow wheat—I do not say he can do so profitably, because of present-day prices—it does not necessarily follow that he can successfully raise sheep or even deal in sheep. The other day a client of the Agricultural Bank wrote to me regarding his experience with sheep and told me he had bought some at 30s. per head and had held them. Through lack of knowledge of sheep farming, he was forced to quit and he had to sell them at 4s. 6d. per head. It is not merely a matter of advising farmers to quit wheat and go in for mixed farming; we must see to it that pastures are improved to enable those farmers to carry sheep. In Western Australia some of the land will carry a sheep to three acres, and if a man has 1,000 acres and can carry a sheep to every three acres only, we can hardly say that it is sound advice if we urge him to change over to mixed farming. I mention this phase in order to stress to the Minister for Agriculture the necessity for further investigation of pasture improvement and for combating pests and diseases with which agriculturists are afflicted. Those pests include the red-legged mite that has caused trouble even amongst the wheat crops, although it is usually considered to confine its attention to clovers and so forth. Another pest is the lucerne flea, while there is also the new disease which has recently made its presence felt severely among the sheep growers—toxic paralysis. These matters can only be dealt with, and remedies found, by means of research work in laboratories. The two visits that were made to Western Australia by Dr. Rivett, head

of the Commonwealth Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, recalled to one's mind that on each occasion that official stated that the resources of the council were not available to Western Australia to the full extent because of the lack of laboratory accommodation. Until we provide facilities in that regard, we cannot secure the full co-operation of the council. Two years ago I took a deputation comprising representatives of the Wheatgrowers' Union, the Royal Agricultural Society and the Primary Producers' Association to the then Minister for Agriculture in order to request that better laboratory facilities should be provided by the State Government. So far, the only reply I have been able to get in response to our representations has been that the matter is receiving the consideration of Cabinet. I appeal to the new Minister for Agriculture to take this matter in hand and do what he can to secure the provision of adequate laboratory facilities. In order to emphasise that necessity, I desire to give some idea of the ravages of toxic paralysis during the present year. Fortunately, one of the road boards, knowing that I was interested in this matter, sent me the result of a plebiscite that they had taken of the farmers of their district. It is a mixed farming area and some 69 farmers supplied particulars to the board. These show that there was a loss of 5,000 sheep in that particular road board area last year. That does not represent the whole loss because there was, in addition to the sheep, the unborn lambs and the wool. We had some experience in the Pingelly district with this disease. The Chief Veterinary Officer, who has always been ready to assist in every way possible, visited the district and investigated our trouble. Fortunately, the first man we met had some affected sheep in his cart when we met him on the road. One had already died and six were alive. The veterinary officer killed three of them. They were all ewes, some of them heavy in lamb, and after he had examined them, the officer said the only conclusion he could come to was that the sheep should never have died. They were apparently in perfect health and yet these sheep were dropping at the rate of 10 or 12 a day. The particular farmer, whose sheep the veterinary officer inspected on the road, had lost 60 sheep within a week from the time the first animal died. These figures

are sufficiently alarming to show the necessity for a thorough investigation. I know that a certain amount of work has been done, but I am of opinion that no solution will be found until a competent officer is appointed to devote the whole of his time to an investigation of the disease. Some years ago the braxy-like disease caused heavy losses and it was not until Dr. Bennetts had given the whole of this time to an investigation of that disease that satisfactory results were obtained. Consequently, I hope the Minister for Agriculture will see to it that adequate laboratory accommodation is provided so that these various diseases and pests may be investigated. Toxic paralysis, in addition to carrying off sheep, has attacked cattle. I know a farmer who has lost 20 head of cattle in the last two years and in one road board area practically 40 per cent. of the farmers cannot keep cows. It is not a dairying district and the farmers kept cows in order to secure milk and butter supplies. All the cows died from this particular disease. I know that some of those farmers were selling butter, but within three weeks they were buying condensed milk. So far as I am aware, no effective remedy for toxic paralysis has yet been discovered. It was stated that the use of dicalcie licks would overcome the trouble. I know one farmer used the lick extensively but found that it was of little avail and his losses continued.

Mr. Mann: The lick has proved useless.

Mr. SEWARD: Quite useless. That particular man had 900 head of sheep and gave them a ton of lick within a fortnight, and yet he lost 100 of them. One aspect of this disease has completely puzzled the farmers. In some instances the toxic paralysis has attacked only ewes, whereas in neighbouring farms only wethers have been attacked. The result is that the farmers are in such a mind that they have determined not to go in for rabbit-poisoning this year. They blame the dead rabbits for the introduction of this disease. I do not know whether that is the position, but the farmers certainly attribute the outbreak to that cause, and they intend to refuse to go in for poisoning this year.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Will not last year's rabbits do the damage just the same this year?

Mr. SEWARD: I suppose last year's carcasses will be cleaned up by that time, but

the fact remains that the farmers will not continue poisoning operations this year. There is also another reason why I appeal to the Minister to provide laboratory accommodation, and that is on account of the departmental officers themselves. We have some very capable officials among the experts of the Agricultural Department, and it is not fair to ask them to carry on their work under present conditions. They are entitled to the best of conditions to enable them to carry on their investigations, otherwise it is only natural that they will leave the State and accept positions elsewhere, where adequate laboratory facilities are available. Therefore, as we have such a competent and efficient staff at the Agricultural Department, it is certainly worth while for the Government to provide them with facilities to carry out the important work on which they are engaged. Next I desire to deal with an interjection that the Premier made when the Acting Leader of the Opposition was speaking. The Premier asked the hon. member to state exactly what should be done in order to cope with the rabbit pest. We would all like to be able to give a complete answer to that query. I do not know that there is any answer that could be regarded as having definite application to the whole of the State. We may be able to deal with the rabbits in the wheat belt by fencing in the water supplies during the summer months and by poisoning and so forth during the winter months, without the necessity for using wire netting. On the other hand, in the Great Southern and South-Western areas, where water and green feed are available throughout the year, it is essential that holdings be wire netted. For that reason it is also essential that rabbit-proof netting be made available to the farmers on the easiest possible terms. In that regard the road board to which I previously referred as having provided me with information regarding the effects of toxic paralysis on the flocks, also supplied me with information concerning the crop losses due to rabbits. The crops lost in that district represented nearly 1,000 acres due to the ravages of the rabbits. When we have regard to all these losses that are attributable to rabbits, members will agree that it is necessary to deal with the pest effectively. I would not for one moment suggest that wire netting should be supplied indiscriminately,

because I have heard of supplies being made available to a few farmers who did not use it, but allowed it to lie around on their holdings. No one would stand for that. Agricultural Bank inspectors travel round districts regularly and they could be supplied with the names of the farmers who had been furnished with wire netting. They could see that the farmers had made proper use of the netting. If farmers neglected to do so, the wire netting could be taken away from them. It would be idle to suggest that farmers should be supplied with wire netting if they were not prepared to make use of it. That is one way by which the interests of the Government and of the Agricultural Bank could be conserved. With the Acting Leader of the Opposition, I deplore the action of the Commonwealth Government in their expressed intention to make wire netting available to Western Australia only to the amount granted to the Premier at the recent meeting of the Loan Council, with a reduction of only one per cent. in interest. Of the £2,800,000 that was Western Australia's proportion, I believe £100,000 was the amount in respect of which one per cent. less interest was to be charged compared with the interest chargeable on the balance of the loan. I regret that, so far as we are aware, that was the best offer the Commonwealth Government could make towards assisting the farmers in their problems. At the same time, if the Commonwealth's offer is to be refused, then the responsibility for denying wire netting to farmers will rest upon the State Government. So far as we are aware, the Government have no alternative plan to advance as the scheme that has been in vogue in previous years has lapsed. I think the Government could easily have given us that £100,000 seeing that the Premier was more fortunate than others in that he received more of his originally requested total than other Premiers were able to secure. In other words this amount has not been cut down, and so to have allowed the farmers the £100,000 for the supply of wire netting would not have been amiss. There is another matter touching wire netting to which I should like to draw the attention of the Minister for Lands, namely, the change of policy brought about by the commissioners of the Agricultural Bank in their administration of the Wire Netting Act. Last year the administration of that Act was taken from the Lands Department

and passed over to the commissioners of the Agricultural Bank. In the previous year it had been the rule that where Associated Bank clients were supplied with netting under the Government scheme, those banks had to give the first charge on their mortgage to secure that netting. That was only a reasonable demand, but this year the commissioners of the Agricultural Bank, not satisfied with that first charge for the security, asked in addition that the banks should guarantee every payment. This the Associated Banks have refused to do, and as a result the clients of those banks are not able to participate in wire netting issued under the Government scheme. Whether that was a right attitude on the part of the commissioners I am not prepared to say, but it seems to me it was the duty of the commissioners to meet the Associated Banks and come to some arrangement so that the Associated Bank clients might get the benefit of the scheme. It meant that many of them could not get any wire netting. I am continually receiving letters from those unfortunate people in the country asking me to see the Agricultural Bank Commissioners and endeavour to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement. I wrote to the Minister for Lands about five weeks ago asking him if anything could be done in the matter, but unfortunately to date—quite unlike the usual methods of that Minister—I have had no reply to my letter. It is practically too late now to do anything, because of the change of policy; I mean it would be too late for this year. I hope the Minister will take up this matter with the Agricultural Bank Commissioners and see if some arrangement cannot be made with the Associated Banks before next year comes around. Now I should like to say one or two words about the Agricultural Bank itself. I am aware that the commissioners of that bank have taken over a very big task: indeed I do not suppose they could have found a bigger task in the whole of the Commonwealth. Consequently, I shall not attempt to criticise them. I know but one of them, the late Minister for Works, who was known to all of us here as an exceedingly competent and able man, and I feel sure that in time he will make a satisfactory alteration in the administration of that bank. At the same time, I cannot help saying there is something radically

wrong with the bank at present. That I know from the large number of letters coming to me from unfortunate settlers who are practically being put off their holdings. As I have said, I know the bank commissioners have a big task in hand, but I think when the commissioners went through the accounts of the various clients, in all probability they separated them under certain headings, as for instance, those who could carry on for another year or even further, those who were extremely doubtful, and again those whose position was practically hopeless. It is the last-named class I have in mind. A special board, an appeal board, should have been created to go into all those cases and make sure that where a man's position was hopeless, it was entirely through his own fault, not through any fault on the part of anybody else. I make that statement advisedly, because I have often been requested to go along to the Agricultural Bank on behalf of a client of that institution. But in going to see the bank on such an occasion I would no more presume to ask a bank official to do what his business training told him he ought not to do than I would attempt to fly; I simply went there in order to put the whole of that client's affairs before the bank authorities so that they could judge his position impartially. To take an instance: In about March last a friend of mine wrote down and mentioned to me the case of a neighbour of his who had received a letter from the bank authorities stating that they were going to foreclose on his property. My friend asked me to see the bank and learn whether anything could be done about it. I saw that man's trustee and got the whole of the figures from him, and I found that despite bad seasons the settler had been progressing right through and had, amongst other things, paid for his sheep. At my request an investigation was made at the bank, with the result that the foreclosure order was withdrawn. In view of that, I suggest that before any of these settlers are put off their holdings the position should be closely investigated by an appeal board, on which would be a representative of the farmers, in order to ensure that no injustice is being done. Another man came to me to get an abandoned farm. He had all his own plant and horse feed and his own requirements for 12 months. He wanted the farm

in order to do some following on it. I saw the bank authorities and as a result they authorised the handing over of the farm to this man. Five months later I met him and asked how he was getting on with it, but he said that nothing further had been done. On investigation, we found that the mortgage had been sent up by the bank to the local officer, who had kept it for two months and said nothing about it, with the result that that settler's proposed work on that farm was lost for a year. So, as I say, these cases should be investigated by a competent board on which the farmer could be represented. I have noticed in the newspapers it is proposed that the chief inspectors who are to be appointed shall act as an appeal board for the farmers. I sincerely hope they will not be men who have had previous connection with the Agricultural Bank. Such a board should be composed of independent men before whom the farmers can go and lay their respective cases, in order that the board might have the whole of the facts. If that were done, I am sure the straightening out of the affairs of the Agricultural Bank would proceed with more satisfaction to all concerned. I should like to urge the necessity for the Agricultural Department exercising the very closest supervision over the introduction of seeds into this State and over the sale of seeds to the agricultural industry generally. We in Western Australia have a very fine protection in our geographical separation from the rest of Australia, a natural protection against the introduction of noxious weeds. The worst weed of all is the skeleton weed, of which we have heard something lately. Those who have any knowledge of the effect of this weed say it is the worst they know of, and that its introduction here would be a calamity. But we have been buying chaff and even seeds from the Eastern States, so it behoves the Agricultural Department to ensure that chaff or any other commodity from the Eastern States brought into this State did not originate in any area affected by the skeleton weed. Also, I should like to appeal to the Minister for Agriculture on the subject of the regulations drawn up last year to deal with the pea weevil. The growing of peas is one of the most important activities of the farmers of the southern districts; not only are they a very valuable fodder for the fattening of sheep, but the

peas are great soil builders, assisting the settlers to build up their soils and, as a result, carry much larger numbers of stock. This weevil is working a great deal of havoc, and in consequence it may be necessary to prohibit the growing of peas for two years in order to cope with the pest. I hope the Minister will see that the regulations to be drafted this year will be more equitable than were those of last year, which practically precluded any man from selling any peas at all, even though he carried out the fumigation laid down by the department. The time is at hand when direct effort must be made to solve the problem, and I hope the Minister will see that this year's regulations are equitable, so that people who have taken every precaution for the destruction of the pea weevil will not be prevented from selling their seed. I have one or two other matters I wish to refer to, but they can stand over until the Estimates come down.

MR. HAWKE (Northam) [5.12]: I desire first of all to deal with the question of discontinued insurance policies. I have not been able to ascertain the figures for Western Australia regarding this phase of insurance business, but I have extracted from the "Commonwealth Year Book" a good deal of information covering the question of insurance policies discontinued in the Commonwealth in recent years. In order that the section of the public which reads "Hansard" might have some knowledge of the actual position, and in the hope that the newspapers of the State might give publicity to that position, I propose to quote sets of figures that have been taken from the "Commonwealth Year Book." First of all it is my intention to quote the figures dealing with discontinuance of what are known as ordinary life insurance policies. The headings of discontinuance are three in number, first of all, "Death or maturity," secondly, "Surrender," thirdly, "Forfeiture." The table is as follows:—

Insurance Policies Discontinued.

1928—	
Death or maturity,	16,134 policies, representing £3,704,000.
Surrender,	16,340 policies, representing £4,479,000.
Forfeiture,	34,555 policies, representing £11,776,000.

Actually the number of forfeited policies in that year was greater than the number of policies discontinued through death or maturity or surrender.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Have you particulars of the paid up premiums on those policies?

Mr. HAWKE: No, it is impossible to obtain those figures from the "Commonwealth Year Book," but later on I propose to direct attention to that phase.

Mr. Thorn: It would be interesting to know the amount of money actually forfeited.

Mr. HAWKE: It would be more than interesting; I think it would have an amazing effect throughout the community. The discontinuance of ordinary life insurance policies in 1930 is summarised thus—

Death or maturity,	17,150 policies,	representing	£3,838,000.
Surrender,	19,928 policies,	representing	£6,192,000.
Forfeiture,	33,566 policies,	representing	£13,790,000.

Here again the number of forfeited policies equalled almost exactly the number of policies discontinued because of death, maturity or surrender. For the following year, 1931, I am giving details merely of policies surrendered and forfeited, because the rate of increase in regard to policies discontinued because of death or maturity is approximately the same. The figures for 1931 are—

Surrender,	30,259 policies,	representing	£9,411,000.
Forfeiture,	38,061 policies,	representing	£15,807,000.

In 1931, which was really the first and worst year of the depression, although the depression had commenced in 1930, the number of policies discontinued because of surrender and forfeiture was no less than 68,300, and the sum assured was approximately £25,000,000. Let me now take the five-year period covering the years 1928 to 1932 inclusive—

Death or maturity,	87,886 policies,	representing	£19,817,000.
Surrender,	109,411 policies,	representing	£32,900,000.
Forfeiture,	170,318 policies,	representing	£65,040,000.

Again the number of forfeited policies almost equalled the number discontinued because of death or maturity or surrender. The totals I have quoted show that only 25 per cent. of the policies and 17 per cent. of the assured amount were covered by death or maturity claims: 30 per cent. of the policies and 28 per cent. of the assured amount were covered by surrender policies, and 45 per cent. of the policies and 55 per

cent. of the assured amount were covered by forfeited policies. During that five-year period the excess of receipts over expenditure was no less than £26,000,000. There can be no doubt that a great deal of that excess of receipts over expenditure was provided by the huge number of policies that people in various parts of the Commonwealth were compelled to forfeit after having paid the premiums for many years. There can be no doubt that many thousands of people in each State of Australia lost large sums of money because of the forfeiture of insurance policies. I recall that, during the last Federal election campaign, we heard a great deal of the slogan of protecting the people's savings. It is a great pity that the parties responsible for coining that slogan and for advertising it have not taken action in the Federal Parliament to protect the policy holders throughout Australia. It is a great pity, too, that action was not taken in the Federal Parliament many years ago to afford some reasonable protection to policy holders in respect to money paid to insurance companies.

Mr. Patriek: Has the question never been raised by anybody there?

Mr. HAWKE: So far I have dealt with ordinary life insurance. I propose now to deal with industrial life insurance. Most members know that industrial life insurance policies are policies that poor people are talked into taking up. Two years ago Parliament passed a Purchasers' Protection Act to protect the people of Western Australia against the misrepresentations made by certain salesmen who, previous to that time, were selling blocks of land to a section of the public of Western Australia. However much that protection may have been required by the public, and however much the public may have deserved the protection given them in regard to the sale of blocks of land in the metropolitan area, it appears to me that there is an even greater need that some measure of legislative protection should be given to the section of our population who have been persuaded, in many cases by misrepresentation, to take up industrial life insurance policies.

Mr. Cross: Every policy should have a surrender value.

Mr. HAWKE: The average amount of each industrial policy taken out in Australia is £43, and the average annual premium is £2 10s., which works out at a little less than

Is. per week. I am sure every member knows that mothers are persuaded to take out these industrial life insurance policies for the sake of their children. Many very bright tales are told to mothers regarding these industrial life insurance policies. In 1928 the discontinuance of industrial life policies is thus summarised—

Death or maturity, 53,624 policies, representing £1,282,000.
Surrender, 9,158 policies, representing £448,000.
Forfeiture, 169,900 policies, representing £8,978,000.

Thus in 1928 the number of industrial policies forfeited was nearly three times the number discontinued because of death or maturity or surrender. And 1928 was a prosperous year when one would have thought it would have been unnecessary for such a large number of policies to be forfeited. The fact that so many were forfeited in a year of that description goes to prove that there is something radically wrong with this class of insurance policy. The figures for 1930 are—

Death or maturity, 61,159 policies, representing £1,566,000.
Surrendered, 16,900 policies, representing £830,000.
Forfeiture, 231,991 policies, representing £12,253,000.

The number of forfeited policies in 1930 was approximately 61,000 greater than in 1928. For the five-year period, covering 1928 to 1932 inclusive, the number of industrial life insurance policies discontinued was as follows—

Death or maturity, 278,491 policies, representing £7,220,000.
Surrender, 84,453 policies, representing £4,067,000.
Forfeiture, 962,600 policies, representing £50,450,000.

During that five-year period the number of policies forfeited was nearly three times the total of those discontinued because of death or maturity or surrender. Only 22 per cent. of the total policies and 13 per cent. of the assured amount were covered by death or maturity claims in that period of five years. Only 6 per cent. of the policies and 6 per cent. of the assured amount were covered by surrender policies, and 72 per cent. of the policies and 81 per cent. of the total sum assured were covered by forfeited policies. The excess of receipts over expenditure during the five-year period totalled £8,332,000. The figures that I have

quoted reveal, in my opinion, a state of affairs that requires urgent and drastic attention. It would be far better if such attention were given by the Commonwealth Parliament.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You know that we could not do it.

Mr. HAWKE: I have some hope that, before I have concluded, members may agree that there is not only a possibility, but every opportunity, for remedial measures to be taken even in one State. I admit it would be far better if it were done on a Commonwealth basis, because then the legislation and the control would be uniform throughout Australia. But if the Commonwealth will not move—and I think we can all be certain that the present Commonwealth Government will not move—it seems to me that if we can give some measure of protection to the people who are being exploited, it is the duty of members of this Parliament, and the duty of the Government, earnestly to consider the taking of action in that regard.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There is a constitutional difficulty.

Mr. HAWKE: The Queensland Parliament took action in 1933 to protect the people of that State. The Queensland Legislature passed an Act to amend the Life Insurance Companies Act of 1921, and in that amendment Act inserted the following provision:—

An ordinary whole-life assurance policy or an ordinary endowment assurance policy which has been in force for three years or upwards, or an industrial whole-life assurance policy or an industrial endowment assurance policy, shall carry a surrender value of 65 per cent. of the reserve value of the policy.

So I would point out to the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson), and I would point out to the other members of this Chamber, that the Queensland Parliament has already taken action to protect the people of Queensland in regard to surrender value for all classes of policies, including industrial life assurance policies. I feel sure that the Queensland Parliament did not take the action it did in 1933, until it was certain of the constitutional position. That amendment Act passed in 1933 was put into operation early in the following year, and it has continued to operate since. Its operation has afforded a highly necessary measure of protection to the people of

Queensland. In my opinion our own Western Australian Parliament could well follow the example set by the Queensland Legislature in 1933, and I hope that before this session ends serious consideration will have been given to the position and, if possible, the necessary protective legislation placed upon the statute book. I admit that the figures which have been given do not cover the whole of the ground. I admit that there are justifying reasons why policies are forfeited from time to time. However, I say definitely that the figures are so great as to show beyond the possibility of successful contradiction that there has been a great and widespread exploitation of the people in Western Australia and in the other Australian States by certain life assurance companies. I may be permitted to support the case I have presented by quoting the experience of one of my own constituents in regard to industrial life assurance. The woman was engaged, together with her husband, in the farming industry prior to 1930. A salesman for a certain mutual life assurance company waited upon her on different occasions and finally persuaded her that she would be doing a wonderful thing for her children if she took out industrial life assurance policies in their names. So she decided to take out an industrial life assurance policy for each of her two children. After six months she was persuaded to take out an additional policy for each of them. Thus she finally had four industrial life assurance policies for her two children, and her weekly liability for premiums amounted to 4s. While the farming industry was enjoying a prosperous period, she was quite able, as well as anxious, to maintain the policies; but when the depression came she and her husband, like many other families upon the land, were forced into a position where it became absolutely necessary to discontinue the payment of the 4s. per week. Those four policies, of course, are included among the huge number of forfeited industrial life assurance policies of which I have spoken this afternoon. This woman paid in altogether approximately £80 on those policies. The company concerned, after a good deal of trouble, agreed to loan her back £13; and from that day to this she has not been able to secure another penny. She wrote the company many letters. This one, written on the 20th October last year, I regard as

sufficiently worthy to occupy a space in "Hansard":—

Dear sir,—I now wish to again raise the question of your society paying me surrender value on the four policies which I was unable to keep current. In your letter of 25/8/33 you point out that surrender value is not provided for in the conditions associated with industrial policies. You also state it is not the policy to enable policies to be surrendered easily. Surely you do not think that I allowed four policies to lapse because of wanting to do so. Several times I have pointed out to you that there was no choice, that cruel circumstances imposed by the coming of the depression forced me to cease payments. Bare necessities of life for my family took every penny of income. So you may be sure that the policies in question were not surrendered because it was an easy thing to do. It was only after a very hard struggle to keep them current that I was compelled to allow them to lapse. I also had other policies with other societies. These, too, had to be surrendered; but, to the credit of those other societies, they treated me reasonably, and made reasonable repayments to me. Before the depression I had great faith in the value of insurance, and in the fairness of all those associated with it. My long struggle to obtain a reasonable deal from you and your society has caused my faith to sag badly. You point out that if your society granted me a reasonable surrender value, it would have to do the same with a large number of policy-holders somewhat similarly situated. This rather proves that a large number of policies have been surrendered during the depression. Apart from the small loans made on such policies, your society would have received a very large sum of money on such policies. You have had all that money, and the profitable use of it. In addition, it seems as if you will continue to hold it and use it despite the fact that the people who paid the money are now in the most difficult of circumstances. To me, a plain honest woman, such a plan seems to lack fairness and business morality. On the four policies I had on behalf of my boys, the amount paid to your society approximates £80. On policy No. you loaned me £13. Therefore you have continued to hold, and earn interest on, the balance of £67; and you persist in stating that your chief executive officers are determined to maintain their legal right to hang on to the whole of that balance. If your society had been a private company, owned and controlled by hard-hearted profit-chasers, I would not have been surprised at the treatment meted out to me; but you are supposed to administer a mutual society to assist and benefit all policy-holders. Yet those policy-holders who are most in need of help are not helped when they ask for a return of portion of the money they themselves have provided. Therefore it would seem that your society protects only those policy-holders who are fortunately circumstanced, and they are helped to obtain bigger bonuses by using the money paid in by those unfortunate policy-holders who have been forced to surrender policies after having paid in for years on them. My correspondence with you has been very

unsatisfactory, and I hope I may be excused for being frank. Therefore, I make this earnest appeal to you and your chief executive officers to reconsider my case, and make a reasonable repayment to me of the balance of money paid on the policies in question.

I have here a pamphlet advertising the benefits of industrial life assurance. The front page of the pamphlet has only three words on it—"An Astounding Announcement." The last page carries this statement—

Announcement. (Here the name of the company appears.) The bonuses of this company payable by its industrial department rank among the largest in the world.

If consideration is given to the individual I have mentioned, and further if consideration is given to the facts I have outlined, which facts have been taken from the "Commonwealth Year Book," then there can be no wonder that companies of that kind can make astounding announcements, or that those astounding announcements cover such a statement as the one I have read, to the effect that the bonuses paid by the industrial department of the company rank among the largest in the world. What this company and other companies like it do, of course, is to use the money they gather in from forfeited policies, for the purpose of boosting their business by offering those astounding bonuses with which the pamphlet deals. I do not propose to speak further on this question, except to repeat that the Queensland Parliament found it possible to take action. The Queensland amendment Act passed in 1933 guarantees to every policyholder in Queensland, whether the policy held be ordinary assurance or industrial assurance, that a surrender value, and a set surrender value, shall be paid on every policy after it has been in force for a certain number of years. If we in this Parliament follow that example, we shall be doing a great deal of good. I feel we shall then be giving a highly necessary measure of protection to a section of our community that deserves and requires every protection we can give it—that section of our population to which the industrial life assurance policy idea appeals.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAWKE: I am sure that members on the Opposition side of the Chamber would be disappointed to a slight extent if I did not have something to say regarding certain of the charges which have been levelled at the party who now constitute the Government of Western Australia. I was very interested in the speech of the

Acting Leader of the Opposition and I feel that I can with justification congratulate him upon the excellence of that effort. But I regret to say it was marred to some extent by statements that were not altogether in accordance with fact. Either he or someone else coined the nice sounding phrase "agricultural conscience." The Acting Leader of the Opposition juggled with this phrase on the visit to the North-West in which he took part. Whether he coined the phrase on the sandplains of Roebourne, or in some other part of the North-West, I know not; the fact is that during his speech he declared that the present Government had no agricultural conscience. Just what that was meant to convey I do not know; probably it was meant to convey that the Government had no wish or desire to do anything to deal at all effectively with the position of agriculture in Western Australia. In some of his public statements in the North-West the Acting Leader of the Opposition, in offering a heartfelt measure of congratulation to Mr. Wise upon his elevation to the Ministry, stated that his main reason for offering congratulations was that he believed Mr. Wise was possessed of a very active agricultural conscience.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I said the same in this House.

Mr. HAWKE: If the Minister for Agriculture has a very live and active agricultural conscience, it becomes difficult to make the contradictory statement that the Government have no agricultural conscience.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Mr. Wise is not the Government, he is only a member of it.

Mr. HAWKE: Mr. Wise holds the portfolio of agriculture; he is the Minister in charge of that department, and therefore, although he is not the Government, he is the member of the Government who has most to do with administering the Agricultural Department; he is the Minister who has most to do with the framing of measures dealing with the agricultural industry. Therefore it appears to me that the Acting Leader of the Opposition merely coined the phrase because it had a nice round roll about it, and because he found it came smoothly off his tongue and appealed to him as a phrase that he could use for the purpose of depreciating in the country dis-

tricts the supporters of the Government. Because the Acting Leader of the Opposition has already admitted in public speeches that the Minister in charge of the Agricultural Department and the agricultural industry generally in this State has a very live agricultural conscience, I think we can conclude that his charge against the Government of having no agricultural conscience is without foundation. I desire, however, to go a little further. If the present Government had no agricultural conscience during the last two years, they would have done nothing at all to assist the farmers. If they had had only an industrial conscience, they would have concentrated the whole of their efforts on industrial affairs and would not have taken any action, administrative or otherwise, to give any assistance or protection to the agriculturists of Western Australia. I have gone to the trouble of drawing up a list of Acts of Parliament passed in 1933 and in 1934 for the purpose of quoting them this afternoon and disproving completely the charge that the present Government have no agricultural conscience. In 1933 the Government amended the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act. A Government that had no agricultural conscience would not have amended that Act; they would probably have made some attempt to get rid of it altogether. The Government also amended the Fruit Cases Act in order that a greater measure of protection should be given to the fruitgrowers of Western Australia. If they had had no agricultural conscience, they certainly would not have shown any activity in that regard, in which case the member for Toodyay (Mr. Thorn) and other members representing the fruitgrowers' districts would have been left lamenting. I must say that I was disappointed indeed that the member for Toodyay did not contradict his Acting Leader when that gentleman made the charge that the present Government had no agricultural conscience.

Mr. Moloney: That would have strained his loyalty too much.

Mr. HAWKE: In 1933 the Government also amended the Metropolitan Whole Milk Act. Had the Government been without any agricultural conscience they certainly would not have brought down that legislation, and if the whole-milk producers had been of the same

opinion as the Acting Leader of the Opposition, namely that this Government had no agricultural conscience, they would not be holding deputations to the Minister for Agriculture at the present time asking that the Act be further amended. The Government also brought down an amendment of the Plant Diseases Act. Members on the opposite side were very interested in that amending Bill and they supported it—every one of them. They would not have had the opportunity of supporting that amending Bill if the Government had not possessed an agricultural conscience, because that amending Bill would never have seen the light of day. In 1933 the Government also passed a consolidating Land Act. Here again members opposite supported that measure. Why did they support it?

The Minister for Lands: And in that Bill were many advantages.

Mr. HAWKE: They supported it because they realised that the consolidating Land Bill was going to confer a great number of advantages upon the landowners and agriculturists of Western Australia. I ask members of the Opposition, therefore, to explain when they have the opportunity to do so, how a Government without any semblance of an agricultural conscience, could bring down a measure of that description. Then, again, the Government have brought down two Bills for the purpose of authorising the construction of railways in agricultural districts. If the Government had not been possessed of an agricultural conscience, they would not have been the least bit concerned about authorising the construction of a railway from Yuna to Dartmoor, and I am sure if the member for Greenough (Mr. Patrick) were asked for his opinion as to whether the Government had an agricultural conscience, he would admit that they had, and a very live, active and beneficial agricultural conscience. In 1934 this Government without an agricultural conscience, according to the Acting Leader of the Opposition, again gave a practical demonstration of their interest in agriculture and a practical demonstration of the fact that they have indeed an agricultural conscience. They again amended the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act so that that Act might be widened in its operations and so that it might give additional benefits in the direction of lightening the load of debt upon the agriculturists of Western Australia. Then the Government brought

down the Dried Fruits Act Continuance Act.

Mr. Thorn: Don't say anything about that.

Mr. HAWKE: Well, in response to the plaintive appeal of the hon. member, I will not say what he thought and knew I was going to say, but I will say that he welcomed that measure with open arms.

Mr. Thorn: Yes, I will admit that.

Mr. HAWKE: And although the member for Toodyay was silent when his Acting Leader made that charge against the Government, I feel sure in my own mind, as he went out amongst his own constituents he told them it was only a little political window dressing that the Acting Leader was indulging in, and that actually the present Government had shown a greater agricultural conscience than the Government of which he was a supporter had ever done.

Mr. Thorn: No, I would not say that.

Mr. HAWKE: Next, the Government brought down the Agricultural Bank Bill. Whatever we may think of that measure and certain of its provisions, we all agree that that Act as it now stands provides all the power and authority necessary to save to a large degree the farmers and the farming industry of Western Australia. I was glad to find the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) was fairly loud—I do not mean vocally—in his praise of this Act, and fairly loud also in his expression of faith in the ability of the present Commissioners of the Bank to bring benefits to the struggling farmers of Western Australia. Then in 1934 the Government also brought down a Dairy Products Marketing Regulation Act. Now a Government would require to possess a fairly active agricultural conscience to realise the necessity for such an Act, and if the present Government had no agricultural conscience, if they were deaf and blind to the needs and requirements of agriculture, the Act of which I speak would not have seen the light of day. Members representing dairying districts—I include the member for Sussex—were loud in their praises of this Act. They stuck to the Government, and supported them at every stage until eventually the measure was placed upon the statute book. That Act is in operation to-day. Members representing dairying districts will agree that its provisions must play an important part in restoring hope and a reasonable degree of safety to the industry. We can afford to

feel that when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made this unwarranted charge against the Government, he made it not because he felt it was justified, but because the phrase "agricultural conscience" had a great appeal for him, and impressed him as being a plaything which could be thrown about and used to gain undue advantage over the Government and the party they represent. A great deal more could be said to show that the Government have taken into consideration the agricultural districts and the agricultural industry, but I do not propose to go further into that matter. A statement was made on several occasions during the debate that the Government have expended most of their loan moneys in the metropolitan area, and the suggestion was that most of it was spent in the district represented by the member for Canning.

Mr. Cross: Oh, no.

Mr. HAWKE: The greater part of the loan moneys that were available to the Government during the last two years has been expended in the country districts. Of the average number of 9,000 men who were on relief works during the last two years, 6,000 have been employed in the country districts, leaving only 3,000 to be employed in the metropolitan area. If twice as many relief workers have been engaged throughout the country districts as have been working in the metropolitan area, it follows as a matter of logic, that the greater amount of loan money spent by the Government in the last two years has been expended in the country districts.

Mr. Thorn: Not as a matter of fact.

Mr. HAWKE: Those country members who tour their constituencies, and care to note what is being done in the country districts, must know that during the last two years a great volume of work has been carried out in the country. I do not suppose one district in the whole State has been neglected on this score. I ask those members who were in the North-West party to remember what we saw and heard in that part of the State. We were told that the present Government in the expenditure of loan moneys had given a generous share to that portion of Western Australia.

Mr. Thorn: You will admit that a lot of the expenditure goes in material.

Mr. HAWKE: Jobs cannot be done in the country without material any easier than in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Thorn: Of course they can.

Mr. HAWKE: The charge the Opposition have sought to sustain, that the Government have spent practically the whole of their loan moneys in the metropolitan area, has no force at all because there is no truth in it. The charge that the Government have had more money to spend than the previous Government had is a very humorous one, especially if we recall the amount of propaganda issued against the Labour party during the last election campaign. Most of the propaganda issued in the Northam district consisted of the statement that if the Mitchell-Latham Government were defeated, and a Labour Government came into power, the people would be worse off, and the unemployed, the relief workers, and the sustenance workers would be ever so much worse off because a Labour Government would not be able to command the confidence of those who would have the money to lend. I suppose that propaganda was spread abroad in every district. It was spread with a good deal of viciousness, and it had a good deal of effect in a great many cases. To-day, however, the charge against the Government is not that they have not been able to command the confidence of the investing public, not that they have not been able to obtain money with which to carry on, but that they have had more money than the previous Government, and therefore have had more to spend, and that things should be better than they were under the regime of the previous Government. That sort of argument may appeal to those who make use of it, but it is an argument that will appeal to the citizens of the State only in one way, namely, that if the present Government are able to command confidence, to obtain more money for the carrying out of works and the extension of industry, and are able to receive greater financial assistance than the previous Government received, the best thing to do is to keep the present Government in office. I think that is the answer that will be given to that type of argument when the people have an opportunity to pronounce upon it. I wish now to refer to the mining dispute. Industrial disputes are as old as the ages. They have come down almost from the time when man first began to hire other men to work. They will continue until the present basis of our economic and industrial system is entirely altered. In the final analysis an industrial dispute is the

only means by which a speedy and oft-times reasonable solution for the settlement of a dispute can be found. Most people who have condemned the Government because of the mining dispute have always stopped a good deal short of where they should. If their condemnation of the Government is justified, in addition to stating that they were wrong or that they did something which was wrong, they should be able to state just what was the right thing to do. I make bold to suggest that not one of the critics of the Government can say what should have been done at the time. No member opposite is prepared to say that the men should have been prosecuted and imprisoned. No critic of the Government is prepared to say that either.

Mr. Marshall: He could not do it.

Mr. HAWKE: If any critic had offered that suggestion it would have been of a worthless type, and acting upon it would have been extremely dangerous. If those men had been prosecuted and imprisoned, I take the risk of stating that the mining dispute would have been with us still, and that great groups of other industrial workers in the State would also have been affected. Because the Government secured a peaceful settlement, because they secured a speedy and a satisfactory settlement, which gave not altogether justice, but a degree of justice to the men, the critics of the Government come down upon them, and seek to show that the Government have done something illegal and unconstitutional, something that is likely to undermine the whole structure of our State's system. The criticism has been petty; it has had neither strength nor logic in it. Those who think they will be able to gain an advantage over the Government on this question should be very careful in what they do.

The Minister for Lands: They have chosen a very bad battle ground.

Mr. HAWKE: During the mining dispute, I had the opportunity of travelling through various districts in Western Australia, and of conversing with several people concerning the matter. I was impressed by the unanimity of support that was given to the miners by every section of the community.

The Minister for Lands: Even by mining men.

Mr. HAWKE: Members of the Opposition would be wise to recollect that most people in the State have either worked in the mines or lived on the goldfields, or have

relations or friends who either live or work there. It was not surprising after all that a great majority of the people of the State should have been sympathetic towards the miners in the fight they staged on that occasion.

Mr. Thorn: We are always sympathetic towards them.

Mr. HAWKE: I am sorry that when the miners decided to have a dispute they did not fight for a 40-hour week underground. Any man who goes underground and is prepared to suffer what is in fact a slow death is being overworked even at 40 hours a week.

Mr. Marshall: The miners did not start that fight. It was the Chamber of Mines that did so. They should have been imprisoned, if any one, not the men. The men were locked out. I will have something to say about that yet.

Mr. HAWKE: No doubt the hon. member will have something to say about it. I am sure that what he says, supported by what I have said and what others will say, will be such that our opponents would be well advised to take good advice, and jettison this election war cry they have been so carefully framing and preserving for weeks past.

Mr. Thorn: You are putting up a good electioneering speech.

Mr. HAWKE: I am glad my speech has impressed the hon. member. If it impresses him, how much greater will its effect be upon the unprejudiced public outside?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. MANN (Beverley) [7.32]: I join with other members in extending sympathy to the Minister for Employment (Hon. J. J. Kenneally) in his illness. Whilst members on this side may not agree with all his political views, the hon. gentleman has the confidence of the House for his courage and his determination; and we here sincerely trust that he will soon be restored to health and resume his place in the Chamber. I wish to congratulate the new members for Avon (Mr. Boyle) and South Fremantle (Mr. Fox). Like other members, I feel that those two gentlemen will prove an acquisition to the House and increase its strength. I desire also to extend congratulations to the new Minister for Agriculture (Hon. F. J. S. Wise). We have watched Mr. Wise's career since he entered Parlia-

ment. He has shown great commonsense, and I am especially pleased that he has been selected for the portfolio of Agriculture. He has no small task before him. However, though a new man he fortunately has a knowledge of the working of the agricultural and other primary industries. In my opinion, one of the main requirements of a Minister is that he should be a man with a natural feeling for the subject of the particular department he is called upon to administer. It may be finance, or Public Works, or Railways—the man who has a natural feeling for the environment of the department is bound to make a success of it. Let me repeat, however, that the Minister for Agriculture has a mighty big task in front of him. The Agricultural Department, though it may be classed as a minor department, is one of the most important of our Departments of State; for, if this country is to exist by primary production, the greatest factor we can have towards success is an Agricultural Department with capable officers and sound administration. Given those desiderata, Western Australia must take a leading place in the world. It is necessary for us to promote research work, which to-day is being advanced in all countries. We live in a definite research age. Old methods are passing rapidly, and if Western Australia is to progress science must play its part. I have watched the Agricultural Department under two Ministers. Of those two gentlemen I do not wish to be critical, because they carried out their task to the best of their ability; but I have greater faith in the new man, because he himself has an extensive knowledge of the scientific side of agriculture. He has a tremendous amount of breaking-down of prejudice to do in that department. I hate being critical, but my experience of the Agricultural Department for many years has been that it is a top-heavy department. It is controlled largely by one dictator. We are blessed in this State by having in our Agricultural Department some of the most competent men to be found in Australia. I wish to congratulate the party who, when in power six years ago, made certain appointments to that department. In particular, I refer to the appointment of Dr. Bennetts, who is recognised not only here but in the Eastern States and in New Zealand, and also in Great Britain, as the man

who solved a great problem, that of the cure of Braxy-like disease. He has solved the problem which British scientists for many years failed to solve. Dr. Pen-netts is a scientist who is held in esteem by all the Agricultural Departments in Australia. We have other excellent men in our Department of Agriculture: but the point I wish to raise is that whilst we have these excellent officers, sincere and conscientious in their work, they are under the definite control of one man, the Director of Agriculture. Our agricultural scientists are subordinate to a man who has no knowledge whatever of science. There is the question of administration, but administrators are born and not made. I am convinced that some of our agricultural scientists will leave the service of Western Australia for appointments elsewhere, if opportunity offers. I know that in the matter of research work generally, there is not a happy feeling to-day, either in the Royal Agricultural Society, or the Royal Agricultural Council, or the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. There is not a happy feeling as regards our Director of Agriculture. He is a man so jealous of his position, so afraid lest others may creep in or assist, that Western Australia is at present being held back from definite research work which is essential. Attempts have been made to obtain assistance from the Eastern States. There is now a cry that the department's office accommodation and laboratory are not suitable. I agree that that is so. I agree that funds should be made available immediately for the proper accommodation of that highly important department, not only from the point of view of records but also from that of research work. As regards the Turner tests, I do not think a more pitiable state of affairs could exist than that in which the officers of the Agricultural Department last year endeavoured to carry out those tests. It is a marvel to me that the officers were able to make so many tests, something like 700 a day, under such unsatisfactory conditions.

The Minister for Water Supplies: Those tests would not have been made but for the man whom you are criticising.

Mr. MANN: That is the Minister's opinion.

The Minister for Water Supplies: It is not an opinion. It is a fact.

Mr. MANN: I have my own opinion about the officer in question, and I have my own opinion about the Agricultural Department. I hope the House does not regard me as utterly prejudiced.

The Minister for Water Supplies: Had it not been for the Director of Agriculture, there would have been no Turner tests made.

Mr. MANN: There is one place where members may speak their minds, and that is in this Chamber. Public officials have to stand criticism on certain points. Whilst the Minister declares that the Director of Agriculture is the man responsible for the Turner tests, who would the Minister say has the greater scientific knowledge—the Director of Agriculture, or those officers who are versed in scientific knowledge which the Director does not possess? I freely acknowledge that he is an excellent wheat man. I daresay no man in Australia could hold a candle to him in wheat-growing. But I touch the other aspect, the scientific side. What is going to be the future of Western Australia? The only future we see at present, and are likely to see for many years, lies in the livestock region. Yet our Agricultural Department is starved as regards veterinary officers. There is only a handful of men to control disease; and those men are hampered, which to my mind is utterly wrong. Inducements are not held out to get the very best out of those men. The true scientist becomes a fanatic for his work; he lives only for his scientific work. But under the present control the scientific work of those officers is not likely to be worth twopence. It is very hard having to criticise an official but, in my opinion, all is not well with the Agricultural Department, due wholly and solely to the question of administration. The Minister has a big task before him in trying to control his department right through. It is for the Government to formulate a policy to which, whether it be right or wrong, they have to stand, and it is the job of Ministers to see that the policy is carried out. I say that, without fear of contradiction, the Minister for Agriculture, for whom I have a great admiration, is well able to grapple with the big task before him, for his department is a mighty hard one to handle. I have seen that for myself. I did not hear what the Premier said.

The Premier: It is so obvious!

Mr. MANN: Improvement in agriculture can be achieved only by the application of science, and yet there is no laboratory available in this State for adequate research work. The member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) spoke the other night with reference to the change over from wheat to stock. That position has to be faced. We must evolve a cheaper method for stock-raising generally. This State has a wonderful opportunity. Last year we were successful in securing a large export trade in fat lambs, and we can increase that trade because we can grow the right type. The trouble is that we grow our fat lambs at a much greater cost than Eastern States' producers, who have the benefit of better natural pastures. Apart from the southern portions of the State and certain parts in the Midland areas, we have some good pastures, but, generally speaking, the first essential is to secure a method to lessen the cost of raising lambs. That is a matter in which science can play a prominent part. The Agricultural Department have held a farming property in the Beverley district for a number of years and excellent work has been carried out there in connection with lamb-raising, but those lambs are raised under the same conditions as on an ordinary farm. For that reason I appeal to the Minister to provide better accommodation and approved laboratory facilities. If Avondale Farm were provided with a laboratory where research work could be carried out, it could play a very prominent part in improving plant nutrition conditions and in dealing with various diseases and pests that affect the farmers so adversely in that part of the State. I wish the Minister every success in his task, and I feel that, while that task is a mighty big one, he is capable of carrying his responsibilities for the benefit of the State. There has been some criticism regarding the appointment of the Commissioners who now control the Agricultural Bank, and more particularly regarding the appointment of Mr. McCallum as the chairman of the Commission. Older members of this House who have watched Mr. McCallum's career in Parliament, must give him credit for being a very capable administrator. He has played a prominent part in politics and has been responsible for the framing of some most important legislation. I think the Premier and his Cabinet are to be congratulated upon the appointment of

the Agricultural Bank Commission. While there has been some criticism, thinking men will realise that the task before the Commissioners is a tremendous one and I feel that Mr. McCallum, with his past experience, will prove most capable in his new position. If he fails, it will not be through any fault of his. The work the Commissioners have to undertake is one of the most onerous that could be shouldered in this State, because the condition of the agricultural industry to-day is indeed critical. For my part, I congratulate the Government upon the appointment of Mr. McCallum. I believe in giving credit where it is due, and I am convinced that Mr. McCallum will make good in his new job. Without being pessimistic, I think it can be claimed that we are confronted with probably one of the most critical years in the history of agriculture apart, perhaps, from 1914. Nevertheless, in 1914 our agricultural development was comparatively small. To-day it has extended 100 miles further north, east and west. If the season cuts off and if the Premier happens to be Premier of the State next year—

Mr. Cross: He will be.

Mr. MANN: —he will have a most unpleasant time with regard to his Budget. Sheep-raising has had a very hard knock. We will be fortunate if lambing, particularly in the eastern districts, reaches 40 per cent. Many of the crops will not yield very much hay, unless there is an exceptionally late season. If we have many more days such as the last two or three, the effects will be seen immediately. I am speaking of the eastern districts more particularly. The water problem has to be faced and later the difficulty with regard to feed for sheep will have to be tackled. Naturally, we will have a largely decreased wheat yield compared with last year because, even with reasonably late rains, a greater acreage must be cut for hay owing to the number of short crops. It is a regrettable position, and the Premier will find that his budgetary position will be adversely affected. If the season lasts, there must be a radical alteration in the financial position for the coming year. The Agricultural Bank Commissioners, who have such a big task before them, will experience a testing time during this financial year. I believe the Commissioners, more particularly the chairman, are capable of handling the position, and I am confident that

Mr. McCallum will do his best to promote the interests of the farmers and the welfare of the State generally. I do not know whether Western Australia will be fortunate in connection with the export of fat lambs this year. Last year we were lucky in being able to send away 140,000 fat lambs, but now the question of restrictions becomes one of great importance. Under the quota system last year, we were supposed to send away about 60,000 fat lambs. Owing to adverse seasonal conditions in the Eastern States, the producers there were not able to fulfil their conditions and Western Australia had an open go. In view of the agreement reached between the Commonwealth and Imperial Governments, I am somewhat concerned about the future exports from Western Australia. Before long we may find that the restrictions will be made more rigid with regard to the output of Australian lamb, mutton and beef. There is nothing surer than that, with such restrictions, certain sections in the Eastern States will try to cut our exports down to a smaller percentage. I am satisfied that with reasonable seasonal conditions, this State in the course of the next five years will be exporting 300,000 or 400,000 lambs. For various reasons we cannot export a very large number this year, but undoubtedly in the future our main export of fat stock will be lambs. The quota system is going to have a big effect here. When the Federal Cabinet sat in Perth they promised us that the position of Western Australia would be viewed in a favourable light. But the control lies in the Eastern States, and they can say what will be sent, what will be the quota for the various States. If we are to be faced with only a small quota it will be very bad for us.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: And what about the foreign trade?

Mr. MANN: We raised that question and we asked whether we would be able to exchange wool for wire netting. Mr. White put up the bogey that since England was our best customer we must trade with her. However, there are limits to the buying that England can do in Australia. If we are to confine ourselves to the trade position in Great Britain, what will be our own position? Except Japan, the greatest buyer of Australian wool is Bradford. The Bradford man buys his wool from Australia in the open market and sends the greater portion of his tops to Germany on trade balance at

a profit. As I say, if the Commonwealth Government puts up the bogey that, England being our best customer, we must buy everything from her, what will our position be? Given leave, this State might trade with Germany, particularly in the exchange of wire netting and wool. I sincerely hope some assistance will be given to rural industries in this State as the outcome of the Commonwealth grant for rural rehabilitation. However, I do not like the restrictions made by the Commonwealth Government under which our quota must be used for the settlement of debts. It would be far better if our money were used for the purchase of stock and fencing, and the provision of water supplies, instead of meeting deficits with it. The House anxiously awaits the Premier's decision in regard to bulk handling. The farmer is looking to the Government to adopt the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and we are all awaiting the Premier's declaration. I am not going to delay the House for long, but I wish to touch on certain matters mentioned by the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) the other night when dealing with the report of the secession delegation. The people of the State who voted for secession and who believed in the severance of this State from the Commonwealth had faith that the Imperial Government would consider the position in a favourable light. The member for Nedlands made some rather caustic remarks about the Imperial Government, and one member interjected at the time that those remarks were fully justified. We have more than ever believed that the State Government had a perfect right to approach the Imperial Government for the redress of our grievances. This State, by a large majority, decided that we should be free from the Federal Parliament, and our application has been practically ignored by the Imperial Government. Seemingly the Prime Minister of Australia, who was Home at the time, was able to exercise a good deal of influence. I remember the Premier once alluding to a brilliant speech made at a Loan Council meeting by Mr. Menzies when he was Attorney General for Victoria, and when he spoke of the disabilities of the States under Federation. To-day Mr. Menzies is the Federal Attorney General, and while he may have spoken with one voice as the Attorney General of Victoria, he speaks to-day with another voice as the Attorney Gen-

eral of the Commonwealth Government. Now I want to say, without trying to paint an inaccurate picture, that when the people of this State voted on secession, a great number of those who went to the polls voted for it in all sincerity. What do we find the position to-day? The Premier presently will be going to the Eastern States to a meeting of the Loan Council. He admits that in the past he has had to beg for money at the council, and doubtless he will do so again. But must that condition always remain; must the Premiers of the smaller States continue to bend the knee to those of the larger States and to the Commonwealth representatives?

Mr. Marshall: It will be so while you people continue to subscribe to the Federal system.

Mr. MANN: To-day there is not any field left for the collection of State revenue. If we are going to continue to exist in this State we must do one of two things, either support unification and Commonwealth control, or determinedly break away.

The Premier: The Boston tea again.

Mr. MANN: Let us have the Boston tea again.

The Premier: Well, we know now where you stand.

Mr. MANN: Unless we do something, the position will go on from year to year. Are we not going to advance our State; have we not sufficient control here?

The Premier: Then you stand for the Boston tea policy?

Mr. MANN: I do, very clearly, and I should like to know how the Premier is going to raise his finance any better this year than he did last year.

Mr. Moloney: What about your own Government last time?

Mr. MANN: I am satisfied with past Governments, and I do not intend to indulge in criticism of the present Government. They certainly have had a better run than the previous Government had, because money has been much freer. It does not matter which Government may be in power it will be found necessary to borrow; the Governments of Australia all have to borrow. Moreover, every State Government has had a better spin in point of finance during the last two years, and if our party had been in power we should have had the same advantage. The hogey raised to-day is the ability to spend money.

The Premier: Would you accept an offer of major-general in the new army?

Mr. MANN: When we can borrow money we shall spend that money. To-day the financial conditions are much better than they were three years ago. Our Government came in on a wave of deficits, and money was not available, but as finance grew easier the present Government came into power and so were able to borrow more money.

Mr. Moloney: That was magical.

Mr. MANN: I do not know that the hon. member is always magical. That is the position. The present Government claim to have a better idea of how to spend money than had the previous Government. It should be recognised that under existing conditions it is possible for Governments to borrow, but it has to be remembered that a day of reckoning will come. All the money that has been borrowed will have to be paid back. Possibly posterity will repay it; certainly someone will have to face the responsibility of repaying it, or the country must default.

Mr. Marshall: A lot of it will never be repaid. That is inevitable.

Mr. MANN: I agree that a lot of it will never be paid back, but perhaps by that time there will have occurred an alteration in the whole of the world conditions.

Mr. Cross: You are not going to repudiate, are you?

Mr. MANN: I did not say "repudiate." What I said was that by that time world conditions will probably have altered. The Commonwealth and the States have increased their indebtedness by leaps and bounds, and it is inevitable that a day of reckoning must come. I sometimes wonder whether later generations will consider themselves responsible for all the money that has been borrowed. Let me revert to the point that this State has been slighted. The Premier knows full well that he will have to go to Canberra again, cap in hand, and if he remains in office for many years he will have to do the same thing year after year, namely appeal to the Commonwealth for funds with which to carry on. It is extraordinary to think that the Premiers of all the States must necessarily approach one body and appeal for money with which to carry on the affairs of State and to keep their people in work. It is an extraordinary position for a State that is supposed to possess sovereign rights. I consider that when the lotteries legislation was passed, it was a mighty good thing for the Govern-

ment. The lotteries have been instrumental in providing a tremendous amount of money for the assistance of hospitals and various charitable organisations. But for the lotteries, the Government would have been compelled to face a much greater burden of debt for those purposes. The present chairman of the Lotteries Commission has proved most satisfactory. He is a man of wide vision and is prepared to consider all proposals on their merits and, with the aid of his fellow-commissioners, do his best for all concerned. We are mighty fortunate in having the lotteries to help us along at this stage. I do not intend to touch upon the goldfields strike. We have had an explanation of it to-night. No doubt the Premier will refer to it later in the debate.

The Premier: You will know more about it to-morrow.

Mr. MANN: We are certainly looking for additional information, and I shall await with interest the Premier's statement. I regret that the season has opened so unpromisingly, but I hope the situation will yet improve. I was impressed with the report from London published in this morning's paper on the question of migration. The Prime Minister has stated that there will be no further migration from England to Australia for the time being. If we weigh up the position in Australia to-day, particularly in view of the trouble brewing in Abyssinia, we must ask ourselves what will be the ultimate end of Australia. Here we have a very large country, and we are trying to carry on with a mere six millions of people. Some of the remarks cabled from London, particularly those by one of the bishops, were most significant. He referred to the Abyssinian question, and blamed England for allowing portions of the Empire to remain unpopulated. One cannot but wonder what will be the ultimate end, seeing that so many nations are craving for an outlet for their surplus population. I am pleased that an appeal has been made on behalf of the motherhood and the youth of the State. Certainly any movement in the interests of the motherhood of the State is deserving of commendation. At the same time I feel greatly concerned about the future of our youths who are out of work. I hope the committee will devise ways and means so that a number of the youths with a bent for farming life will be enabled to take up some of the aban-

doned holdings. A large number of blocks are available, and many of our young men must have a leaning towards an agricultural life. If they could be given six or twelve months' training in a school of agriculture such as the Narragin school, to which I pay tribute for its excellent work, they could be fitted for a farmer's life. We cannot allow the farming industry to decline; it has to be carried on. If 3,000 or 4,000 of our farms were abandoned through the holders walking off, what would be the position? The land would quickly revert to nature. The greatest and, in my opinion, the most important occupation in life is that which enables a man to earn a living from the soil. It is the most natural and healthy life of all. Yet we find young men being attracted to the goldmining industry because the wages paid by the industry are high. The member for Murchison has indicated how unhealthy is the life of the miner. So it is. It cannot but be unhealthy when a man has to work in the bowels of the earth where the air is laden with dust, and silicosis and other troubles may readily be contracted. At present there is no inducement for young men to remain on the land. Their fathers cannot pay them, and so many strong young fellows are drifting to the mines because they can earn good money there.

The Minister for Lands: You know that the same thing occurred 30 years ago.

The Premier: Starving on the land and no inducement to remain.

Mr. MANN: I did not say they were starving, but what inducement is there to remain on the farm, working from daylight to dark, when they can earn £1 per day on the goldfields?

The Premier: Then let them live on the farms.

Mr. MANN: Would not a young man be healthier if he remained on a farm than if he went to work in the mining industry?

The Premier: Of course, but how is he going to live?

The Minister for Lands: Every man is a free agent. Those youths are not forced to go to the goldfields. They go there because they wish to.

Mr. MANN: Because of the inducement offered by the industry. Many of the lads would be better off on the land, and their

remaining on the land would be in the best interests of the State.

The Premier: How are you going to keep them on the land?

Mr. Cross: And if you do, where will they sell their produce?

Mr. MANN: That is the question.

The Premier: We know something about farming, all of us.

Mr. MANN: I realise the present disadvantages, too.

The Minister for Lands: And you speak with experience.

Mr. MANN: I consider that mining is one of the most unhealthy occupations in which a man can engage, and I think it a pity that strong, hefty young men should leave the farming districts to seek work in the mines.

The Premier: If you would keep them on the land, how would you do it?

Mr. MANN: Probably as a result of greater inducements.

The Premier: How?

Mr. MANN: I will leave that to the Government. The pity of it is that these young fellows, instead of adopting the healthier life on the land, prefer the environment of the goldfields and the higher returns for their labour there.

The Premier: A pity it is.

MR. NULSEN (Kanowna) [8.10]: I congratulate the members for Avon and South Fremantle upon their election to this House. I listened attentively to their speeches on the Address-in-reply, and feel sure those members will prove an acquisition to the debating strength of the Chamber. I also congratulate the Minister for Agriculture upon his elevation to Cabinet rank. The Government made an excellent choice. The Minister has had agricultural experience and is of a genial disposition. I am sure it will be found that he will be able to hold his own with everyone with whom he comes in contact, not only from the point of view of intellect but from the point of view of temperament as well. I regret the Minister for Employment is in hospital. He will be greatly missed not only by Ministers, but by the Premier himself, owing to his great knowledge of industrial methods. I congratulate the Government upon their wonderful achievements up to date. Their administration has been excellent, not only in the metropolitan area but throughout the State, from Esperance in the south to the

northern parts of Western Australia. The Government have not been sectional; they have assisted every section of the community, and have been just in every possible way. I feel confident that at the next election, if the people of the State are just themselves, they will return the present Government to power for another three years. I owe the Government a great debt of gratitude for what they have done in my electorate. They have given us the necessary roads and water supplies, have ballasted the railways where necessary, and have given us necessary schools. They have created a fine monument for the State in the construction of the Esperance jetty. The jetty is 2,876 feet long. At its head it is 537 feet by 48 feet, and there is a depth of water at the end of 37½ feet. The boats which have called there have been well satisfied. It is now a matter of stimulating trade through Esperance so that the work may be of great benefit to the hinterland. Since the construction of the jetty two oil sites have been chosen, one by the Shell Company and another by a big mining company in Kalgoorlie. I think Mr. Thorn is a controller of the company. Tenders have been invited for the installation of a 10,000 tons tank. That is progress. I wish to make a few comparisons between the freights charged on the Great Western Railway and those charged on the State Railways, which are greatly in favour of goods coming to Esperance rather than over the Commonwealth line. To Kalgoorlie there is a saving in freight in favour of sending goods via Esperance of 40s. 6d. in the "B" class, 53s. 4d. "C" class, 40s. 6d. No. 1 class, and 48s. 1d. second class. The average saving against the trans line is 45s. 7½d. to Kalgoorlie. To Menzies the figures respectively are 54s. 10d., 69s. 10d., 59s. 5d., and 72s. 1d., while the average saving as against the trans line is 63s. 6½d.

Mr. Patriek: Is that cheaper than bringing goods over the trans line.

Mr. NULSEN: Yes. These are the savings in favour of Esperance. To Leonora on the "B" class the saving was 58s. 7d., and "C" class 64s. 4d., on first class 68s. 5d., on second class 84s. 3d., while the average saving against the trans line is 71s. 4¾d. To Laverton the figures respectively are 60s. 6d., 77s., 74s. 10d., and 92s. 10d., the average saving against the trans line being 76s. 3½d. These figures may not be absolutely correct, but are approximately so. I quote them to show that there is considerable sav-

ing in favour of Esperance. The railage from Fremantle compared with freights through Adelaide works out at a little less. Where goods are manufactured they are naturally cheaper than they are elsewhere. When we add the extra cost of transport to Fremantle, we find the cost works out considerably higher than if the goods were brought direct to the natural port of Esperance. Felspar is produced at Coolgardie, about eight miles on the Esperance side. That commodity, however, is transported to Fremantle and exported therefrom instead of being shipped from Esperance. The distance to Fremantle is 372 miles, and to Esperance 225 miles, a difference of 147 miles in favour of the latter. I hope consideration will be given to that point. Felspar should naturally be exported through Esperance. I am not in favour of importing anything that can be produced within the State. I believe in local production and realise its effect on the employment of our people. We must go on developing. Esperance has had a bad time for many years. When the port is opened up, and the business and mining people situated in the hinterland realise the savings to be effected by trading through Esperance, I believe it will make considerable progress. The Minister for Agriculture has promised to visit Esperance on the 3rd November. I hope he will then be able to give some useful advice on fruit-growing, gardening and poultry farming generally. The people there have been expectant for so long that they have lost heart. Probably the Minister's visit would inspire them with some confidence. Rehabilitation of the mallee country is progressing wonderfully. Dr. Teakle has made a complete soil analysis, which I believe will enable the people and also the various Governments of Western Australia to obtain a better appreciation of the capabilities of the district. I learn that the Agricultural Bank will give consideration to the new scheme of mixed farming in the district. Turning now to wheat-growing, I hold that the industry will prove a difficult problem not only in this State, but throughout Australia. Looking back and reflecting a little, we see that in all industries, primary and secondary alike, the expenses have been too great for full consumption. In my opinion, sufficient account was not taken, after the devastation of Europe, of the prospects of its mending and its countries tending to

make themselves more or less self-supporting. Britain's secondary industries also were over-done. In consequence, British industrialisation after the war did not proceed as did the industrialisation of about a century earlier. European countries were compelled to revert to rural industry. The only thing that saved France was the fact of her being agricultural to so large an extent. This factor saved her for a considerable time. My belief is that as regards the wheat industry we shall have to go cautiously for many years to come. The reduction in the surplus of wheat I regard as merely temporary. Therefore I urge farmers to proceed carefully in the future. I recognise that especially in Western Australia the wheat industry must continue. We simply cannot abandon it. It was pointed out by Mr. J. A. McFarland, the general manager of the Canadian Wheat Pool, that the production of nine of the principal foods and raw materials was 45 per cent. greater in 1927-28 than in 1924-25, and in 1930-31 one hundred per cent. above normal. However, that difficulty seems to have been largely coped with by the closing down of many factories and reduction of the output of others. The Canadian Agricultural Department, though, were reluctant to recommend reduction of the area of cropping, and the farmers were hard to wean from their old methods. Consequently reduction did not take place in Canada. The same remark applies to the other countries producing a surplus of wheat—Australia, the Argentine, and the United States. Those three countries also failed to appreciate that a time would come when they would be over-producing wheat. Some people argue that the trouble was not over-production, but under-consumption and mal-distribution. Upon reflection one easily sees that the real trouble was over-saturation. Let us examine a few figures. In 1922-27 the world's production of wheat was 3,310 million bushels. The 1927 production was 100 million bushels above the average production of the preceding five years. That occurred in a period of prosperity, when there were no complaints concerning the spending power of the people. Actually, by producing more the position was going to be made worse. But yet in 1928-33 the world produced 3,360 million bushels, representing an increase of 350 million bushels over the average of the previous six years, equiva-

lent to an increase of 11 per cent. Was it consumed? No. It could not be consumed, because in 1930 the world's carry-over was 1,000 million bushels, or just about 10 per cent. less than the peak production. I consider that it behoves this House to warn the farmer not to deceive himself. I would recommend that the farmer should read this address to the Canadian Club from which I have been quoting, an address delivered on the 17th May, 1935, by Mr. McFarland, the general manager of the Canadian Wheat Pool. He puts the position plainly, especially as regards the wheatgrower of the big pooling countries. Under-consumption and mal-distribution are more or less bogies. It was simply impossible for all the wheat produced in the world to be consumed. The world carry-over accumulated in the period of greatest prosperity, which ended about 1929-30. The unwanted surplus of wheat was created during a period of three years, when buying was really at its best. During the years of depression wheat consumption increased by 200 million bushels. That was not entirely human consumption, but included consumption by animals. So far we have thought mostly of world production of wheat. Now I would like to say something about the "Big Four"—Australia, Canada, Argentina, and the United States. European imports of wheat for the last four years have averaged 500 million bushels; but just prior to the war, in 1913, European imports of wheat totalled 550 million bushels. Thus 50 million bushels less was imported into Europe annually after the war than before it. From what I can gather, Europe has latterly consumed 150 million bushels of wheat per annum more than it consumed prior to the war. And yet the "Big Four" produced less than 1,200 million bushels of wheat in 1913. Off 92 million acres there was produced an average of about 13 bushels per acre. For the five years ended 1929 the "Big Four" produced 1,633 million bushels off 122,500,000 acres, representing an average of 13.4 bushels per acre. This meant an increase of 30 million acres, representing 430 million bushels. As regards the carry-over of 400 million bushels above normal, 300 million bushels above that quantity was still held by the "Big Four." In 1931-32 production still went on, 1,690 million bushels off 127 million acres, giving an average yield of 13.3 bushels per acre. There was an increase again of

400 million acres, giving an extra 57 million bushels. Again there was a 400 million bushels carry-over above normal. The lowest prices for wheat were received in 1932-33, and yet Europe imported less. Consumption during this period of extremely low prices was slightly less than in the preceding five years. Thus the position was most acute. Yet during 1933 we continued to put in the full area under wheat, without any attempt at reduction. Nature took a hand, and from the unabated acreage of 1933 there was produced 1,258,000 bushels, the average yield being 10 bushels per acre, which represented a reduction of 25 per cent. in acreage yield. The reduction was equal to the product of about 30 million seeded acres. In 1934 there were 113 million acres cropped, producing 1,140 million bushels, or 100 million bushels less than the 1933 yield. Five hundred million bushels less were produced than in 1930, 1931 and 1932, or over the previous ten years from 1922 to 1932, or a difference of 28,000,000 acres under crop. Despite that, Europe again reduced imports by 50,000,000 bushels. Nature, plus a little management, effected a reduction of about 70,000,000 acres or about 750,000,000 bushels, with a carry-over of 800,000,000 bushels, or 100,000,000 bushels above normal. Had not nature taken a hand in it, the carry-over would have been something like 1,500,000,000 bushels. In view of these figures, the position can be readily seen and we must realise that the present slight improvement is probably merely temporary. The country that has suffered most regarding wheatgrowing is Canada, where in the past out of every 100 bushels of wheat and wheat products produced, they exported 35 bushels. Argentine exported 20 bushels; Australia 20 bushels, and the United States of America 10 bushels. Naturally the United States exported less because it has a huge population and the problem there should not be nearly as acute as in Australia, the Argentine and, more particularly, Canada. According to the leading article that appeared in the "West Australian" this morning the prospects are a little more healthy, because whereas America anticipated a crop of 730,000,000 bushels, it is now expected that the crop will be nearer 608,000,000 bushels, which will be about correct. In Canada the crop was estimated at 400,000,000 bushels, whereas now it is expected it will be

320,000,000 bushels. Even so, it will be 50,000,000 bushels more than that country produced during the previous two years. Looking at the position from the standpoint of the wheatgrower, I favour a Commonwealth compulsory pool, because I think it would give us more control and would probably keep the wheatgrowers better informed. In consequence, I think that a compulsory pool would be a great benefit to the wheatgrower. There is no doubt that a general writing down of indebtedness is necessary. We can see the state of the market, and I think that not only will Governments have to make provision for secured and unsecured creditors, but the machinery merchants, the associated banks, and the oil companies will all have to write down the debts of their farmer clients so that their position may be put on a proper business basis. It seems to me to be the only hope for them, for to a large extent the big financial interests of the world, as well as of Australia, were to blame for the present position of the farmers. The wheatgrowers so far from being discouraged, were encouraged to go on producing at under cost and so they cannot be blamed, wholly and solely, for the position they find themselves in now. All these interests should accept a share of the blame, and I believe there should be a general writing down, which should be done voluntarily, but failing that, it should be done compulsorily. There is also some hope in the proposal that the men on the land should go in for mixed farming. Wheat growing alone is not profitable, nor yet is it safe, so, where it is possible, mixed farming should be resorted to, and farmers should make themselves, as far as they can, self-supporting and self-reliant. In view of the present capitalisation, it is almost impossible for farmers to reach that position and, therefore, failing a voluntary writing down, their indebtedness should be compulsorily written down. I know something about the position because I have had a taste of it myself. The pastoral industry has had a trying time, but it is pleasing to note that the number of sheep in Western Australia has slightly increased, the flocks now totalling 11,163,232, producing 88,457,622 lbs. of wool, the sheep averaging eight lbs. per fleece. That is a satisfactory feature. The large pastoralists will have a reasonable clip this year, but unfortunately the farmers will not secure as much as would have been the case had the season been better in the

earlier part of the year. Every consideration should be given to the pastoralists, and I am sure the Government have extended that consideration to them. At the same time, I have received a letter from Mr. Frank Lefroy, who signs the document as honorary secretary, on behalf of the Conference of Murchison District Committees, in which he voices their complaints regarding railway freights on live stock. In order to place before members a comparison of the railway freights charged in Western Australia with those levied elsewhere, I shall read the letter which is as follows:—

Re Railway Freight Live Stock.

For some years past the Pastoralists' Association has been seeking relief for its members in the matter of live stock freights on the Government Railways, and with this aim in view have, on several occasions, asked that the method of fixing live stock freights on a flat basis per mile should be altered to conform with the principle adopted with other goods traffic, the mileage rate of which tapers according to distance.

The replies of the Commissioner of Railways and the Hon. Minister to the requests for reductions have, in recent years, been to the effect that when the competing traffic on the roads was subjected to control, freights generally would be reviewed, and until then no relief could be granted.

Following on the passage of the Transport Act in February last, the Hon. Minister announced that certain reductions in live stock and other freights would operate as from the 1st March, 1935, and you can well imagine the disappointment of the users in the pastoral areas when it was found that the reduction in live stock freights was limited to 2d. per truck per mile on distances beyond 400 miles.

Quite apart from the total inadequacy of the reduction for long distances, the Government's decision meant that no relief at all was afforded to producers consigning stock west of, say, Wagga Wagga on the Murchison Railway, and south of Broad Arrow, on the Leonora-Laverton line.

Pastoralists served by the Railways are very dissatisfied with the Department's decision, and at the sixth annual Conference of Representatives of the Murchison District Committees of the Pastoralists' Association, held in Cue recently, a resolution was unanimously agreed to expressing the extreme disappointment felt at the inadequate reduction in live stock freights.

It was also decided that representations to the Department should be renewed with the request that the system of a tapering freight per mile according to distance should be applied to live stock in its entirety.

I was further directed to advise you of the Conference's decision, and to seek your co-operation and assistance in the representations made to the Railway Department.

That we are justified in considering the live stock freights excessive even after allowing for the reductions made in March is demonstrated

by the following comparisons with the rates ruling in other States.

TABLE 1.

Comparative Statement of Railway Freight per Single Four-wheeled Wagon in Various States.

Capacity of Truck—	Sheep	110	70	100	100	70
	Cattle	10	8	8	10	6
Miles.	Victoria.	Western Australia.	South Australia.	New South Wales.	Queensland.	
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	Sheep.	Cattle.
100 ...	4 7 5	3 15 0	4 3 1	4 17 10	4 5 0	3 9 0
200 ...	6 14 8	6 5 0	7 8 3	7 12 9	6 18 0	6 0 0
300 ...	9 7 10	8 15 0	9 15 8	9 12 10	8 10 0	7 17 0
400 ...	11 8 6	11 5 0	12 3 2	11 9 11	10 0 0	9 3 0
500 ...	12 19 0	12 18 4	14 10 6	13 7 0	10 13 0	10 16 0
600 ...	14 11 0	14 11 8	16 18 0	14 5 8	11 10 0	12 0 0

Note.—In Queensland different rates are charged for sheep and cattle trucks.

Owing to the varying capacities of the trucks in the different States, the table set out above does not reveal as clearly as the following comparison the disabilities suffered by producers in Western Australia.

TABLE 2.

Comparative Statement of Freight per Head of Sheep in Various States.

Miles.	Victoria.	Western Australia.	South Australia.	New South Wales.	Queensland.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
100 ...	0 10	1 1	0 10	1 0	1 3
200 ...	1 3	1 10	1 6	1 6	2 0
300 ...	1 8	2 6	1 11	1 11	2 5
400 ...	2 1	3 3	2 5	2 3	2 10
500 ...	2 4	3 8	2 11	2 8	3 0
600 ...	2 8	4 2	3 6	2 10	3 3

It will be noted that with a few minor exceptions the cost of railing stock per head in this State is more expensive than in the other States, and in most cases the excess local cost is considerable.

As the Commissioner has been informed on a number of occasions, the trouble is due to the unscientific and inequitable method of fixing live stock freights on a flat mileage basis, and not on a sliding scale which is the generally acknowledged practice in Railway administration throughout Australia and other countries, and is in fact applied to goods traffic in this State.

It is submitted that the adoption of such a method is more essential in a country the area of this State than say, Victoria, which is closely settled, and where the distances are comparatively small.

We cannot hope to encourage the settlement of our outback areas unless a policy is inaugurated which will permit the taking up of such country as an economic proposition.

I have addressed you fully on this matter because of its importance to producers served by the Railways in your constituency, and I feel sure that we will have your active support in the further representations to the Commissioner of Railways as mentioned in the resolution carried at the Cue Conference.

I have read that in order to show the position in point of rates.

The Minister for Railways: We have a lot of other rates that have been reduced lately.

Mr. NULSEN: I quite realise that. I hope the Minister will give due consideration to

that letter. He has not yet had opportunity to make those reductions. Unquestionably there is a considerable difference, and in consequence, seeing we have a huge area to attend to, the pastoralists are living far out, and every consideration should be given to them when getting their stock to market. The difference in freight is sometimes just the difference between profit and loss to the grower. Even the Queensland freights are higher than ours in only two instances, namely 100 miles and 200 miles.

The Minister for Railways: Queensland wiped off 20 millions from capital account by writing down.

Mr. NULSEN: Mining has done a lot for Western Australia in the past, and to-day it is again the backbone of the State. Although it is not real wealth, yet it is of considerable value and is doing a great deal to absorb the unemployed and get us back to prosperity. I again compliment the Government on their inauguration of the Munsie scheme, on their initial step taken. The Government certainly do things without waiting for a precedent, things that will be conducive to the welfare of the State, whereas past Governments have not been so adventurous. The Munsie scheme has proved very successful. It has absorbed an immense number of unem-

ployed from metropolitan districts and is helping to give those people some moral standing once more. From Kanowna to Laverton we come across prospectors right through the area, and things there are reasonably good. In time to come Laverton will develop into a huge district while the production and price of gold last. From Spargo to Norseman there is to be found a big crowd of prospectors. There are 150 leases and at least 209 prospecting areas between Spargo and Norseman. So it will be seen that mining is doing a great deal for the State. I thank the Government for that promised pipe line to Norseman. It is essential and it will help the district considerably. To my knowledge, ever since 1912 there has always been a shortage of water in Norseman, and in consequence it has been impossible for the district to progress. The pipeline was granted under certain conditions. I wish to compliment the Government upon the business-like methods they adopted. They asked the company to pay so much money in advance for the water they will receive. The company have not been asked to contribute towards the cost of the pipeline, but they have been asked to pay something as an evidence of good faith for the water to be supplied them. All said and done, mining is a speculation and it behoves those who embark upon such speculation to make some contribution towards the essential services required to carry on their activities. Had Spargo's Company put down a pipeline at their own expense, the 26½ miles of 4-in. main would have cost the company £15,000. On top of that, they would have had to maintain the pipeline, which would have been no asset to the company apart from its value for conveying water to the mine. The company have contributed £10,000 in advance as an evidence of good faith for the water to be supplied. Consequently, when members in another place accuse the Government of not being as liberal as in the past in providing necessary water supplies, their criticism is unfair and unjust.

Mr. Sampson: You really have faith in the present Government?

Mr. NULSEN: I have very great faith in the present Government and am proud to be one of their supporters.

The Premier: Has the member for Swan gathered that idea?

Mr. Sampson: I have.

The Premier: You are pretty alert!

Mr. NULSEN: Everything possible should be done to meet the requirements of the mining industry. I do not pretend that the suggestions I am about to make have originated in my own mind. It has been suggested to me that a bureau of mining should be established to assist men inexperienced in mining. It has also been suggested that a geologist should be made available to prospectors to give them an idea whether they have any chance of getting returns from the areas being prospected. I cannot see that that would be very effective, because it is hard for even a geologist to say what is below the surface. I wish to refer to mining reservations. I have received numerous complaints from various districts, including Edjudina, Laverton, Mt. Morgan and Norseman. I have no intention of speaking derogatively of the Minister's action, because I know that his one idea is to assist the mining industry of the State and make it attractive to foreign capital. I consider that mining reservations have had a good effect in that direction, but I feel sure that some of the companies, especially in the Mt. Monger district, are exploiting the position. In that district the reefs are small; there are no big formations; there is nothing that a big company would look at, but the reservation is being held for speculative purposes. That matter should be investigated. Considerable good has resulted from the granting of reservations at Norseman, and much money has been spent on them. The Western Mining Corporation has spent £100,000 in that district. Where money is not spent on the reservations, however, they should be cancelled. A time limit should be imposed and no renewal should be granted. At a time like the present, something should be done for the men working in the industry. Men who engage in our gold mining industry work in the bowels of the earth and produce real wealth. Those who work underground incur real risks and more or less sacrifice their health. Seeing that the price of gold is at such a high level and that the people of the State contribute 25 per cent. towards it, the companies should do more for the derelicts of the industry. I suggest to the Government that the old Miners' Phtthisis Act be re-enacted, together with the amendments and regulations up to the time when

it was merged in the new Act. I also suggest that some consideration should be extended to men suffering from early silicosis. Such men should be taken out of the industry before the disease gets too firm a hold of them. The health of the working man is really his capital. When he loses his health, he loses everything. In view of the prosperity of the industry, I consider that men in the early stages of silicosis should be compensated to the extent of £400 or £500, and that advanced cases should come under the third schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act until they become tubercular. When they reach that stage, they should come under the old Miners' Phthisis Act. I also suggest that the contributions to the Mine Workers' Relief fund be not interfered with. If this suggestion were adopted, the miners would still contribute their 9d. per week, which, with the contributions of the mine owners and the Government, would amount to 2s. 3d. per week. I understand that there are 7,000 members, and the contributions would realise £3,150 a month, equal to £37,800 a year. I do not know what amount would be required to give effect to my suggestion, but if to the 6½ per cent. representing 1s. 4d. in the pound on the net profit on gold, there were added 3¼ per cent., making a total of 10 per cent. or 2s. in the pound on the net profit on gold, it would produce for that fund another £42,000. That would be equal to £126,000, or plus the miners' relief contribution of £37,800, a total of £163,800 per annum. That estimate is based on present production which, in time, might be reduced or increased. I think it behoves the people of the State and the large mine owners, who are getting their profits without risk to their health and incurring risk only with respect to their capital, to make better provision for the derelicts of the industry. A time of prosperity in the industry, such as the present, is the time for the Government to make a move in that direction. I offer this suggestion on behalf of the men working in the mines. I have discussed it fairly fully with Mr. Triat, secretary of the A.W.U. at Boulder, and also with Mr. Tapp, president of the union. They agreed that the suggestion was worthy of consideration, and their opinion was given independently of that of miners in other centres who have approached me. I wish now to refer to the Perth Mint.

The present Deputy Master is thoroughly competent, and is held in high esteem. I think, however, the Government should be consulted before such an important post as this is filled. At the Mint there are officers who have filled every position in the establishment. They have been there, some of them, for 35 years and the average service of them all is 26 years. The Mint, or refinery, as it may be called, cost the State about £60,000. The Government are financially responsible for everything to do with it. They pay the wages, salaries, pensions and all contingencies, and receive in return the revenue from the Mint. I understand the Government were not consulted when the position of Deputy Master was last filled. The appointment was made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the ex-officio Master of the Mint in London. That seems to me unfair, especially in view of the fact that there are officers at the Mint who have served faithfully and diligently for many years. Those men should have an opportunity of rising to the top, and are fully competent to take the higher positions. The officers must be honest, and they have proved themselves to be honest, and yet the Government, who are really responsible for the upkeep of the establishment, were not consulted about the appointment of the Deputy Master. I hope steps will be taken in any future appointment to ensure that the Government are consulted, and that an opportunity is given to those who have served their time so well and faithfully to get promotion. I am not going to speak on monetary reform to-night, for I think everyone knows my views. I maintain that until we have monetary reform we shall never be restored to prosperity. I compliment the member for Claremont (Mr. North) on his speech, although his views and the views of those he represents do not perhaps coincide entirely with mine. His speech and what we read provide food for thought. When there is a change, I think we shall be able to say that the Douglas Credit proposals have perhaps done more towards bringing it about than any other advocacy in the world.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.5]: I join with others in expressing my deepest sympathy with those who have been bereaved by the death of the former member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) and the former member for Katanning (Mr. Piesse). I

congratulate the new members upon their advent to Parliament, and congratulate the Minister for Agriculture upon his elevation, so early in his political life, to Ministerial office. I wish that hon. gentleman every success. There is no doubt about his ability to fill the office, and his capacity to administer his department with beneficial results and pleasure to those who are interested in agricultural development. On reading through the Speech, I am reminded that this is the first opportunity I have had to congratulate His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor upon his elevation to that high office. I did not speak last year on the Address-in-reply, and so I now congratulate His Excellency on being the first Western Australian-born to fill this high and honourable office. I think that is unique in the history of Governors in Australia, and it is certainly unique in Western Australia. Whether I believe in appointing State Governors at all is another matter. If these positions are going to be filled, and must be filled, I stand for preference to Western Australian-born citizens. The present occupant of the position will give just as much satisfaction and will fill the job just as well and ably as any other individual. I say this with all respect to previous Governors and Lieut.-Governors. I congratulate His Excellency on being the first Western Australian-born to ascend to such a high office. If I were asked what is the most outstanding feature of the administration of the Government, I would say the return to the wage standard. There is nothing so vital to any nation, or so important to any section of the people, as the wage standard. The Government, with the aid of their capable Minister, whose illness I deplore, took this matter out of a state of chaos. They placed somewhere near to a decent standard of living many thousands of people. I listened to members opposite criticising the Government for the existing unemployment, and twitting them with having little or no sympathy for those people. I have yet to learn that any member of the Opposition supported his criticisms with facts and figures, so as to prove that the Government have done so little to relieve the vile and invidious circumstances which surrounded thousands of home when the present Cabinet came into office. I could complain about the administration of the Government in many ways. I should like to know the Government that is infallible. I

have been a member of this House for 15 years, and have not yet found an infallible Government. If I remain another 15 years, and I hope I will not, I still feel I will not find an infallible Government.

Mr. Sampson: You must not lose faith.

Mr. MARSHALL: There are, however, many things we can appreciate. The Government have disclosed by their actions that within the limits of their power they have done the very best possible for the State. It, therefore, ill-becomes members to offer carping criticism of a character which cannot be substantiated by facts. The member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward), speaking to-day, voiced bitter complaints about the position of the farmer. No doubt the farmer is in a particularly bad way; but so is practically every person in the State, with but very few exceptions. The working-class fraternity of Western Australia have no security of tenure under prevalent circumstances. It is sad to think that farmers, because they are farmers, imagine themselves to be the only section of the community suffering ill-treatment, or not receiving that consideration to which they deem themselves entitled. All the criticism of Opposition members is wrapped up in the matter of finance. Apparently, hon. members opposite representing farming electorates believe that the Treasurer has an unlimited supply of capital, and that through the medium of the Agricultural Bank he can advance uncounted thousands of pounds. On the other hand, owing to mismanagement probably in some cases, incompetency in others, and inefficiency in yet other cases, we find that frequently the farmer does not make good. The same members then come along and say, "There is nothing to do but write off the debts of the farmers." Who is to carry the baby? Where is the thing to end? I well remember the inauguration of group settlement. Members qualified to speak on the subject warned the Government of the folly of carrying out such a programme. And then what happened? Invariably, every member representing a primary producing electorate attacked bitterly those members who tried to advise the Government wisely. Such members were charged with throwing cold water on a proposition that meant the development of hundreds of thousands of acres of Western Australian land. Such members were said to have no desire to develop Western Australia, were accused of being mere flies in the ointment. To-day the members who

made those charges come along and declare, "There is nothing to do now but write off more millions." But who is to carry it all? Quite apart from wheat production, there are now in Western Australia thousands of men on sustenance or on relief work. They have no security of tenure, and no homes; their everyday existence is one of fear and trembling. With their families, they may be in a condition of actual hunger. Our producers of wheat, wool, and meat are all in the same category. Pastoralists who at one time could almost boast of being in a state of affluence are now managing their former properties for a pittance, without any direction or control. The same remark applies to producers of wheat and wool. But when we on this side ask hon. members opposite to consider the advisableness of revolutionising a system which has brought about such a lamentable state of affairs, those hon. members raise their hands in horror. We have the evil upon us. Member after member rises to speak of world's parity prices. We are chasing after oversea markets which do not exist. By borrowing money and putting it into the production of primary goods, we are attempting to supply articles for which we cannot find a profitable market. Before we can secure payable markets, we must bring the world's standard of living down to the coolie level. There is no alternative other than to discard a monetary system which has proved not sufficiently elastic. Is it not remarkable how we go abroad seeking to sell the very commodities for the want of which our own people are starving? We travel tens of thousands of miles to look for an imaginary market, whereas an actual market exists at our very doors. Does not every member know that thousands of people are hungry in our cities and towns? Yet we run about to see if we can feed Japanese, or Chinese, or Indians, without ever an attempt to revolutionise the monetary system which has brought destitution to hundreds of thousands of people at our very doors. When it is suggested to hon. members opposite that they should join forces with us, in a progressive spirit, to bring about the necessary reform, they push us aside and go along next day to the Treasurer to ask him to find more money to write down the debts of the farmers.

Mr. North: You have the numbers here now.

Mr. MARSHALL: I shall come to that point in a moment.

The Premier: We have not the numbers in another place, though.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MARSHALL: The Constitution of Western Australia does not permit the present Government to interfere with the monetary system. We forfeited that right when we federated.

Mr. Moloney: Wait till we get secession!

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know about secession, but hon. members opposite argue that there is a case for allowing Western Australia to secede from the Commonwealth. I could present a similar case for the Murchison, and indeed for all the North-West of this State, to secede from the metropolitan area. If I were to attack the present Treasurer for his inaction with regard to the monetary system, he would at once tell me that this was not a function for him and his Government to discharge, being outside their jurisdiction. Constitutionally speaking, that is so, no doubt. Then we appeal to the Commonwealth Government, saying it is their bounden duty to protect the Australian people and to see that there is no obstacle placed in the way of securing to them a fairly high standard of living. The wage tariff should be increased so that at least everyone will have full and plenty. We are immediately told that the problem is world-wide, and that therefore even the Federal Government cannot do much. So the responsibility is passed on from one to another, to be eventually passed out into the world. The wide world is blamed. But history teaches that there comes a time when the Constitution of a country can no longer stand in the way of reform. I know of no great reform that has ever been accomplished by strict adherence to Constitutions and laws. Even kings have lost their heads in the process of reforms being brought about. It is said that under our system we must adhere strictly to the Constitution. We are to sit idly and send our Treasurer across to Canberra every year, or twice or thrice annually, to see how much he can, with his able manner, cadge from the banks of Australia, including the Commonwealth Bank, the bank that should be functioning in the interests of the Commonwealth, of this State, and of the Eastern States. That institution has become just one of the Associated Banks. The Com-

monwealth Bank is quite as full of tyranny as is any of the private banks. I tell the Premier that we cannot stand by, irrespective of whether he sees eye to eye with me or not, because someone has to move, somewhere, sometime and at no distant date. Wheat producers are clamouring for assistance in every direction. Can Opposition members tell me any year in which the primary producers got full value for their labour, or for the sale of their products, apart from abnormal times? I was reared in a farming district, and I know that the farmers slave from early morning and often on through part of the night.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The woolgrowers are in much the same position.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is no difference to-day. The present price for wheat is not out of reason, when we compare it with pre-war prices. It may be different regarding the cost of production, but there is no difference between the actual prices secured for wheat now and the prices received in pre-war days.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Wheat was sold for as little as 1s. 6d. per bushel.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know of times when it was sold at 10d. per bushel. Again I ask if Opposition members know of any time when the primary producers received full value for their labour, taking into consideration their hours of work and the sacrifices they had to make in the industry, apart from abnormal periods?

Mr. Stubbs: But they built up an asset.

Mr. MARSHALL: That may be so, but can the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) tell me where their asset is to-day?

Mr. Stubbs: No, but—

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member must agree that the building up of assets is purely imaginary.

Mr. Stubbs: Land in the Eastern States has been sold at £20 an acre, and yet it was no better than the land in Western Australia.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not arguing about that. How can we complain of the price of wheat to-day, when it is comparable with the price we got before the war? Notwithstanding all the criticism regarding the cost of production and the price obtained for wheat, we cannot expect anything better while we depend upon a world in which the standard of living is comparable with that of the coolie. It is useless

to expect to get outside the Commonwealth better prices than we are obtaining to-day, and what we should aim at is to build up a standard of living that will make possible a better market locally. If that were done, it would be better than chasing about the world in an endeavour to control something we cannot control. Until the monetary system is attacked effectively, and in a large measure altered from the present basis, the position cannot be materially changed, no matter what members opposite may say, or which Government may be in office. While we are at the mercy of the Associated Banks and their system, we cannot expect any great relief from the present position. I have heard Opposition members attacking our few State enterprises. They take cognisance of reports appearing in the capitalistic Press, which sets itself the task of falsifying the financial position of the State trading concerns. The figures published in the Press are correct but are most misleading. No businessman in the world could make those concerns pay on the basis that the Government are obliged to conduct them, and every member knows that to be so. Yet the capitalistic Press deals with those concerns and does untold harm. Let members remember what happened in the North-West before the advent of the State steamers. It was a common practice for the big "meat kings," as they were referred to, to charter the whole of the space on a ship in order to prevent the small growers in the North-West from despatching their stock to the metropolitan market, and ruining the prices available for the meat kings. They would allow the ship to proceed down the coast and return again quite empty. That shows how much sympathy they had with the primary producer, and yet we see some of them rushing to the aid of the agriculturists in Parliament. Until the State steamers were placed on the North-West coast, the development of the northern parts of the State was impossible. Despite that, we find the Press giving publicity to falsified figures regarding the profits and losses of the trading concerns. The same thing applies to our railways. Where is there a private individual who would take over the State railway system and run trains for hundreds of miles through barren country over non-paying lines, as the Government are doing to-day? No private company in the world

would contemplate doing it at the price the Government charge to-day. If freights were increased, there would be no farmers. The Government do all these things in order to assist development. The same position applies to the timber mills and the brick kilns. This work gives us an opportunity to compare privately-controlled concerns with State-controlled concerns.

Mr. Thorn: We have always supported State-controlled railways.

Mr. MARSHALL: You may have done so, as an individual.

The Premier: At any rate, you are only a boy in politics. You are getting wise.

Mr. MARSHALL: But the trouble with the member for Toodyay is that it is such a very, very slow process!

Mr. Thorn: If you are getting wise, I don't want to.

Mr. MARSHALL: It does not matter whether I am wise or dense now—

Mr. Thorn: No, it is too late.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have long since given up all hope of seeing any reform in my time. One member, during the course of the debate, reflected upon the Government's attitude respecting a recent industrial upheaval at Kalgoorlie. That member had not the slightest knowledge of the cause of the trouble. I think he must have got all his information down among the Bridgetown timber mills, for he knew nothing about the mining award or what caused the trouble, and certainly had no idea of the Government's attitude with regard to the settlement.

The Premier: Don't reflect upon the timber mills.

Mr. MARSHALL: He accused the Government of interfering with an Arbitration Court award. The Government did not interfere with any Arbitration Court award; they had nothing to do with it. I really think the time is rapidly approaching when we shall have some method other than the Arbitration Court of adjusting industrial grievances. Let me give members the three distinct principles of adjusting the hours of those men underground. Just imagine an Arbitration Court award which specifies as the hours of work underground three alternative methods to be adopted. I want members to understand that the 44-hour week has been in operation for many years without any alteration. Then the Arbitration

Court issues an award and this is the way it reads:—

Forty-four hours shall constitute a week's work underground, including crib time.

That is definite. That is what the men were already working. Then it goes on to say:—

On Mondays to Fridays, inclusive, eight hours, including crib time, and on Saturday four hours, exclusive of crib time, shall comprise a week's work.

Is not that a 44-hour week? Of course it is. The award goes on to specify two other different ways. One is—

Provided, however, that in the case of continuous and/or shift work, and workers regularly working underground, this condition shall be deemed to have been complied with if the ordinary working hours do not exceed 88 per fortnight, to be worked in alternate weeks of 40 hours and 44 hours respectively, each of such weeks to be worked in shifts of eight hours each, including crib time. Provided, further, that by agreement between an employer and the union, the hours of work may be worked under a roster which shall provide for an average of 44 hours per week spread over a period of three weeks.

Mr. Cross: As clear as mud.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, it is. So there are three different methods. This is how much the Government interfered! If I were attacking the Government I would attack them on totally different lines. These men had been working 44 hours per week for the last 17 years, and the only thing wrong with that is that it is four hours a week too much. I do not know but that 40 hours per week is too much for some of the miners. However, the men had been working 44 hours per week for 17 years when the award was issued. The Chamber of Mines came along and said "We will adopt the third system, to spread it over the three weeks. And that can only be done by negotiation, as set down in the award." The point is that the Chamber of Mines, desiring to break what has been established for 17 years, might have been expected to adopt this attitude and say, "Well, 44 hours per week has been the system for many years and is still included in the award. We want to try one of the other two schemes, and we will negotiate with you on the third alternative, or we will take the 40-48 hour week." But no, what they did was to put up notices on the mines saying that after a certain date all men employed would have to work 40-48 hours.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Was that in keeping with the award?

Mr. MARSHALL: The award set down an eight hour day with four hours on Saturday morning. That had been worked for 17 years. If the Chamber of Mines had desired to retain peace in the industry they would have said to the men, "Rather than have any trouble we will concede you the 44 hour week and will go to the court." But no, they said, "You shan't work in our mines except on our terms." And so they locked out the men, put up the notice and prevented the men from working 44 hours per week which they had been working for 17 years, and which is in the award. The Chamber of Mines should have permitted decency to prevail, and should have approached the situation in a correct way. Then if they had wanted to go to the court there would have been no cessation of work on the part of the men. But that did not suit the Chamber of Mines. They thought they would starve the men into submission, knowing the experience they had previously when the A.W.U. was not in complete control. They thought they would have a repetition of that experience and that the men would break away. However, the men stood loyally. Again if the Chamber of Mines were sincere in their efforts, if they considered principles and stood by them, why did they not put off the engineers who refused to work more than 44 hours? But they did not do that. The Government should have taken immediate action against the Chamber of Mines—that is what they should have done. The men did not cease work, but were locked out, and the award said 44 hours per week, which they had been working for 17 years. The Government in their action were more courageous than I gave them credit for, because if I had been a member of the Government and advised the men to go back, I would have advised them to work a 44 hour week, not a minute longer. In no circumstances would I advise men to work 48 hours per week. It is criminal to try to work men 48 hours per week underground chewing dust, living and working under the most unhappy circumstances possible for a human being. The Chamber of Mines wanted them to work 48 hours per week. The Government showed the Chamber of Mines a way out of the difficulty, and in doing so they went very close to sacrificing the principle of the 44 hour week. I admired their attitude in the bringing about of a settlement, and I say they took a very courageous stand in doing it. They are to be complimented on it. Forty-four hours is

too much for a man to work underground. If any member wants a proof of that he only has to go to Wooroloo and see what sacrifice the gold mining industry of Western Australia has called upon humanity to make. I have not many relatives left. They have all gone to very early graves, the eldest at 48 years. And now the men are wanted to go back to the 48 hour week. I congratulate the Government on the attitude they adopted. I am not sure what the Crown law would advise, but I feel that the Government would have been quite entitled to prosecute the Chamber of Mines. It ill becomes the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith), who knows nothing about the case, to criticise the Government on the attitude they adopted.

Member: He was not the only one to do so.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, but he was the most prominent.

The Premier: He is the principal apostate.

Mr. MARSHALL: He said, "I stand for the great spirit of nationalism." He is the best political acrobat on the other side. He is adept at looping the loop. He entered Parliament as a Labour man and then, I think, joined the Country Party, and is now a Nationalist, and he stands for the great spirit of nationalism. He might know something about cutting timber and something about the South-West, but he would be well advised to leave the subject of the mining industry and of Arbitration Court awards as applied to the mining industry severely alone, because he is not too well versed on those subjects. I do not desire to delay the House longer. I did not anticipate speaking at all, but in the circumstances I could not refrain from offering a few remarks. Members who represent the primary producers come to Parliament and ask for money from the Agricultural Bank, money to settle men on the land: they ask us to wipe off liabilities or over-capitalisation, to withhold interest charges and pool debts. Regardless of what they do, while the monetary system remains as at present, no great relief can be expected for primary producers or industrialists in this or any other country.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [9.41]: During the few weeks over which this debate has extended, I have listened to various speakers who have castigated the

Government in various ways. The Acting Leader of the Opposition spoke of the Government having no agricultural conscience and said they had muddled in the handling of the finances, but he failed to make any reference to the difficult problem of unemployment. He failed dismally to indicate to the workers of the metropolis and country what his party would do if returned to the Treasury Benches. The hon. member was rather optimistic of the trend of events in the country as revealed by the two recent by-elections. If his party entered the lists in the metropolitan area, he would certainly have to offer something more substantial in the way of policy than he gave in his speech. When the previous Government were in power—he was a member of the Cabinet—almost immediately after assuming office they made direct onslaughts on the conditions of the workers. One of their first acts was to interfere with what is known as the district or camping allowance for men on relief work. The then Minister for Works peremptorily wiped that allowance out. The union went to the court and were successful in securing a restoration of 5s. 3d. in place of the 6s. previously paid. Then the workers were put back on a 48-hour week, whereas previously they had been working 44 hours a week. There were many instances of men's time being deliberately broken by administrative instruction. Many men approached me at the time with the complaint they had worked almost a month and were then stood down, or had their time deliberately broken, so that they could not obtain the holiday pay to which they were entitled under the award. The emergency tax was applied to married men receiving only £2 a week and to single men receiving only £1 a week. In other ways the previous Government attacked the industrial conditions of the workers. They amended the Arbitration Act to secure a quarterly adjustment of the basic wage, so that they could get the wages of the workers down almost as quickly as the prices of commodities fell. The Financial Emergency Acts that were introduced made wholesale onslaughts on the workers' wages. The Acting Leader of the Opposition failed to tell the workers what he would be prepared to do if his party were returned to power. Many of the workers are awaiting information on that point. The present Government have made a definite and honest

attempt to improve the conditions of the workers, difficult though the times have been.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: They have succeeded.

Mr. HEGNEY: I was about to indicate some of the ways in which they have succeeded. One of the first things the Minister for Employment did was to ensure that the men, when they had worked for the requisite periods, received the holiday pay to which they were entitled. Then the Government re-instituted the 44-hour week, which is applicable to the workers throughout the country. The emergency legislation was amended and the Government fought to increase the incidence of the tax and to make the exemption for workers on the basic wage at £3 12s. as compared with the previous Government's figure of £2 a week. The member for Nelson implied that he had been instrumental in influencing another place to raise the incidence of the tax. I have never heard such an absurd claim in my life. As regards single men, whereas previously the financial emergency tax was imposed on earnings of £1 per week, the present Government tried to get it raised to £2, but a compromise with another place was necessary and the amount now stands at 30s. a week. Those are a few of the problems that the Government tackled. One of their first acts after taking office was to appoint a Minister for Employment, who would give the whole of his time to the problems of unemployment. There is no question that Mr. Kenneally has done a remarkably good job. True he made some mistakes, but nobody in that position could have avoided making some mistakes. Having regard to the manner in which he organised his department, he is deserving of the best that the State can give. The Labour Party went to the country pledged to establish a portfolio for a Minister for Employment. When the Lyons-Latham Government went to the country nine months ago, they submitted a similar proposal to the people and received endorsement by being returned to power. Mr. Stewart was given the portfolio of Minister for Employment. Subsequently, because of a reshuffle consequent upon the coalition of the United Australia Party and the Country Party, Mr. Stewart was displaced and reduced to the status of an under secretary. What have the Federal Government done to cope with unemployment since Mr. Stewart was appointed? Almost immediately after his appointment, he left on a world tour to study

economic and industrial conditions abroad. The workers of Australia were expecting that the Federal Government would help the States to minimise the problem of unemployment.

Mr. North: The Minister advocated reduced hours.

Mr. HEGNEY: Yes, but the workers of this State are still awaiting the taking of steps by the Federal Government towards a solution of the problem. This problem is certainly the one of the age. Mr. Stewart, the Under Secretary for Employment in the Federal Ministry, is the person we are waiting for to do something to assist all the States in this matter. The Deputy Leader of the Country Party complains at the way the Government have spent loan funds. He said they had no agricultural conscience and had been spending too much loan money in the metropolitan area. He did not ask that any of the works on which money was being spent should be discontinued. He did not suggest that the sewerage works should be stopped, or that the Canning reservoir, which is necessary to add to the pure water supplies of the metropolitan area, should be discontinued. He only said that too much money was being spent within the metropolitan area. He referred to Stirling Highway. That is not being carried out from loan funds, but from money supplied through the Main Roads Act. In the case of most of the workers in the metropolitan area, their difficulty lies in finding jobs near home. There are certain works in the metropolitan area which have to be gone on with. The Government are to be commended for initiating a modern scheme of sewerage and sewerage development. The Leader of the National Party said the Government had no plans for the future. This great sewerage work is for the future as well as for the present, and it is an undertaking that is well worth going on with. It is also the means of providing employment for many workers who would otherwise have to go to the country. At one time most of the unemployed single men were in camp in my electorate. At one period there were 1,000 men at Blackboy, and there were 600 men at Hovea in the Swan electorate. The member for Swan was not long in having the 600 removed from Hovea, but the 1,000 men still remained at Blackboy. Subsequently the men were transferred to various centres, and at election time there were about 230

left. A month after the elections there were 600 men at Blackboy. One of the first things I did after being returned was to meet these men, who discussed with me the question of having a share of the pick-ups. The Minister for Employment also spoke to the representatives of the men, and told them they would have a share of any pick-ups. Within a few months most of the men were placed in suitable employment. The money for single men was increased and a good many were placed in country situations. Some were incapable of doing laborious work, but these were found suitable employment elsewhere. There are many more single men receiving assistance from the Government now than received it during the term of the previous Government. Numbers of young men have also been found employment in the prospecting scheme. There are now over 2,000 men engaged on that scheme. This has relieved considerably the acuteness of the position of single men out of work in the metropolitan area. These are irrefutable facts. Although all the single men are not satisfied with their lot, they are receiving such assistance as will tide them over their present difficulties. An effort has been made to transfer many of the single men to the gold mining centres on railway construction works, whence they can gravitate into the mining industry and find full-time employment. I read in "Hansard" for the current session that a member in another place criticised the Government because the time single men had to work was not long enough. He said that for 30s. a week they should work three or four days a week. His reason for saying that was that they should be made to seek employment in the farming areas. Most of the industrial workers are averse to receiving employment in the farming industry. At the Marquis-street depot efforts are constantly made to induce men to take on work in the country. The trouble is that they are not certain of getting their wages from the farmers. I know of young men who have been defrauded of wages amounting to £40 or £60. Their parents have been up against it themselves and had to seek child welfare assistance for their families.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: That is not the rule.

Mr. HEGNEY: There are many instances of the kind. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition complained that the Govern-

ment were making this kind of employment so attractive to single men that they would not seek work in the country. In another place we have a member putting up the same proposition. If a man works for an employer he is entitled to the reward for his labour.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Quite right.

Mr. HEGNEY: Many have complained that they do not receive payment.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Only in isolated cases.

Mr. HEGNEY: Not at all.

Mr. Fox: I know of one boy who received 16s. for seven months work.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: I also know of isolated cases.

Mr. HEGNEY: The Government have done their utmost for single men having regard to their financial resources and the economic conditions. They have greatly improved the lot of that section of the community, and are far in advance of what the previous Government did. I hope the Government will bring down a Bill for the abolition of private labour exchanges. Many complaints have come to me from workers who have gone to such establishments in search of employment. There are cases of unscrupulous employment brokers who receive payment from two or three workers for the one job. Not long ago I picked up two young fellows on the way to Midland Junction. They were endeavouring to get to the goldfields by train. They were two bright young Australians. They told me they had gone to one of the exchanges a few days before. One of them paid 15s. and was sent to the Bridgetown district. The other went to an exchange the next day and was sent to the same district. That was how they met. They said they had to sleep in a place that was separated only by a wall from where the calves slept. They could not live under such conditions and left the place. They then set out on foot to find employment elsewhere. They jumped trains to seek employment in other parts of the country. As regards labour exchanges, another place has always been the bulwark against dealing with this problem. The placing of labour should be definitely a function of the State Labour Bureau, where there might be some reorganisation, possibly by the appointment of a man with varied experience in industrial occupations and therefore with a knowledge of how to pick men for particular

jobs. But certainly the private labour exchanges could well be done away with. Possibly the Government have already given consideration to that matter; if not, I hope they will do so. Recently I read in the Press a report of a discussion on constitutional and electoral reform. It was urged that the number of members in this Chamber should be reduced to 30, and the number in another place to 20. I hold that it would be highly advantageous if another place were abolished altogether. The 50 members of this Chamber could carry on the work of legislation. If the people give a mandate to a National, or Country Party, or Labour Government, that should be sufficient without another branch of the Legislature, representing only one-third of the people, mutilating or rejecting legislation of which the electors have expressed their definite approval. I hope the time is not far distant when another place will be abolished, as it could be with advantage to the people. That remark applies to the Federal as well as to the State arena. A Queensland Labour Government abolished that State's Legislative Council, and no one can assert that Queensland legislation does not compare favourably with that of any other Australian State. In the Federal arena the Senate is supposed to be a States House, but it is in fact definitely a party House. Whether Labour has control or, as at present, the Nationalist and Country Parties have control, in either case the Senate is a party House. On that ground it is an excrescence. It could well be done away with, and the people thus relieved of a load which they now have to carry. The member for Claremont (Mr. North) discussed the financial stringency, and said that if the stringency were not relaxed he would be inclined to support State socialism.

Mr. North: I said State socialism would be better than bankruptcy.

Mr. HEGNEY: That is so. The bankers are still complaining that the people criticise the financial institutions, that the people assert that financial reform is unattainable owing to machinations of the banks here and in other countries. The banks have to accept a measure of blame in that respect. In the United States of America a great fight is now proceeding over the question of economic reform. Recently I read of a high personage, in the course of evidence before a commission of inquiry, pointing out that

85 per cent. of the corporate wealth of the United States is in the hands of 5 per cent. of the corporations—indicating that the control of American wealth is getting into fewer and fewer hands. We know that that has been the trend, in other parts of the world as well as in America. Western Australia has people in comfortable circumstances, but in the metropolitan area and in the farming districts many of our citizens are now living beggarly existences. Numbers of my constituents are rearing families in extremely difficult circumstances. While those things exist, the social system stands condemned. The period of acute unemployment through which we are passing is not the only difficult period of that kind. It has been computed that in Australia, even with prices at their peak, there are never less than 60,000 unemployed. It shows that many thousands of our men find themselves from time to time without employment. These are a few points which I have risen to mention on the Address-in-reply. The Government have set out to do their best on behalf of the people who elected them. In some directions they may have failed, but in the essential things they have done a good job on behalf of the workers.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 21st August, 1935.

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

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT ACT, 1899, AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [4.37]: We should be most careful in effecting any

alterations to the Constitution. I am in favour of a select committee being appointed to give consideration to the Bill. It is necessary that some slight amendments be made to define the position of members of Parliament, and I hope that when the second reading is agreed to, the Bill will be referred to a select committee. I would like the Chief Secretary, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Parker, Mr. Holmes and Mr. Cornell to comprise the select committee.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You will get yourself into trouble if you make those suggestions.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The question has been raised as to where evidence could be procured. The members I have indicated could have a round-table conference to discuss the pros and cons, or they might be able to get some legal advice respecting the Bill as it is framed now. I do not care for it in its present form, for I consider it requires modification. I shall support the second reading on condition that the Bill is referred to a select committee.

HON. C. H. WITTENOOM (South-East) [4.39]: At the outset I did not consider the Bill was necessary, but, after listening to the speeches of various members, I have entirely altered my opinion, and I intend to support the second reading. I have endeavoured to recall definite occasions upon which members have been confronted with difficulty arising out of the application of the provisions of the Constitution, and I cannot remember any instances apart from the two that have been referred to during the debate. No doubt they were painful to the members concerned and, in one instance, it meant to him considerable financial loss. In common with other members, I recognise that when we attempt to interfere with the Constitution that has, generally speaking, worked well for years, we assume grave responsibilities. It is certainly a long time since the Constitution was last amended. When Mr. Holmes spoke, he mentioned that the functions of the Government had been considerably altered latterly, to an extent that the framers of the Constitution never contemplated. They did not dream that at any time a Government of this State would interfere with private enterprise as the present Administration are doing. Of course, the present Government are not solely blameworthy because when those who