

than we have depastured, it would be a favourable opportunity to get some of the starving stock from the Eastern States into our pastoral areas. It would be a good scheme for the State Government to take up with the Commonwealth Government by offering to transport stock over the trans-Australian and State railways at a cheap rate in order to make the transfer an economic proposition. The cost of transport at existing rates is fairly heavy, but it would be money well spent if the two Governments subsidised the cost.

Mr. Teesdale: Those States charged us £15 for chaff when we had a drought. They are nice people to do a good turn to.

Mr. FERGUSON: In conclusion let me say I have a genuine desire to assist in the development and progress of my native State, and if during my term as a member of Parliament I can do something to that end, my ambition will have been achieved.

On motion by Mr. Sleeman, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.27 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 9th August, 1927.

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

QUESTION—DAIRYING, SOUTH-WEST AREAS.

Hon. A. BURVILL asked the Chief Secretary: What is the approximate area of South-West land, alienated and unalienated, suitable for dairying, starting from 50 miles east of Albany to 50 miles north of Bunbury?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The approximate area is 7,940,000 acres, but there is not sufficient information available to say how much of this area is suitable for dairying.

PAPERS—COLLIE POWER SCHEME.

On motion by Hon. J. Ewing ordered: That all papers, reports, plans, estimates, etc., in connection with the proposed Collie Power Scheme be laid upon the Table of the House.

MOTION—TRAFFIC ACT.

To disallow regulations.

Debate resumed from 4th August on the following motion by Hon. G. Potter:—

That the regulations prescribing omnibus routes Nos. 7, 16, 20, 42, 48, 54, and 55, under "The Traffic Act, 1919-1926," published in the "Government Gazette" on the 22nd July, 1927, and laid upon the Table on the 2nd August, 1927, be and are hereby disallowed.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.35]: It is not surprising that there should be a motion for the disallowance of these regulations. Even if they had been prepared by King Solomon, we would look for such a result. Many diverse interests are concerned, and those who may suffer or who may imagine they suffer even the slightest inconvenience are naturally up in arms, and they soon find champions for their side. Where the safety of the public is concerned the interest is too general to win numerous advocates, and it is too often the case that, in the desire to consider the welfare of a section, the welfare of the mass is overlooked. The grounds on which the disallowance of the regulations is sought are the weakest that could be used to influence a responsible and deliberative assembly such as the Legislative Council. Because Mr. Potter and Mr. Gray, and others with a similar lack of experience in such matters, consider that the starting points and termini of motor vehicles are wrong, that is no reason why the judgment of experts on this question should be set aside. We are asked to obey the behests of Mr. Potter, Mr. Gray and Mr. Kitson, and ignore the experience and wisdom of those whose business it is to give close study to

the question. With regard to Mr. Potter's remarks, the taxis on the Perth-Fremantle route were at the very outset allowed to start from opposite the premises of the Western Australian Bank, or, to be more accurate, were not interfered with there. They were, however, advised from the commencement that their operations in this respect were absolutely unauthorised, and that no assurance could be given to them as to whether they would be permitted to continue, or whether at any moment they might have to alter their stand. The Western Australian Bank authorities strongly objected to the blockading of their premises. The taxis were then permitted to occupy a temporary stand at the corner of William-street and St. George's-terrace. It was again pointed out that there was every probability of their being removed from that position, and that no permanent stand could be guaranteed. It was also stated that, in the event of their being permitted to continue operations between Perth and Fremantle, and a route being declared for them to run on, the terminal point of such route would in all probability be, not William-street or St. George's-terrace, but some other locality. This was made clear from the outset, and as far as I am aware no public protest was made.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It was not made publicly.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Everyone concerned was notified not by letter but verbally. I have that assurance from the Police Department.

Hon. G. Potter: I can give the Chief Secretary an assurance that the public are complaining not by petition but verbally.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course thousands of them are doing so.

Hon. E. H. Gray: They have a right to.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They will continue to complain no matter what regulations are made. Mr. Potter referred to the alleged disability suffered by the public, but the advisory board contends that no such disability exists.

Hon. G. Potter: In the opinion of the advisory board.

The PRESIDENT: I must ask members to allow the Chief Secretary to proceed. When other members are speaking he is very careful to refrain from interrupting them. I ask them to extend the same courtesy to him as he extends to members.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Bazaar-terrace is not five minutes' walk from the city, and it is only 195 yards from St. George's-terrace. The distance has been measured within the last few days. The intersection of Bazaar-terrace with William-street is regarded as the natural terminal point of motor vehicles operating over Mount's Bay-road. Another matter stressed as a serious obstacle is the hill leading up to William street. I would point out that this is no more difficult a hill than that in Barrack-street, which patrons of the State Ferry Service to South Perth have to traverse and travel a distance nearly twice as far as is the case of the other hill. They have also to experience the same weather about which Mr. Potter complained on behalf of the passengers who will use the taxis under the new regulation.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The South Perth people have a tramway to use.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is also stated that the Bazaar-terrace intersection is dimly lighted. A moment's consideration will convince anyone acquainted with the circumstances that it is no worse in that respect than any other part of the route to Fremantle, where passengers are picked up and set down. Many parts of that route are also dimly lighted. It is admitted that an additional light might be of advantage, but it is considered that this light would not be in its proper place at the intersection, but at some little distance from the spot where taxis would be picking up and setting down passengers. Hon. members who have grounds of objection to the regulations, and to anything I have said, will have ample opportunity at a later stage to reply to my speech. There is no necessity for constant interjections. The subject is a very difficult one to grapple with, and I have given it a great deal of consideration. It is a technical matter which cannot easily be handled by anyone who has not had experience of it. Another objection raised by Mr. Potter is as to the condition of the ground in the vicinity. Passengers coming from Fremantle alight on the north side of the terrace on the footpath, and those joining the buses on the outward journey from Perth enter from the footpath on the south side. There is no quagmire or any wet ground where the buses stop and start. The roadway is well made and has a surface of bitumen. The pool of water to which the hon. member referred is some distance away from the stopping and starting

point. There is no necessity for anyone to go over it. I was down there yesterday, and saw things for myself, and therefore speak as a result of personal observation.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It was a fine day.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If the Mount's Bay-road is a bad thoroughfare, then all the streets in Perth must reflect discredibly in a greater or lesser degree upon the Perth City Council. There is certainly no evidence that I have been able to find of Mount's Bay-road having been neglected by the local authorities. At least 50 per cent. of the taxi drivers utilising this road have approached the traffic branch of the Police Department, and stated that they are quite satisfied with the terminal point as proposed. With respect to the William-street and St. George's-terrace intersection, protests have been lodged by occupiers of premises adjacent to that intersection, and these protests will be more pronounced unless the terminal points are moved as proposed by the regulations. The next phase to be considered is the terminal point at Fremantle. Two conferences have been held at Fremantle with the local municipal council and the bus proprietors. At the second one, which was held two months ago, representatives of the Fremantle Municipal Council, the Fremantle Municipal Tramways, the bus proprietors and the taxi owners, as well as members of the Taxi Routes Advisory Committee were present. With such a diversity of interests it was never to be expected that a unanimous decision would be arrived at. As the Advisory Committee had the making of the recommendation in connection with the terminal point, they took the responsibility of doing so as a result of the conferences to which I have referred. It may be surprising to critics of the regulations to learn that representatives of the Fremantle council and of the Fremantle tramways were in accord with this recommendation, and members of the Fremantle council have since then held a meeting and have endorsed the regulations. However, that body suggested as an alternative for one of the recommendations only, that Beach-street, near the gas works, should be substituted for the buses instead of the north side of Queen-street as proposed by the Advisory Committee. That was the only objection raised. The whole question resolves itself into a consideration of what is necessary from a traffic point of view, and also from the standpoint of the safety of

the public. The William-street corner at Fremantle is considered to be a dangerous one. It is regarded as such, not only by the police officials, but also by the Fremantle local authorities. At the intersection of William-street with High-street by the Town Hall corner, two tramlines converge in a V shape and taxis have to cross those lines going out of or entering William-street, thus running considerable risk. That is the opinion of those who give daily consideration to this question. Under the proposal contained in the regulations, the taxis will not have to cross the tramline entering Queen-street, and on their departure for Perth will cross the rails only once in Adelaide-street. Even then, the taxi drivers starting from the intersection will have a clear view both ways before starting on their journey. No traffic pointsman, as was suggested, will be required. The hon. member cannot claim to be an expert in the matter of deciding what constitutes a volume of traffic such as would warrant the appointment of a pointsman at the intersection.

Hon. G. Potter: Mr President!

The PRESIDENT: Is the hon. member rising to a point of order?

Hon. G. Potter: Yes. I know it may be an extraordinary and possibly unprecedented action to take, but I wish to state that I have never posed as an expert.

The PRESIDENT: That is a personal explanation.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am quite satisfied with the explanation. What has been attempted under the regulations has been to separate the traffic going south from Fremantle from that proceeding north to Perth, and to make the terminal points at what must be regarded as the proper sites, if viewed from the standpoint of public safety. After all, that should be the first consideration. This means that buses proceeding south will start from South-terrace and the taxis journeying to Perth will start from Queen-street, thus obviating their running through the thickly populated portions of Fremantle, and also avoiding practically crossing one another. Touching the references made by Mr. Potter to the expenditure of £15,000 in building a garage and repair shop, that hon. member said this provision would be useless if the regulations were allowed. I do not think an argument like that carries much weight. It is not unusual for depots for different kinds of transport to be located some distance from

the scene of operations. In support of that assertion I may mention the tramways in Fremantle and the yellow cabs in Perth. The complaints made against the regulations sound strange in view of the repudiations made by the authorised secretary of the Metropolitan Omnibus Co. and the representative of the Motor Passenger Transport Association to the Advisory Board. I have here extracts from the minutes of a meeting of the Advisory Board reading as follows:--

Mr. Irvine said he wished to deny the statements made in the House the previous evening by Mr. Potter. The Metropolitan Omnibus Company agreed with the regulations in toto, and they had not authorised any statement to be made against them. Mr. Irvine said that he had telephoned the Minister and also denied the correctness of the statements.

Mr. Sumpton, the representative of the local authorities on the Advisory Committee, said, on behalf of the Fremantle Municipality:

The Council wished to submit an alternative "commencing point" as a compromise, that is, instead of running to new Queen-street, the buses should start from Beach-street near the gas works, but, in regard to the other starting points the municipality agreed to them.

During the course of his speech Mr. Kitson said he understood the Perth City Council had given the taxi owners authority to start from William-street. No stand has ever been declared by the City Council and, as I have already mentioned, the taxi owners were informed by the traffic authorities that they were there under permissive tenancy only and that the stand they were occupying was likely to be taken away from them at any moment. It is quite agreed that the motor service has come to stay, but the operations of passenger vehicles have to be regulated and no one is in a better position to do that than the traffic branch of the Police Department. Mr. Kitson also argued that the terminal point should not have been fixed until the whole of the people affected by the various services had been consulted. If the hon. member is serious in making such a suggestion, then I wish him well. I wish him well, that is to say, if he is to undertake the business himself. With such a diversity of interests, he would find it possible to obtain unanimity in the solution of such a question. At any rate, that has been the experience of those who have been handling the matter to date. Unanimity is out of the question altogether as every hon. member should fully realise. Mr. Kitson also stated that the

Fremantle Council should have been approached before any alteration was made. As I mentioned previously, that body was approached and two conferences were held.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Not regarding the Perth terminal point.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No obligation at all is imposed by the Act that any suggestions made by a municipal council or any local governing authority should be agreed to. The Fremantle Municipal Council was approached and conferred with twice. Regarding the assertion by Mr. Stephenson in reference to the foot of William-street being the most objectionable place in Perth, if that hon. member's remarks are warranted, they say very little indeed for the manner in which the Perth City Council maintains the roads. There does not appear to the traffic authorities to be any justification for such an assertion. So far as Mounts Bay-road and Bazaar-terrace are concerned, what Mr. Stephenson evidently refers to is the parking ground on the Esplanade. It must be remembered that the route neither starts nor finishes there. He stated that he had seen women almost run down by the traffic at that point. It is needless for me or anyone else to assert that a similar spectacle can be witnessed any day in any street in Perth. Such comments, even from Mr. Stephenson, would more fittingly apply to St. George's-terrace than to a quiet intersection such as that of William-street and Bazaar-terrace. Mr. Gray made some general observations about stifling the motor transport service. I can assure the hon. member that there is not the slightest desire to do anything like that. All routes with terminal points must be fixed by the responsible authority in a similar fashion, for instance, to routes and terminal points for tramways, or for any other means of transport. Mr. Gray drew a dismal picture of workmen being deprived of their Sunday motor trips. That assertion, like the flowers that bloom in the spring, has nothing whatever to do with the case. So far as the terminal points of the Perth-Fremantle taxi routes are concerned, they hinder no one from taking motor trips of any kind whatever. Mr. Gray, however, was very lukewarm in his advocacy of repealing the regulations. I notice, after carefully perusing my notes, that he safeguarded himself by stating that buses and taxis must be regulated. As soon as we have regulations to do so, we find members rising in protest!

Hon. members should realise what the disallowance of these regulations will mean. Should this occur, all the routes and terminal points mentioned will be cancelled, and those which were previously authorised will come into operation. The effect of this will be that no route at all will be provided for Cottesloe taxis. The regulations sought to give them a route. As regards the Perth-Fremantle route, the regulations that will exist will be those that were gazetted in January last and which were held in abeyance at the request of the taxi drivers. Those regulations provided that drivers of taxis should not take up or set down passengers along any tram line or within 300 yards of a tram line or railway station, with the exception of terminal points, whereas under the present regulations the Minister has issued instructions that this shall be permitted. Again, it means that the route would start at Queen-street as provided, but instead of going via Mounts Bay-road, it would proceed along Thomas-street and King's Park Road which the taxi drivers themselves do not want. In fact, they have made a strong appeal that that be not enforced. Furthermore, the January regulations would give a monopoly to certain taxi owners to the exclusion of 80 others who would be driven off the route and deprived of the means of existence. With regard to the Advisory Committee, that body has no personal interest, no individual axe to grind; its object is to meet the public convenience and to serve the State as a whole. As a result of the efforts of the Advisory Committee 50 routes have been recommended to the Minister for Works and approved, and on these routes, approximately 50 buses have been running for a considerable time and serving the public convenience. The regulations formulated by the Advisory Committee in conjunction with the by-laws had the effect of improving the buses to such an extent and developing their business so considerably that the companies controlling the buses ordered many new vehicles, some of which may be seen on the track between Fremantle and Perth.

Hon. G. Potter: The company spent £20,000.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That confirms what I say. In connection with the remarks made by the different speakers about the local authorities not having been consulted, I would point out that under the

Traffic Act, the Commissioner of Police is not only the local authority for the metropolitan area, but is also the licensing authority, and no complaint can justly be laid against the Advisory Committee for not consulting the local authority who, in every instance, has been referred to.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why go outside the police at all?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In addition, the municipal councils and road boards have representatives on the Advisory Committee, and I may say that they have been most zealous in looking after the interests of the respective bodies. There is absolutely no trouble, so I am informed, so far as 50 odd routes are concerned, with the exception of the proposed routes on which the taxi owners desire to operate. I may say—I do not like to say it—that the taxi drivers are an undisciplined section, and many of them are quite prepared to ride roughshod over every regulation made; all they consider is their own interests and nothing else.

Hon. J. Cornell: Many of them are not too particular whether they drive over you.

Hon. E. H. Gray: And there are some private owners like that, too.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot do better than read the views of the Commissioner of Police on the subject and also the report of Inspector Hunter, who is in charge of the traffic branch. I am certain the opinions of these gentlemen will carry some weight with hon. members. Under date 6th August, Mr. Connell, the Commissioner of Police, wrote to me as follows:—

I forward herewith a report from Inspector Hunter respecting the terminal points of buses and taxis plying for hire between Perth and Fremantle, and so far as I am personally concerned, I am only interested in the routes from a traffic standpoint, and from that point of view they are all right, whilst I am quite prepared to leave the routes between those points to the Advisory Board. As the officer, however, charged by Parliament with the control and regulation of traffic in the metropolitan area, I am very much interested in such terminal points as the safety of the public is involved, and from that aspect I certainly consider the termini suggested by the Routes Board are fit and proper places for the buses and taxis. Considerable congestion of traffic in St. George's-terrace is approaching, and at peak times there is a large amount there already, and if this traffic is to be added to in any way, its regulation will be very difficult, when it is borne in mind that there are some 160 taxis operating be-

tween Perth and Fremantle, and no guarantee can be given that within 12 months such number will not be doubled. The plans prepared by Inspector Hunter and which are attached hereto, clearly set out the position regarding the termini for taxis both at the Perth and Fremantle ends of the route.

I shall now read the report written by Inspector Hunter:—

At the present time there are approximately 150 taxi cars plying as omnibuses between Perth and Fremantle, the starting point in Perth being William-street on the west side, just south of St. George's-terrace. Ninety per cent. of such vehicles proceed to Fremantle via St. George's-terrace, Mill-street, Mount's Bay-road, Perth-Fremantle-road, Queen Victoria-street, Adelaide-street, cross High-street into William-street at a point nearly opposite the Fremantle town hall; they return via the same route setting down their passengers on the north side of St. George's-terrace, a short distance west of William-street. They then proceed south along William-street to a parking ground alongside of White City and await their turn to come on the starting point at the intersection of William-street and St. George's-terrace. Only two taxis at a time are allowed on the starting point, and it is a common thing for them to race up William-street from White City to reach the stand. The other 10 per cent. do not traverse the same route; they proceed via St. George's-terrace, Malcolm-street, King's Park-road, and Thomas-street. It is now obvious that the route desired by the taxi owners is the one via Mount's Bay-road, and to bring them to the intersection of St. George's-terrace and William-street is unnecessary, as I will endeavour to show. The first point to be considered is whether the starting point—St. George's-terrace and William-street—is unsuitable, and if so, why? The starting point, I contend, is highly dangerous; the roadway at that point is very steep and more often than not you will see such vehicles with the nearside rear tyres slanting into the kerb to hold the car in position, and should the brake of these cars at any time fail, there is nothing to stop the vehicle from running backwards for a considerable distance and causing incalculable damage, with the possibility of serious injury to persons, perhaps loss of life. The intersection is one of the busiest in the city, and at peak periods there is a considerable amount of congestion. That part of the terrace between Mill and William-streets carries a tremendous volume of traffic, including 40 large buses that start for their respective destinations at a point 20 feet west of William-street. The 150 taxi cars arriving and departing from the intersection of William-street and St. George's-terrace considerably increase congestion and is not safe from a traffic view. When congestion arises, the proper course is to divert traffic that is unnecessarily using that part. I have pointed out that the majority of these taxi cars enter Perth via Mount's Bay-road, and that being so, their natural terminal

is Bazaar-terrace, at the intersection of William-street. There is no need for such vehicles to deviate along Mill-street and St. George's-terrace, and it is unreasonable, taking into account the heavy and constant traffic on the portion of the terrace between Mill and William-streets, for them to do so in preference to their natural finishing point. It is said that the terminal recommended, i.e., Bazaar-terrace, west of William-street, is unsuitable. That is not so; in the first place it is not more than 1½ minutes' walk from the intersection of William-street and St. George's-terrace, and passengers would be little inconvenienced in having to walk such a short distance. Secondly, it does not carry 10 per cent. of the traffic that the other intersection carries; thirdly, the road is good and reasonably wide, there are gravel footpaths with kerbing; fourthly, it will decrease congestion at the intersection of St. George's-terrace and William-street and tend to the safety of everybody; fifthly, taxi cars would be under more efficient control, dangerous driving when racing for positions avoided, ample space for them to manoeuvre, and in addition, parked adjacent to their starting point. As regards the terminal at Fremantle, the one at present used by taxi cars, viz., William-street near the Town Hall, is most unsuitable as a terminal. The street is narrow and traffic congested in this particular part, especially at the intersection of High, Adelaide and William-streets, where these vehicles have to cross and recross. Queen-street on the south side is the natural terminal for these vehicles, more so now that it is being recommended that the large buses terminal be Beach-street. The intersection of Queen and Adelaide-street is not dangerous, and is only 1½ minutes walk from the Fremantle Town Hall. I am enclosing a sketch showing the terminals at present being used by these vehicles and another showing the terminals recommended. In recommending these terminals, I have been guided firstly, by safety to the public, secondly, to avoid unnecessary congestion of traffic, and thirdly, the natural terminals as they should reasonably be.

Those are the views of the Commissioner of Police and Inspector Hunter. This House is now asked to disallow the regulations for the flimsiest of reasons. The House is asked to sit in judgment on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee—recommendations that have been approved by the representatives of the Motor Passenger Transport Association on that committee, and, with one small exception, by the representative of the metropolitan local authorities on the committee. Members are asked to ignore the police traffic inspector who says the old order of things is "highly dangerous" and "attended with the possibility of serious injury to persons and perhaps loss of life." Members are also asked to ignore the Com-

missioner of Police who endorses the regulations and says he is very much interested in them as "the safety of the public is involved." On the other hand, we have a case built up on imaginary quagmires, unsheltered footpaths, a long hill to climb to reach St. George's-terrace, and other data of trivial importance. How can such arguments stand against the reports of the Commissioner of Police and Inspector Hunter? My memory takes me back to similar protests made when it was proposed to lay a tramway along the Horseshoe Bridge, characterised at the time, by way of anticipation, as "suicide bridge." The mortality prognosticated in consequence was something appalling; men and women were going to be killed almost every day in the week if a tramway were placed on the bridge and a tramway service conducted over it. But, strange to say, after all these ominous forebodings there has not been a single accident of any kind on the so-called "suicide bridge" since it was opened nearly three years ago.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Did not Mr. Baxter have something to say about that?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot call to mind whether that hon. member did so or not. I may say that I do not make a mental note of those who offer opposition to my attitude in this Chamber. In regard to these regulations, undoubtedly many persons have been deceived and stimulated into an unwise advocacy of this appeal—stimulated and encouraged and urged on by some persons who are not by any means disinterested. It is unnecessary for me to say those individuals are in no way connected with this Chamber. I wish to impress on the mind of every hon. member what the position will be if the present regulations are disallowed. In that case the regulations gazetted on the 14th January, 1927, will come into force and will give a monopoly to certain taxi owners who were operating on the Perth-Fremantle road prior to the 1st September, 1926.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Who framed those regulations?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Those taxi owners will be given practically a monopoly.

Hon. J. Cornell: There are too many taxis on that road now; there ought to be more buses.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The regulations of January would drive off 80 other taxi owners at present making a livelihood on that track. Such will be the result of disallowance of the regulations now under consideration. A champion of the would-be monopolists has had the temerity to come out into the open and instruct Parliament as to what it should do. His sole objection is the unsuitable nature of the terminal points. But that form of strategy should not deceive any member of this House.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Is it Mr. Gray who represents the monopoly?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It may be a roundabout way of achieving the objective, but we have all heard of Charles Lamb's Chinaman who burnt down a house in order that he might have roast pig for a feast. Some gentlemen not connected with this House in any way, are very much interested financially in the disallowance of the regulations. I can prove that statement by access to documents which disclose the reasons for their advocacy. I am not referring to any member of the House; if I did I should not be putting the position fairly. I cannot conceive that this Council would disallow the regulations in face of the fact that the men who framed them are in close touch with the traffic problem, and therefore very much better qualified to judge what is necessary than those who are not similarly advantaged.

Hon. E. H. Gray: One hundred and sixty taxi drivers have no representation on that committee.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Members certainly should not disallow the regulations without making, as I have made, a full personal investigation into the question. I strongly urge that the vote be not taken to-day. In this instance my speech does not close the debate. Mr. Potter has the right of reply, and any member will be entitled to ask for an adjournment in order to allow opportunity for verifying, or otherwise, anything I have said. I shall be prepared to lay on the Table of the House maps which will assist hon. members in coming to a proper conclusion.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Have you any information as to the alteration of the Cottesloe route?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have all the information, or I shall be prepared to supply all the information. If I have

not all the information now, any deficiency will be made good. There is no doubt that chaos and confusion, and worse, may result if traffic regulations are rejected without proper inquiry. Anyone who seeks the rejection of such regulations should be required to put up a sound case in support. I submit that no such sound case has been submitted in this instance. The one large section, the general public, who are not financially concerned in the motor service, but whose safety is of the first importance, have claims to consideration; indeed, the first claim to consideration. The other side—the side which, in some instances, thinks it may suffer some inconvenience, and, in other instances, feels that the disallowance of the regulations will play into its hands—is loud and persistent in its agitation. One can imagine what would be the position in London if an attempt were made to set up a traffic Soviet in the House of Commons or the House of Lords to veto every attempt on the part of the responsible authorities to minimise accidents and guard the welfare of the general body of the people. In a section of the Press it has been said that some of these regulations have been waived. Not one of them has been waived. But we have to-day both in Perth and Fremantle bodies of men openly defying the law, being emboldened by assurances that Parliament will come to their rescue. It is a state of affairs that must engender contempt for all authority, and it should not be encouraged by anyone who has a sense of public responsibility. I hope these regulations will not be disallowed, and they should not be disallowed until every member who casts his vote against them is prepared to say that he can do so intelligently and conscientiously.

On motion by Hon. Sir William Lathlain, debate adjourned.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the 4th August.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [5.26]: In offering a few remarks on the Address-in-reply, one cannot help welcoming the note of optimism which marks it with regard to the advancement made by the State so far as production is concerned, and also as regards the general outlook. In those respects, optimism is justified. We have to recognise

that the Government have come back for a second term of office after a strenuous fight at the polls. There have in the past been references to the conditions governing that fight, and to some things which were done during that fight; but to-day I wish to refer more particularly to certain records the Government have in relation to problems affecting the whole country. The Government's policy has three or four outstanding features. The first one relates to the provision for miners who have been "dusted." The second one refers to the provision of adequate financial assistance of gold mining. Then there is the reference to State finances and production generally. From the aspect of optimism, it is certainly most encouraging for anyone to travel through the back country of the North-East Province, the province of which I am one of the representatives, and to see the enormous advance which has taken place there in the pastoral industry. Where some four or five years ago only a few cattle were to be found, and perhaps a station here and there, to-day that stretch of country extending from Menzies away north to Wiluna and away east to almost 100 miles beyond Laverton has all been taken up, and is being steadily developed for wool-growing. Considerable sums of money have been expended there in fencing, and other improvements, and tens of thousands of sheep have been transported into that district. Wherever one goes, one hears conversation from people who formerly concerned themselves only with gold-mining. about well-sinking, the price of wool, and the outlook of the pastoral industry. In that respect one can regard the position most optimistically. In contrast is the position of the goldmining industry; the optimism which exists on the one hand is to a large extent discounted by pessimism with regard to gold-mining, and also by the feeling that assistance has been delayed all too long to meet the disabilities under which that industry is suffering. I desire to deal first of all with the question of the men who have been incapacitated as the result of their employment in the mining industry. I know that this question has been brought up again and again during recent sessions. Goldfields members have to express their gratitude to other members of the Chamber for the manner in which they have given assistance to ensure provision for the men engaged in gold-mining. At the same time,

experience of the methods which have been laid down for the granting of assistance to the men in question compels one to recognise that there is urgent need for a consolidating measure covering the Acts under which these men are being dealt with. In passing, may I remind hon. members that there are three methods under which such miners are handled at the present time. The first is the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, the second the Miners' Phthisis Act, and the third is the Third Schedule to the Workers' Compensation Act. The Mine Workers' Relief Fund deals principally with men incapacitated prior to the passing of the Miners' Phthisis Act. That fund, as members know, is a voluntary organisation established between the men themselves, the mine owners and the Government with the idea of providing for miners no longer able to follow their calling. When the Miners' Phthisis Act was passed, that measure was limited to dealing with men suffering from tuberculosis. At the same time it warns men who are known to have become affected by dust that continuance in mine work is detrimental to their health. I have here copies of the forms used in connection with the Miners' Phthisis Act; and as I shall have to refer to them in the course of my remarks, I should like to read them out. Form "D" provides for advice to the miner who is suffering from tuberculosis—

Take notice that you are reported to be suffering from tuberculosis, and that in consequence you are hereby from the date of service of this notice upon you prohibited from being employed in, on or about any mine or part of a mine to which Subsection (h) of Section 7 of the Act applies.

Another form reads—

Take notice that you are reported as having developed symptoms of miner's phthisis unaccompanied by tuberculosis, and that further employment in, on or about a mine or part of a mine to which Subsection (h) of Section 7 of the above Act applies may be detrimental to your health.

The Workers' Compensation Act in its Third Schedule deals with the men affected by dust to the extent of interference with their work. The great trouble in respect of that Act is the determination of the extent to which a man has been affected. That can only be done by a doctor, and even then there may be some dispute as to whether a man is still fit to carry on his work in the mine. All those three methods of dealing with the men

have defects, as disclosed in operation. The principal difficulty seems to have been the interpretations that have been made on the Acts as passed by Parliament. It appears to me the restrictions imposed are not in keeping with the spirit of those Acts, although they may perhaps fit in with the letter. At present there are considerable difficulties that have developed as the result of the attempt to administer those Acts. Last session we had the State Insurance Bill, to which I gave support principally on the ground that I wished to see provision made for the men incapacitated as the result of mining. However, I am now satisfied that the greatest need at present is consolidation of legislation whereby these men may be dealt with on an adequate and graduated scale, as for instance, was put forward by Mr. Cornell in his report on the South African measures. That is most urgent in dealing with men suffering from complaints contracted as the result of being employed in the gold mining industry. I want to give illustrations of the way in which these Acts do not deal with the men. The first is the case of a man who was employed on the Trans-Australian railway. Three years ago he was working on a mine. He left mining to engage in work on the Trans. railway. His health has since broken down, and he is now informed by his doctor that he has tuberculosis. His doctor also says that, as the result of that man having been many years engaged in gold mining, his lungs were seriously weakened. To this cause more than any other did the doctor attribute the fact that the man was particularly liable to contract tuberculosis. This man had been working in an isolated mine to which the examination had not been extended. When afterwards, the examination was made, he did not present himself. He was then working at another occupation, and so hoped that he was quite all right. The Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act had not been brought into force, and so this man is not able to claim any assistance under any of the three Acts. Although he was formerly a contributor to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund he, like so many other men, foolishly allowed his contribution to lapse when he left the industry, and so to-day he cannot claim assistance from any of the provisions made for the men. Nevertheless, the fact that he was engaged for so many

years in mining, and that his lungs were seriously injured in that industry, should, I think, entitle him to assistance. I made inquiry about another case only the other day. A man had been examined in the laboratory. On the second examination he was very ill. He informs me that at the time the examination was made he was not working on a mine, being off work for a few weeks through illness. He presented himself for examination and, although examined in March last, so far as I know the process has not been completed, because he was not actually employed on a mine, as the Act prescribed. I have made inquiries and I understand the man is suffering from tuberculosis.

Hon. E. H. Harris: And is still working in the mine?

Hon. H. SEDDON: To the best of my knowledge, yes, although he is known to be suffering from tuberculosis. The matter is being investigated by the department. It appears to me the long delay since the examination took place is not only unfair to the man himself, but unfair also to his workmates, who are exposed to the danger of infection. Certainly greater expedition might have been exercised in this case. I understand the difficulty is that because he was not actually engaged working on a mine when the examination was made, there is some doubt as to whether he can be brought within the scope of the Miners' Phthisis Act. The third instance I wish to touch upon covers a number of men who, as the result of advice given by the Government, left mining and engaged in other occupations. I quoted a few minutes ago the form in which a man is advised for the good of his health to leave the industry owing to his having developed miners' phthisis. Prior to the proclamation of the Workers' Compensation Act, a letter was sent out to all those men who, as the result of examination, were found to be suffering from dust. Those men were advised that it was desirable they should leave the industry and engage in other work. They were also assured by the Minister for Works in a covering letter that he was endeavouring to find other employment for them. A good many of the men were sent down on to the Norseman railway to undertake work in the Salmon Gums area, where provision was being made for establishing a special group settlement. The provisions of the Workers' Compensation

Act have a limitation. If a man has left the industry for 12 months and then breaks down, he cannot under the Act make any claim. The position is that some of those men induced to leave the industry and engage in work on the Norseman railway have since broken down. So those men, by accepting the advice of the Government, have placed themselves outside the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act, and outside the provisions of the Miners' Phthisis Act also. They are not provided for, and there is no means whereby they can claim compensation, although it was distinctly stated when the examination was made that they were suffering from illness contracted in the mines. It was because of that they were sent to Salmon Gums. This is a matter where delay is all to the disadvantage of the men, and the Government have benefited in respect of the working of the Workers' Compensation Act. Certain claims that, probably, would have been preferred had the men remained on the mines, have now lapsed. I should like the Minister to go into that aspect of the question. The Government should endeavour to meet the case and see to it that those men do not suffer for having brought themselves outside the benefits of the Workers' Compensation Act. Fourteen months ago the Premier made an announcement in regard to men taken out of the gold mining industry. He said arrangements had been made to set aside for those men a special group settlement area in the Salmon Gums district, and that special assistance and consideration were to be extended to them, with a view to their living under the best possible conditions and so preserving their health. I have here a "Kalgoorlie Miner" report of a meeting held at the Workers' Hall, Boulder, on the 25th June, 1926. It reads as follows:—

At the Workers' Hall, Boulder, yesterday morning the State Premier, Mr. Collier, M.L.A., addressed a largely attended meeting of members of the Mining Industry Branch of the Australian Workers' Union (Kalgoorlie and Boulder section), who have been notified that they should leave the mines because of the state of their health, and members who are unemployed as a result of the closing down of the Horseshoe G.M. The chair was occupied by the president of the union, Mr. E. F. Brown, who briefly introduced Mr. Collier. The Premier stated that he hoped to be able to find work for all the unemployed in the district within the next three weeks. He would ask those present not to become impatient if

very little was done for the first week or so. It was a somewhat difficult matter to find employment for such a large body of men at once, but within three weeks he hoped to have all the men at present out of work on the goldfields provided with suitable employment. Approximately 100 men would be needed for the Norseman-Salmon Gums line, whilst others would be required for road construction work. The Government had 300 farms, each of about 1,000 acres, surveyed in the Esperance district, some 60 miles from the port, and adjacent to the line. It was intended to allow the men who were affected by the dust to have first preference in acquiring these holdings. The men would not need a shilling to enable them to go on these farms. They would be paid by the Government for clearing, and money would be advanced to them on the most favourable terms by the Agricultural Bank for developmental purposes. Men who were desirous of going on to these farms should hand their names in at the A.W.U. office. He would instruct the Mines Department to liberally assist any men who were anxious to prospect in districts where there was a fair chance of obtaining results. There were already a number of men, approximately 400, out of employment in Perth, and he did not want to see any of the goldfields men amongst them. Any man who wished to go into the country districts for employment would be able to secure a free pass on the railways. At the conclusion of the meeting a number of questions were asked of the Premier, who was accorded a vote of thanks for his attendance.

That was on the 25th June, 1926. Up to date not any man has been settled on those holdings, and so far as I know there seems to be very little indication of any of them getting down there for a considerable time to come.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Did any of them apply to go?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Yes, a great number. I myself have handed in applications from many of them, asking that they should be considered when those farms are thrown open. So, although it is 14 months since that announcement was made, and although the Premier said he had the ground surveyed, not any man has been settled on those blocks. Now I wish to refer to the gold mining industry, which has exercised the attention, not only of members, but of the whole of our people for some considerable time. To a large extent the present Government were returned on a gold mining policy. They promised amongst other things—it will be found in the Premier's speech of 1924—that any sum, however large, would be made available to restore the gold mining industry. I should like to refer to

what has been done since the Government took office. In view of the parlous condition of the industry at present, it is clear that whatever steps the Government have taken have not been effective, and that there is urgent need for action quite outside the established routine to put the industry on a more satisfactory basis. There is also a moral claim upon both the Federal and the State Governments to assist the industry, since the industry is suffering largely from impositions quite beyond its own control. It has been made the subject of debate for many sessions. Two years ago we had before the House a motion enthusiastically upheld by supporters of the present Government. It was for the payment of a gold bonus to assist the industry. Of course, the object of that resolution was to ask the Federal Government to pay a bonus on the production of gold. Though the Federal Government, very largely as a result of the evidence placed before the Disabilities Commission, made available a sum of £450,000 as a special grant to Western Australia and followed it up with a further grant that has amounted to a net gain of £200,000 for each year since, the only provision for the assistance of the industry, made by the State Government out of that special grant was £167,000, and let me remind members that it was pointed out at the time that the special grant was made largely as a result of the evidence respecting the gold mining industry.

Hon. J. Ewing: Has that amount been spent?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Not up to the present. I should like to refer to the position of the Federal Government.

Hon. J. R. Brown: The State Government will spend it judiciously; they cannot throw it away.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The position of the Federal Government has been traversed by many speakers and it is time it was explained to members. First of all, the Federal Government made available a special grant to Western Australia, largely on the evidence respecting the gold mining industry. I read in the Press the other day that the Federal Government had made available the services of Dr. Stillwood, a prominent geologist, who is to undertake an examination of the geological conditions of Kalgoorlie, with a view to making his knowledge available so that

ore deposits may be located and the life of the mines extended.

Hon. J. Cornell: There was never a geologist yet that found anything.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The case has further been traversed by the Central Board of Trade, but they felt they could not recommend any assistance to the industry because of the allegation of inefficiency contained in Mr. Kingsley Thomas's report. Since then the case has been presented to the Migration and Development Commission, and that body instructed a committee of experts of Australian mining men to proceed to Kalgoorlie and make a special investigation of the conditions. I should like to point out that the committee's examination was restricted to the Kalgoorlie field. They certainly paid a visit to the Sons of Gwalia Mine at Leonora, but that was a flying trip engineered by the late Mr. E. J. Wellsted, who wished to draw the committee's attention to the conditions on the Sons of Gwalia Mine, particularly as it had been referred to in terms of commendation by Mr. Kingsley Thomas.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is the model mine and it is closing down.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is so. I understand the Sons of Gwalia Mine has entered upon a programme of salvage and, as far as we can judge, its life has been very much limited when there was really no necessity for limiting it in view of the promising ore deposits in the bottom levels. The technical committee made a very exhaustive inquiry and presented a complete report. Although they were severe in many of their comments they took into consideration many factors that had operated during and since the war, to which factors due recognition had not been given by Mr. Kingsley Thomas. They also made certain recommendations to which I wish to refer. Chiefly their recommendations were that the companies now operating on the Golden Mile should amalgamate into one or two groups; that they should raise further capital, firstly, for the purposes of geological exploration and ore development, and secondly, to re-equip and recondition the mines on the most up-to-date lines. They recommend that flotation should be tested alongside the present method of treatment to determine exactly what savings could be effected by adopting the flotation process and its success on a large scale. They also made other recommendations to which I shall refer later.

The committee, as I have pointed out, were limited, in that their scope was restricted to the Kalgoorlie mines. They did not make any investigation of the industry outside of Kalgoorlie with the exception of a flying trip to the Sons of Gwalia Mine.

Hon. J. Ewing: Why did they do that?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Those were their instructions. Following on their report an interim report was issued by the Migration and Development Commission dealing particularly with the Kalgoorlie mining field. The Commission made certain recommendations. They are still further prosecuting their inquiries into gold mining generally, and their final report has not yet been presented. When a deputation waited on the Prime Minister at Kalgoorlie a few weeks ago he pointed out that he had not yet received the full report of the Migration and Development Commission, and stated that until he had it he could not decide what further action would be taken to assist the gold mining industry. He pointed out, however, that he had made special funds available for the assistance of Western Australia, largely for gold mining, and he understood that of that sum the State Government had set aside £167,000 which had not yet been spent. The consequence is that before anything further can be done to assist gold mining in this State, the Federal Government naturally want to know what has been done with the £167,000. Sufficient evidence has already been placed before members to show the value of gold mining generally from the standpoint of immigration. Statistics have been presented showing the increase of population as a result of gold mining both in Victoria and Western Australia, as well as the additional benefits that accrued to this State as the result of the tremendous inflow of population and the development of production as a result of the gold discoveries. I have before me figures taken from the Western Australian records that show the progress of the State since 1890. In the period from 1890 to 1900 the population increased from 48,500 to 179,900, an increase of 131,400, or 270 per cent. The public debt in 1890 was £1,367,445. In 1900 it was £11,674,640, an increase of £10,307,199, or 854 per cent. Exports increased from £671,813 in 1890 to £6,952,054 in 1900, an increase of £6,180,241 in the ten years, equivalent to 1,020 per cent. From the year 1900 to 1926, a period of 26 years, the

population increased from 179,900 to 375,500, an increase of 195,600, or 209 per cent. The public debt increased from £11,674,640 in 1900 to £70,010,920 in 1926, an increase of £58,336,280, equal to 600 per cent. Our exports increased from £6,352,054 per annum in 1900 to £14,581,657 per annum in 1926, an increase for the 26 years of £7,729,603, or 213 per cent. Thus it has taken 26 years to make the same amount of progress in population and exports as we achieved in the preceding ten years, and the great advance made during the earlier decade was due to the gold mining industry. Even the enormous increase in the public debt has not resulted in anything like the same increase of actual production for export.

Hon. H. Stewart: The war with its aftermath is partly responsible for that.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The war certainly had a very serious effect, but I have pointed out the comparatively slow progress made during the last 26 years as compared with the rapid progress in the preceding ten years, which rapid progress was due to gold mining. Another factor is that gold mining has to a remarkable extent beneficially affected Australian manufactures. There is not the slightest doubt that the enormous market created as a result of the discovery of the goldfields provided a wonderful stimulus for the manufacturing industries of the Eastern States. In fact, the gold mining industry of Western Australia practically saved the State of Victoria. It must be recognised that there are large low-grade bodies of ore existing on our goldfields. They are known to exist, but owing in a majority of instances to bad finance or bad management, or to a thousand and one other causes, largely economic, they have not been developed to any considerable extent. They exist, however, and would provide employment for hundreds of men if they were properly developed and brought into production. They would provide employment quickly, because it is recognised that a vigorous policy of development of low-grade deposits opens up considerable employment for miners. As an illustration I refer to Wiluna, which is employing 150 or 160 men merely on the work of opening up those deposits. They have not started production yet. They are engaged in opening up the ore bodies, and the prospects are highly encouraging. Gold mining also has a beneficial effect on Australia's external trade. An examination of

our production and export figures discloses the fact that of the gold produced in the last four years, no less than 74 per cent. has been exported. Only a limited quantity of gold can be used in the Commonwealth. The gold reserve is maintained at about 47 per cent. of the total note issue, and the consequence is that any increase in gold production becomes an exportable product. Australia's position abroad financially is generally unsatisfactory. As members know, our imports largely exceed our exports. Here then is a method by which, if we stimulate the gold mining industry, we can find an exportable product that always commands its price in the markets of the world and would help to restore the unfavourable balance of Australian trade. From that standpoint a strong case might be made out for the encouragement of gold mining. Production from gold mining operates quickly. There has been a considerable amount of money expended to develop a migration policy for Western Australia, particularly for the development of the agricultural industry. The capital required in connection with that development has been very large. If we make a comparison between a given number of men to be settled in the agricultural industry and take the question of finding employment for the same number of men in the mining industry, we will find that the result is achieved at a much larger figure. When the Horseshoe mine closed down, it had been employing over 400 men for 28 years, but the amount of capital expended on those men did not exceed £500,000 in the first instance. I contend that to settle 400 men in a farming district would in the long run cost the State a very much greater amount than £500,000. Of course some argument may be raised with regard to the greater permanency of the agricultural industry. That would be a sound argument so far as it goes. I would, however, point out the benefit so far as migration is concerned of employing people in the gold mining industry. I would advance this argument in support of that theory. Numbers of men were induced to take part in gold mining. Many of those who went into the industry in 1898 up to 1900 are now amongst the most prosperous agriculturists in the State. During the time they were engaged in gold mining they were not only increasing enormously the wealth of the State, but

were laying the foundation for a market for the products of the agricultural industry. Our agricultural products now find their greatest markets overseas, but at the time I speak of the market afforded by the goldfields for agricultural products was the main thing that stimulated the agricultural industry, and indicated the enormous possibility that existed as the result of opening up the wheat belt. I would point out that 90 per cent. of the gold produced in our mines is spent in Australia by way of wages or the purchase of materials. It has been higher than that figure. With regard to future discoveries, an interesting paper was read by Mr. Gepp before the Institute of Mining Engineers in the Eastern States. He dealt with certain geophysical methods of prospecting which have been pursued in other parts of the world, particularly in Sweden, and which have resulted in the discovery of large ore deposits whose existence had hitherto been unsuspected. These geophysical methods have to be undertaken by trained men. They have opened up a new vista so far as prospecting is concerned, and offer great opportunities for a country like Western Australia. Mining men who are well versed in the position in this State contend that so far as superficial deposits are concerned, these have largely been located, except in the far outlying regions. They point out that there must be from the geological indications deposits equally as important and as valuable as those already known, concealed under the overburden, and which might be brought to light by some improved method of prospecting. It is further pointed out that the application of this method to Australia should result in the discovery of new ore deposits of considerable value, and by that means afford a possibility of re-establishing the gold mining industry. With regard to the question of assisting the gold mining industry, it appears to me that if we approach it from the point of view of migration, this is a job which falls equally upon the Imperial, the Commonwealth and the State Governments. It seems to me all these authorities will benefit by a migration policy such as the stimulation of the gold mining industry would achieve. I consider that the Migration Development Commission might well consider the ques-

tion of assisting the industry by closely associating it with a migration policy, and that this would lead to the greater development of Western Australia. In the course of their inquiries the Technical Committee made some strong references to the gold mining position. They pointed out first of all that the changing economic conditions of recent years had pressed heavily upon the industry and went on to say:—

The direct effect of the traffic had been emphasised too much. In 1910 its effect on working costs was to increase the cost of production from 2d. to 3d. per ton. To-day, the added cost per ton would not exceed 6d. This does not loom large in respect of operating concerns, but it is a serious factor in respect of capital outlay on new properties and plants. In its indirect effect the tariff has been one of the factors operating to increase the cost of living. This has caused wages to rise and working costs to respond. It seems quite impossible to restore pre-war conditions. Other means of assistance are called for if the industry is to survive. Since 1913 wages have risen approximately 35 per cent., materials 45 per cent., and machinery up to 100 per cent.

It is very interesting to read the arguments that were adduced before the Disabilities Commission as to the effect, direct and indirect, of the tariff on the gold mining industry, and to find that the Technical Committee after exhaustive examination are confirming the contentions then brought forward. They have placed a definite figure upon the actual rise in costs to the industry when they quote the average figure of 40 per cent. increase over 1913 costs. They also made further reference to the fact that—

The Migration Committee recognised that from the Imperial and Australian points of view it seems desirable that the industry should continue to provide profitable employment for large numbers of men, and that gold should continue to be won. There is much wealth yet to be won from the gold-mining industry, and it is important that mining operations should not fade into insignificance at this early stage in the history of the Commonwealth.

That is the opinion of the Technical Committee after an exhaustive examination into the industry at Kalgoorlie. It appears too, as a result of their findings, that there is a moral right on the Governments to restore the conditions, so far as they can, that existed in the industry prior to 1913. The figures taken on the 1913 costs would indicate a subsidy in the region of something like 7s. 9d. per ton. This

would be justified on the increase of 40 per cent. upon the 1913 costs. The Development and Migration Commission in their migration report made certain recommendations. These were (1) a thorough reorganisation of existing methods; (2) whether the expenditure of money for the purpose of ascertaining if further substantial ore resources are available is justified; (3) the amalgamation of the west end mines should be finalised immediately; (4) new money will be required to (a) carry out improvements underground and on the surface to enable the Lake View and Star mill to treat 25,000 tons per month; (b) institute an intensive geological survey, ore exploration and development to determine additional available ore reserves; (c) from the latter to determine the amount of further capital expenditure justifiable, to reduce working costs; (5) raising additional capital by the company by shares to which special conditions apply; (6) co-operative action by the State and Commonwealth Governments, contingent on the measures taken by companies and employees for internal reorganisation of the industry, and support by mining investors. There is also the following significant extract taken from the report:—

The ore deposits at Kalgoorlie in general call for an expenditure of some 2s. per ton on exploration, and some 2s. per ton on development of ore bodies when discovered. Without such expenditure work underground is liable to be inefficient owing to lack of proper balance between ore reserves and production requirements.

I wish first of all to deal with the question mooted by the committee as to the desirability of raising capital in London. We have to take into consideration the attitude of London with regard to the gold mining industry. In that respect it will be interesting to members if I read an extract from the Great Boulder report of the 30th July, 1926, and the remarks of Mr. A. H. Collier at that meeting. Mr. Collier said:—

It may interest you to know that I am chairman of the Lake View and Star, and I wrote a month ago a strong letter to the Premier of Western Australia—I know him personally—on the very points that have been raised. He would have received that letter yesterday. I told him that he could not expect me to raise another 6d. here in London for Western Australian mines in face of the disgraceful imposts put upon the industry. I appealed to him as a statesman, and I may tell you this—I know what I am talking about—that I felt sure the Premier agrees with us,

but he is harassed by some of the extremists out there to tax the industry in the way he is doing. But for them he would have kept to the promises which he gave us when he was here last year. He was not in favour of these additional imposts, and I am sure he would have been very glad to have been able to say that the Government would bear them.

Hon. J. Cornell: Evidently one Collier does not know the other.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The director continues—

Hon. H. Stewart: Those promises are no more fruitful than the Salmon Gum promises.

Hon. H. SEDDON: The director continues—

As I have told you I wrote him a very strong letter, and it was supplemented by a very strong cable from the Lake View Board this week supporting my letter.

The other day appeared in the Press a statement by the chairman of the Sons of Gwalia Mining Company. I have previously referred to that mine in this House. Every inquiry that has been made with regard to the efficient carrying on of the gold mining industry has commended this mine for the manner in which it is working. Owing, however, to the burdens placed upon that mine it is now closing down and is engaged in salvage operations. The directors are not prepared to carry on because, as they say, the position is no longer a profitable one. Speaking from the chair at the Sons of Gwalia Mine meeting in London on June 30th, Mr. C. A. Moreing said—

At a previous meeting shareholders freely expressed the opinion that unless better operating conditions were secured the mine should be closed down. In 1925 the Arbitration Court granted increases in wages and other serious concessions, resulting in a net increase of about £5,000. Federal tariffs adversely affected the cost of mining stores and operations for the year 1925 resulted in a loss of £1,231. At the same time they were threatened by the State Government with the enforcement of the third section of the Workers' Compensation Act, involving a further burden of a sum of £5,000 per annum, and the Workers' Union submitted schemes for further wage increases which threatened a still further burden of another £5,000 per annum. The enforcement of the third section of the Workers' Compensation Act was made in October last.

The Act was proclaimed as for Kalgoorlie on June 15th, 1926. It was afterwards extended to the Gwalia mine in October, 1926.

And the claims of the various unions were still pending and had been supplemented re-

cently by a further claim from the firewood cutters, which if successful would materially increase the cost of fuel supplies. In the year 1926 working had resulted in a loss of a little over £3,000. During the current year the position became so acute that the directors pressed for the very earliest assistance, and the Government offered them an advance of £5,000 to meet monthly losses as from March 1, pending decision as to a larger scheme of assistance. They were asked to approve of a mortgage to secure this loan, but they advised the Government that they could not pledge the property against operating costs. In the absence of further advices from the State Government they had no alternative but to cable instructions that all existing liabilities must be met from salvage operations, and these had been commenced this month, 80 men being discharged and the remainder concentrated on the highest grade stopes, which would soon be depleted, following which the plant and other assets must be realised.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Prior to the tea adjournment I was dealing with the question mentioned by the Technical Committee of raising further fresh capital for the reconditioning of the mines in the Kalgoorlie area, and gave the quotations I did from various reports, in order to illustrate the attitude adopted in London regarding further financial assistance for Western Australian mines. In further support of those quotations I would draw the attention of hon. members to conditions prevailing in London at the time of the flotation of the Wiluna mine. At that time an attempt was made by the company to float the mine for £800,000. There was no doubt about it; the flotation dragged on for a considerable time. At that particular period there had been certain discoveries in central America of gold occurrences, and capital was raised in London for the purpose of developing the gold bearing area. The necessary money was raised for the American project in 65 minutes and was largely over-subscribed. I contend that the contrast between the two experiences is indicative of the attitude in London towards Western Australian mining. I also refer to the conditions under which the Great Boulder Perseverance mine was able to raise additional money required in order to carry on operations two or three years before. The only way the mining company was able to raise the money was by the issuing of £1,000,000 worth of priority shares at 1s. They were issued at 3d. on application and calls spread over a period

of about 12 months, the calls being made as required. The conditions under which the shares were issued were that the amount subscribed had first of all to be paid out of the proceeds of the mine, and then the shares were to rank as co-equal with the ordinary shares of the company existing prior to the further distribution. Hon. members will realise that these were onerous conditions to be imposed, but they had to be accepted before fresh capital could be obtained, in order to allow the mine to continue for a longer period. The Technical Committee, when making their recommendation regarding the further money required for reconditioning the Kalgoorlie mines, recognised the conditions under which mining is regarded in London. In their report they say—

The financial policies of the companies are open to grave criticism, but it will be understood that the shareholders have a different point of view to that of either the State or the Federal Government or the point of view actuating the Migration and Development Commission in their efforts to obviate the premature decline of the industry. The shareholder looks for quick returns on as big a scale as possible. He does not regard mining as an industry but as a venture. He finds money speculatively, and looks for rewards sufficient to balance the risk. It really is not surprising therefore that reserves have been sacrificed to distribute dividends, and that the future of the industry has been neglected. It is an unfortunate fact that the changing economic conditions of recent years pressed heavily upon the goldmining industry. Costs have mounted, but the product, apart from the seven years when gold was at a premium, has not appreciably increased in value to the producer.

Regarding the attitude adopted in connection with the financing of mines, I think it is known by those who have studied investment conditions in London that the large financial houses cut out mining altogether from their recommendations. That is to say that when making a recommendation to any investor seeking their advice, they advise those investors to place their money only in companies with strong reserves and in a strong position generally. In any case they cut out mining, except as a purely speculative venture. I have read reports indicating the attitude of the London companies towards finding further capital to continue operations in the mines of the Kalgoorlie goldfields. We have to recognise that this is the companies' attitude in London, and that the chance of raising fresh capital for reconditioning mines is remote. At the same time it must be

recognised that the attitude of both the employees and of the Governments—State and Federal—is entirely different. These sections are looking at the gold-mining industry not only from the standpoint of employment, but as a source of wealth production. The point of view of the London speculator is largely to get all he can out of the industry, but it is essential that the Governments of Australia shall make some forward move in order to demonstrate that they are sincere regarding their promised assistance to the industry. From that standpoint I contend it is incumbent on the State Government to make a move, and to finance the companies by generous assistance instead of heavily penalising them by burdens imposed on the industry. They should say that the Governments—State and Federal—are prepared to give ready assistance to the industry, and thus prove their sincerity by making a move in that direction. From time to time references have been made to the financial policy of the companies and criticism has been levelled at them regarding the way the companies distributed heavy dividends and neglected to provide adequate reserves. On that point I would like hon. members to remember that conditions during the war were such that mining companies that had reserves either of ore or bullion were induced, because of war conditions and the great need of gold on the part of the Empire, not only to realise on their bullion reserves, but to concentrate their mining operations entirely on extracting the gold from the known higher grade ore deposits. For that reason development was entirely neglected during the war period. First because of the urgent necessity to realise on the bullion and secondly, because they were urged to make use of the available ore reserves known to exist. Then again the large numbers of men who had enlisted from the goldfields areas meant that their services were not available for work in the gold mines. Thus war conditions were entirely against the question of development. That fact was recognised by the Mitchell Government, because in 1923 when a case was presented to that Government by the companies for assistance to the gold-mining industry by way of reduced water charges, the fact was appreciated by the Government, who recognised that the companies had not been able to carry on a developmental policy owing to war conditions, and as a result

they made a reduction in the price of water from 7s. per 1,000 gallons to 3s. per 1,000 gallons.

Member: No, it was down to 2s. 6d.

Hon. H. SEDDON: This reduction was made contingent upon the mines agreeing to expend the amount saved because of the reduction in the price of water, entirely on developmental work. I have not heard of any return being received from the companies to show that the money was spent for the purposes stipulated. I contend it was the duty of the Government to see that the conditions laid down when the assistance was granted were complied with, and that the companies should have been warned that further assistance along these lines would not be available if those conditions were not carried out. As to the question of assistance, I have instanced the attitude of the Federal Government. I have detailed the assistance that the Government have already given to the gold-mining industry, and have indicated that even now the Development and Migration Commission have not finished with the case for the mining industry. That body will make a further report dealing with the gold-mining from a Commonwealth standpoint and the case for further monetary assistance. The attitude of the Federal Government has changed considerably since the question was first put before them. When Mr. Bruce was approached in 1924 for assistance in the form of a gold bonus he put up certain conditions that it would be necessary to observe before he would consider the question. The attitude to-day is disclosed in the recognition of the position of the Sons of Gwalia mine. That mine has been commended by everyone who has investigated the position as an up to date mine, yet it is to close down owing to various economic factors. The fact that it is an up to date mine shows that there must be other considerations apart from the question of efficiency operating to affect the conditions of mining operations. It is those factors that will have weight with the Development and Migration Commission in making their further report. The Technical Committee in the course of the recommendations I have referred to, raised the question of finding money for ore exploration and consequently for ore development, and they quoted figures which they considered necessary for the Kalgoorlie mines. They suggest that the assistance should be allocated on the basis

of 2s. per ton to be expended in exploration, and 2s. per ton in the development of ore reserves. This form of assistance would apply to gold-mines throughout the State, and it is a form of assistance that can be granted on a tonnage production basis, and thus assure continuity of operations on the part of the companies receiving it. If assistance were given by the State Government in the form of a grant for developmental purposes, it should be on the basis of 2s. per ton. It would mean that the money would be spent in the directions I have already indicated instead of as in the past, largely to meet operating losses. The expenditure of that money would mean the finding of new wealth. It would be contingent, too, upon the companies operating. It would not be available to any company that had ceased operations, but those companies continuing their operations would receive assistance according to the tonnage raised. I commend to the Government the suggestion that instead of following the methods of assistance they have pursued in the past, an effort should be made to grant assistance along the lines I have suggested, making it always contingent upon continuity of operations and the development of ore reserves. Personally I am very disappointed to note the way in which the State Government have hung on to the money that was made available from the Federal grant. It is now over 12 months since Parliament set aside the sum of £165,000. During that period the State Government have had the use of the money, and whether they have placed it in a Trust Account or used it for other purposes, I do not know. At any rate during that period it should have earned interest equivalent to at least 5 per cent., which on £165,000 would represent £8,250 a year.

Hon. J. Cornell: I presume that amount will be added to the grant.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I claim that in all equity we are entitled to the addition of that £8,000 to the original grant of £165,000. I contend it is only just and equitable that the total sum shall be made available to the companies operating throughout the State. If the gold-mining industry of Western Australia is to be restored to its former strength, that can only be done by the development of large low grade ore bodies outside the Kalgoorlie fields, as well as by the extension of the operations of the Kalgoorlie mines themselves. I therefore appeal to the Gov-

ernment to take action along these lines and to make the grant of £173,000 representing the grant and the interest accrued, available in a form of assistance such as I have outlined. I wish now to deal with the question of production. Speaking on the Address-in-reply Mr. Kitson referred to the progress made in Western Australian production. The hon. member instanced the increase of acreage under wheat, the increase in wheat production, and the increase in the number of sheep, and he said that these were evidence of progress. That is so. But when we analyse the statistics with regard to production we find that the progress is not nearly so satisfactory as far as the State is concerned, as we were led to believe. While the statistics of production indicate progress, for instance, the increase in the 1927 crop, as compared with the 1926 crop, was $9\frac{1}{2}$ million bushels, but as far as the financial returns were concerned the position was not nearly so satisfactory. In this connection I have a table issued by the Government Statistician with regard to the estimated value of Western Australian production from 1916 to 1925. This table sets out that the total value of Western Australian production has steadily increased since 1921. In 1924 the total production of the State was valued at $29\frac{1}{4}$ million pounds. The 1925 total is given as $30\frac{3}{4}$ millions sterling. But in giving the 1925 statistics the Government Statistician points out that he has made a variation in the way he has compiled his figures, and in the 1925 statistics we find that there are two items which cover the period not of 12 months but of 18 months. Therefore, the $30\frac{3}{4}$ millions sterling really includes 18 months' figures. Take the two industries, (1) Forests and Fisheries, and (2) manufactures, adjusted to the new method of computation. If we make the correction there that we are entitled to make we find that the total production of the State, instead of being $30\frac{3}{4}$ millions, really comes out at £27,029,000, and so far from the value of production having increased from 1924 to 1925, it actually has gone back. To effect a comparison I have prepared a table which shows the public debt of the State, the increase of the public debt, and the percentage increase of the public debt for the years 1920 to 1925. The same table also shows the value of the production, the annual increase and the percentage increase. It also shows

the ratio of the production increase to the public debt increase. The figures are so in-

structive that I may be permitted to submit the table for publication:—

YEAR.	PUBLIC DEBT.		PRODUCTION.			PER-centage.	PRODUCTION AND INCREASE.
	Public Debt Total Amount.	Increase Amount.	Per-centage.	Production Amount.	Annual Increase.		Ratio of Pro-duction Increase to Public Debt Increase.
1920 ...	£ 46,822,003	£ 3,184,927	7·3	£ 22,976,660	£ 579,966 inc.	2·6 inc.	18 inc.
1921 ...	49,039,667	2,217,664	4·7	20,461,233	2,515,427 dec.	10·9 dec.	113 dec.
1922 ...	54,959,778	5,920,111	12·0	21,813,233	648,000 inc.	3·0 inc.	10 inc.
1923 ...	58,485,854	3,526,076	6·4	24,689,259	2,876,026 inc.	13·0 inc.	81 inc.
1924 ...	62,765,782	4,279,928	7·3	26,228,568	4,539,324 inc.	18·0 inc.	106 inc.
1925 ...	64,493,261	1,727,479	2·7	30,905,718	1,577,135 inc.	5·4 inc.	91·2 inc.
1925 ...	64,493,261	1,727,479	2·7	27,029,588	2,198,995 dec.	7·5 dec.	121 dec.

NOTE.—In 1925 the production figures for Forests and Fisheries £3,993,226
and Manufacturing £7,335,166

Total £11,328,392

Cover a period of 18 months—

Correcting to a 12 months basis they are as follows—Forests and Fisheries £2,662,151
Manufacturing £4,890,111

Total £7,552,262

Difference £3,776,130

The percentages taken on the latter figures compare with proportions of previous years than the 18 month figures, hence comparison is fair and just.

To further emphasise the true figures, in 1925 the production statistics for Forests and Fisheries were shown as £3,993,226, and for manufactures £7,335,166, a total of £11,328,392. Those figures cover a period of 18 months. For the 12 months they are adjusted as follows: Forests and Fisheries £2,662,151, manufactures £4,890,111, a total of £7,552,262—a difference of £3,776,130. If we take the corrected figures and compare them with the percentage figures for the previous years, we find the proportions are nearer the proportion previously existing in the industries than the figures for 1925 given by the Statistician so far as the production is concerned, and taken on a value basis, the State went back in 1924-25 to the extent of two millions. That is a state of affairs which is very serious, and which people should take into account, for it is an indication of the way the country is going, and it should be a warning to any Government which embarks on a policy that is only presumably for the benefit of the country. I wish to make a few remarks with regard to a subject which is increasingly important to the people of Australia. Very few important steps taken in the last 12 months will have more to do with the future progress of the Commonwealth than certain steps taken within the past year. The first to which

I refer is the investigation made by the Industrial Mission to America, and the second the Arbitration Court and the decision made by Judge Beeby in the engineers' case.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I do not think the first will have much result.

Hon. H. SEDDON: For some time past we have seen in the Press repeated references to the conditions obtaining in America. An attempt has been made to paint a glowing picture of the conditions under which the working men there labour. In certain industries rates of pay have been quoted and contrasted almost invariably unfavourably to the Australian worker. If hon. members have been following the reports made by Messrs. Adams and Grayndler on the investigations those gentlemen have made, they will see that Mr. Adams paints quite a different picture and he shows the conditions actually obtaining in American work-shops. He admits the rates of pay are higher than those in Australia, but he also points out the conditions under which the men are employed, conditions that do not exist out here. In America a man is engaged practically on a day-to-day basis; he never knows when he is going to receive notice that he is to be put off. The consequence is that he is not guaranteed con-

tinuous employment, as is the case in Australia to-day. The position as obtaining in Australia has been outlined by Mr. Julius, who at the present time is at the head of the Institute of Science and Industry. Mr. Julius delivered an address in 1926 at the Hobart conference of Australian engineers. At that conference he made some very significant statements. He first of all referred to the fact that we lived in an age of manufacturing, and he went on to say—

Relative to the well being of Australia curves showed that the average rate of wages paid in our manufacturing industries has increased from £81 in 1908 to £187 in 1924, an increase of 130 per cent. The amount produced per man, irrespective of money value was materially lower than it was 20 years ago, and the general trend is downward. Also the debt per capita has arisen to an enormous extent; the wages paid have risen to an almost exactly similar extent, and are still rising, and although the money value of our products shows an increase from year to year yet the average productivity over all industries is steadily falling.

The striking feature of a diagram which showed the average wealth per head of the populations of the United States and England was the remarkable change which the former country showed in economic conditions at the beginning of the present century. By 1904 a new rate of increase of wealth had become established which no subsequent happening in their own country or abroad has disturbed in the slightest degree. Great Britain has maintained an even rate of increase nothing corresponding to the American acceleration. The cause is said to be due to the greater use of power per head in industries in U.S.A. compared with Great Britain.

In Australia H.P., per employee, wages and value added in the course of manufacture per employee are very much lower than U.S.A. Difference steadily increasing.

Worker.	H.P.	Value added.
American ...	3½	£ 600
Australian ...	1½	322

Comparative "Real Wages."

	£
Philadelphia ...	200
Ottawa ...	164
Sydney ...	156
London ...	100
Paris ...	61
Brussels ...	65
Madrid ...	47

It is a subject of enquiry, however, how much Australia owes to high price of wool and foreign loans.

The following conclusions follow:—

1. The vital factor in the efficient development of industry is cheap power, not only in current but in equipment.

2. Attention should be concentrated on supplying equipment at the lowest possible cost to the consumer.

3. We have established at great cost power stations, but are depriving them of sales by dear equipment for consumers.

4. The U.S.A. pay the highest real wages in history, but only because individual productivity is high.

5. Australia has raised her wages in industry to a point almost as high as America without any corresponding improvement in productivity to warrant the rise. In fact, due to shortage of power, shorter hours of work, and a variety of other reasons individual productivity has steadily fallen through the years on the average.

Australia living on borrowed money and high wool values is in an unhealthy condition that cannot long continue.

Thoughtful men for years past have been drawing attention to Australia's unsatisfactory economic position. The trained financial observers who contribute to our newspapers and writers in Great Britain and the directors of our banks and financial institutions, all unite in commenting on our mounting national debts and urge increased production to meet them.

In other words, Mr. Julius's point is that the internal market for which our manufacturing industries cater is practically saturated as regards most of those industries, and that in order to obtain a return not only for the labour engaged in the industries but also for the capital engaged in them, steps have been taken through the years to increase the prices of the products by increased protection, which has really worked to the detriment of the country as a whole. I now wish to quote certain remarks of Mr. Grayndler, who I understand is the Secretary of the A.W.U., and who accompanied the industrial mission to America. Those remarks are particularly interesting in the circumstances. He refers first of all to the receptions given to the mission—

The receptions gave the mission little or no time for inspections, apart from those arranged for in the itinerary, and the employers' representatives were reluctant to vary the progress through the open shops by any departure that would enable a fuller investigation of the many business concerns conducted in full agreement with the unions. Even when the employees' representatives insisted on an inspection of the Baltimore and Ohio railway works, one of the largest concerns in America, and which is "union" throughout, I had personally to make the preliminary arrangements. But when we arrived at Baltimore the representatives of the Chamber of Commerce met the party, and out of the six hours allowed by the itinerary, four and a-half hours were taken up with a harbour excursion and other forms of entertainment, leaving only one and a-half hours for an investigation of the huge Baltimore works. Later on in the tour, however, we had an opportunity of discussing the conditions with the representatives of the employees of the Balti-

fore and Ohio railway while they were in Washington. This is just one experience which seemed part of a general desire to prevent our getting an opportunity of thoroughly investigating both sides of the industrial position in America. In a population of 120,000,000 it is not extraordinary to find 80 to 100 open shops in a flourishing condition, but most people will realise that a restriction of the investigations to those concerns would make the work of the mission suspect to the great bulk of the trade unionists. There was a tendency on the part of one or two of the employers' representatives to emphasise that the piece-work system under open shop conditions was the chief reason for America's industrial supremacy, and some propaganda to this effect was sent to Australia. But neither the piece-work system nor any other system of payment of wages is the real cause of America's amazing industrial development. The chief factors are efficiency in management and organisation, and perfection and more perfection in machinery which is obviously the constant aim of almost every successful business undertaking in the States. The average American business man is no longer concerned with union smashing. He believes in high wages and in expanding the spending power of the workers, who are the reliable "home market" for the immense quantities of commodities produced by mass production methods. One statistical fact stands out—the highest wages are paid and the best conditions obtain in the industries that have been thoroughly organised by the American Federation of Labour. Notoriously on the other hand, the worst conditions are in the open shops of the automobile industry, notably in Detroit, where one factory's 125,000 employees speak no less than 57 different languages, and where unemployment is painfully prevalent.

Those remarks are particularly interesting when we consider the conditions obtaining to-day in Australia, and the dispute which seems to be arising out of the attitude of the Federal Arbitration Court. For the first time we have an Arbitration Court taking into consideration the fact that when they fix the rate of wages regard must be had to the amount of production given in return for those wages. When the Arbitration Bill was discussed in this Chamber, more than one member pointed out that recent awards of wages were not based on the actual production of the State or the Commonwealth, and that the payment of such wages must sooner or later create a condition of affairs under which industry could not be carried on. Apparently, the Arbitration Courts, both Federal and State, have taken cognisance of this fact, because we have, as already pointed out by me to-day, Judge Beeby in the Federal Court laying down the condition of shorter hours subject to the provision that piecework may

be introduced in connection with their working. In our State court a recent award of Justice Dwyer recognises the conditions obtaining in the mining industry, into which he had made investigation. He pointed out that he was not able to concede any relief to the men engaged in the industry, since he was convinced, as a result of his investigation, that the industry could not stand it. We have been fixing wages which are really based upon the conditions obtaining in the secondary industries, and these secondary industries are, almost without exception, benefiting by the protectionist policy of Australia. The only sound basis upon which to fix wages is to have regard to the returns obtained by primary industry. The load which has been placed upon primary industry is so heavy, and is increasing so rapidly, as to create a state of affairs recognised by all financial authorities to be unstable in the extreme. References have been made in this Chamber to the unsatisfactory reports current in London financial circles as to heavy borrowings by Western Australia. Yet we find that the protectionist policy which we have inaugurated is really working in direct opposition to the policy of heavy borrowings, because all those borrowings have to be brought to Australia in the form of goods, and those goods, on entering Australia, have to bear an all-round tariff of 22 per cent. Thus our loans, upon entering Australia, are depreciated to the extent of 22 per cent. by the operation of the tariff. I raise the point because this departure by the Arbitration Courts leads in the right direction, to my thinking. In future the courts will base their awards more especially upon production, and thus will, I hope, steadily press on in the direction of bringing the remuneration for labour more directly into correspondence with the production per head of the population; and that is the only basis upon which we can establish stable conditions for industry. Everybody recognises that to-day our workers are living at a standard very much higher than that ruling in many other countries of the world. We want to see that standard maintained. Here is a chance of maintaining the high standard of which we Australians are so proud, without inflicting upon our workers hardships which will inevitably come upon

them by the destruction of the unstable edifice of finance which we have erected upon the basis of large loans and diminished production. The answer to the problem is to be found in the investigation by the industrial mission to America, which mission has reported that by the increase of efficiency per head, by the greater and greater employment of power to assist the employee, and by the adoption of the principle of mass production in those of our manufactures to which it can be applied, we shall find a way out of the uneconomic position which we now occupy. The mining industry is the first example of a primary industry being pressed out of existence by unfair burdens placed upon it. In conclusion, I wish to say a few words regarding the finances of the State. There has been a considerable amount of comment in the public Press on the financial position. The Premier has reported a surplus of £28,000 as the result of last year's financial operations. The hon. gentleman recently took upon himself the task of answering criticisms which have been passed upon the finances, and he made certain remarks which I think should be brought to the special attention of hon. members, because it seems to me that as the result of the Premier's explanations the position has been further confused. Mr. Collier spoke as follows:—

Each one of the critics knows perfectly well that not one penny of the Commonwealth money from any of these grants during the past three years has benefited Consolidated Revenue at all. The inference has been that in some way the money has come directly into Consolidated Revenue. Statements have been made with that purpose in view. The object has been to give the people the idea that the improvement in the finances has been brought about because of Commonwealth grants. I assert again that not one pound of Federal money has gone into Consolidated Revenue.

I repeat my opinion that the Premier's remarks in many respects do not clarify the position. His assertion that Commonwealth grants have not benefited Consolidated Revenue at all will not bear investigation. We have to recognise that Commonwealth grants, being spent within the community, have an effect on employment, an effect on taxation, returns from income tax, and an effect, so far as the State is concerned, in relieving the burden which exists as regards the deficit. Hon. members may recollect that when the first grant was

received from the Federal Government, just over 12 months ago, it was allocated by this Parliament in two directions. An amount of £200,000 was set aside to meet the then existing deficit. That sum of £200,000 relieved the burden which would have had to be borne by the people of the State. If £200,000 of deficit had been funded as the other £6,000,000 of deficit had been funded, the State, borrowing money at the rate of not less than 5 per cent. interest, would have created an additional interest burden of at least £10,000 annually. Interest payments have to be found out of Consolidated Revenue. The returns for the financial year 1925-26 show an amount of £3,040,398 18s. 3d. as having been paid by way of interest on bonds, stocks, and Treasury bills during that year. Thus by employing the Commonwealth money to wipe out the deficit, the backs of Western Australian taxpayers were relieved of £10,000 in the form of annual interest charges, and Consolidated Revenue was also relieved to that extent. The sum of £165,000 was set aside for mining. I have already quoted the amount of interest that was due as the result of the retention of that £165,000 in the hands of the Government for 12 months. If that money was invested, it must have earned £8,250, while if it was used for other purposes the Government have benefited by the fact of not having had to pay £8,250 in interest for money from other sources. Therefore to that extent Consolidated Revenue has benefited, again as the result of savings in interest charges. Reference was made by the Premier to the £200,000 provided out of the second year's Commonwealth grant for the purpose of reducing income tax. In his remarks on that head the Premier said that as a matter of fact he had not gained, but actually had lost by taking that £200,000 into account in the reduction of income taxation. What are the figures? In the financial statement published in the newspapers on July 12th we find an item under the head of taxation. That item is income tax, and income tax is shown to have brought in for the year ended 30th June, 1927, £345,527. The Government set aside for the reduction of income tax one-third of the previous rate; so if we take one-half of £345,527 or £172,763, we get the actual amount of the reduction. The total amount that would have been received is £518,290.

That is the amount the Government would have received in place of £343,527 had they maintained the old rate of taxation during the 12 months. However, instead of receiving this £172,763, the Treasurer took £200,000 and used that in addition to the £345,527 that he collected. So instead of £518,290, he actually received in 1926 the sum of £545,527. In other words, the gain to Consolidated Revenue by the inclusion of £200,000 of the Federal grant for 1926 was £27,237. Then there is another matter to which the Premier referred, one that I think should be brought under notice of members. That is in regard to the surplus that existed in the sinking fund of the Goldfields Water Supply loan. If members will turn to the public accounts for 1926, page 120, they will find an item of £2,704,699. That is the amount to the credit of the sinking fund in respect of loan moneys raised for the purpose of establishing the Goldfields Water Supply. The amount that had to be repaid was £2,500,000 and the amount to the credit of the sinking fund was £2,704,699. So there is a difference of £204,699. The Premier in the course of his remarks said that he showed a benefit to Consolidated Revenue of £58,000 received in repayment from the sinking fund of the Goldfields Water Supply loan. I have shown that there was in that sinking fund a surplus of £204,699. The amount that was taken into Consolidated Revenue from that £204,699 was £58,000. In the remarks that passed between the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, Sir James Mitchell said there was a surplus of £200,000 in June last and that he supposed some of the bonds had been sold at less than face value. The Premier said that at the time it was a matter of face value, but that subsequently they were sold at market value, which was less than face value, and so the revenue had benefited to that extent. During 1926 the contribution to the sinking fund totalled £257,830, which came from Consolidated Revenue. On face value there was a credit of £204,699 in the Goldfields Water Supply sinking fund. I cannot understand how the Premier makes out that out of £204,699 he got only £58,000 for Consolidated Revenue, when by making an adjustment against what he had to pay into the sinking fund, he could have got so much more. I should like the Chief Secretary to explain the position in regard to this, for I contend that the statement made by the Premier on this point in another place was not satisfactory, was not clear in any way.

On the question of finance, it appears to me a good deal of confusion and mistrust could be obviated if simultaneously with the publication of the financial statement there was also published a balance sheet showing the amounts owing to the State and by the State, as well as the actual amounts received and expended.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You want the Treasurer to give the show away.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I should like to draw attention to an article published a few months ago in the "Australian Banking Journal." It was written by the ex-Treasurer of New South Wales, who drew attention to a smart piece of work by Mr. Lang when he took office. Mr. Lang investigated the financial position and gave instructions that all money owing by the Government to other people was to be paid immediately. He also gave further instructions that in respect of the revenue accruing to the Government the Treasury officials were simply to follow the ordinary routine and close the books sharply on 30th June. The result was that the financial year ended with a tremendous deficit, for which Mr. Lang's predecessor got the blame. The curious thing is that nobody could find any fault with the action taken by Mr. Lang, because it was strictly in accordance with accepted accountancy practice all over the world. It was first-class finance and, more than that, it was a condemnation of the methods that have obtained in Government finance for many years past.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Did he adopt the same tactics when dealing with the last balance sheet?

Hon. H. SEDDON: It seems to me the practice of allowing accounts to remain open until the 10th of the following month serves to bring into account a larger sum of money and result in a representation of the State's finances that is not in accordance with facts.

Hon. J. Cornell: Does it matter very much in the long run?

Hon. H. SEDDON: I think it does, because if you were to show the people the true position and give them a balance sheet detailing the State's liabilities and assets in respect of Consolidated Revenue they would understand the position more clearly and see exactly how the State was going. The Government that adopted that policy would do more to win the confidence of the electors than by following the usual practice, which I say merits condemnation.

I do not wish to refer to the financial proposals to-night, for we shall have an opportunity to discuss them at a later date. As to the remarks made by previous speakers on this point, I hope members will suspend judgment in regard to the financial proposals until they are able to consider them in detail. It is evident that those proposals were put forward under press of circumstances and conditions that, if ignored, might bring results to Australia far worse than the faults hon. members think they can see in these proposals. I support the remarks of Mr. Nicholson upon the accommodation existing in the securities department of the Lands Titles Office. Recently I had occasion to go into that office, when my attention was drawn to the way they have been crowded out in the accommodation provided for those securities. One of the staff asked me if I could indicate any position in which they could store more securities in the accommodation available. I had to admit that the room appeared to be crowded out. This matter is in urgent need of attention for I feel that the papers down there should be properly looked after, and that accommodation should be made for the rapidly increasing number of transactions in titles recorded by the department. I will support the motion before the Chair.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [8.28]: I understand the Chief Secretary desires to close the Address-in-reply debate as early as possible in order that an adjournment might be made to enable many members to visit the goldfields celebration fortnight. When it was learnt that the Chief Secretary wished to finish early, every member wanted to know if he was to follow Mr. Seddon in order that the Minister might achieve the happy end he desired. I came unprepared to speak, notwithstanding which I found that the task of following Mr. Seddon devolved upon me. I have therefore offered myself as a sacrifice to assist the Chief Secretary to secure an early adjournment. I desire at the outset to congratulate the Leader of the House upon his return to the position he has so ably occupied for the past three years. His return to that position means, of course, the re-election of the Government, of which he has been a member since 1924. Taken by and large, the Government during the past three years of history can claim some credit for having

been the means of the Chief Secretary's re-election. I attribute the chief credit for the return of the Labour Party to power to the leader to whom the party pinned their faith, namely, the Premier, Mr. Collier. If, apart from Mr. Hughes, any leader in an election has stood out for acuteness, the present Premier did so. He was a paragon of perfection for astuteness, and succeeded in hypnotising all sections of the community. Mr. Collier has been a friend of mine for more than 20 years, and it is a tribute to him that he succeeded in reconciling such conflicting opinions as those of the president of the Pastoralists' Association, the secretary of the Trades Hall, the recipients of income tax reduction, and the Methodist Conference representatives. To bring all those conflicting interests together and secure their support certainly revealed a high degree of astuteness.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You are omitting Lord Salisbury.

Hon. J. CORNELL: But he was only a passing figure.

Hon. E. H. Harris: He was good enough to use during the campaign.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Over the eyes of the representatives of all those conflicting interests, Mr. Collier was very successful in pulling the wool. Imagine the Methodist Conference complimenting the Premier on the abolition of gambling, while the White Cities were still operating a hundred per cent. At one time I used to indulge in betting; I profited from the experience, but I can say there is as much gambling to-day as ever there was. Yet the Methodist Conference complimented Mr. Collier on the abolition of gambling.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It was on a par with the simple-majority resolutions.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Still dealing with Mr. Collier's astuteness, let me refer to the selection of Mr. Angwin as Agent General to succeed Sir Hal Colebatch. I venture to say that Mr. Angwin will prove as successful as have any of his predecessors. What he lacks in oratorical ability he will make up in rugged open sincerity which, in the long run, appeals to all men. Sir Hal Colebatch, on his return from London, was given a public reception in the Parliamentary dining room, and the speech made by the Premier on that occasion excelled the one he delivered to the delegates of the Empire Parliamentary Association in the Govern-

ment House Ballroom. I was astounded at one episode at the luncheon. The Premier, in the effective language over which he possesses such command, extolled the virtues and ability of Sir Hal Colebatch, and added that he ought to have been made High Commissioner for Australia. I watched closely the effect of this utterance on the guests assembled, and it was noticeable that while every Labour representative maintained silence, there was almost unanimous applause from Mr. Collier's political opponents. That was another instance of the Premier's ability to pull the wool over the eyes of those politically opposed to him. If Sir Hal Colebatch was fit to be High Commissioner, as the Premier stated he was, he was fit to continue to represent Western Australia as Agent General.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Probably it was contrary to Mr. Collier's wish that the change was made.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Mr. Collier is the mouthpiece of the Labour Party and of the Government, and what he says is the opinion of the party he leads. If what he says does not meet with the approval of his followers, it meets with the approval of his political opponents. More power to the Premier if he can catch his political opponents in that way.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do not you think he was sincere?

Hon. J. CORNELL: What was the logical conclusion to be drawn from his statement? If a man was fit to be High Commissioner, surely he was fit to continue as Agent General for the State. I do not intend to weary the House with questions of finance. Mr. Seddon, when he deals with finance and tells us how we are drifting, makes me feel pessimistic. I recollect in youthful days my dear old dad giving me sound advice where I would drift if I continued as I was going.

Hon. H. Seddon: Was he not right?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Well, I landed in Parliament, where he never expected me to be. I am not so pessimistic of the future as Mr. Seddon is. Probably I have not so long to live as he has, and will die before his doleful prophecies come true. The abolition of the per capita payments and the substitution of proposals agreed to by the Premier's conference can best be discussed when the matter is formally brought before us. I am an Australian first. If on careful analysis of the proposals I find that the State will not benefit by entering into the proposed agreement I shall vote against it.

Let me reiterate what I said a few sessions ago. Some people talk about unification, and of our becoming mendicants to the Federal Government. Well, we might as well become unificationists right away and take what the Federal Government will give us without becoming mendicants as well. Mr. Seddon went to considerable pains to deal with the surplus for the last financial year. I have not yet decided whether the surplus is real or spurious. Some of my friends say it is real, and some say it is spurious. If I said to the first of them that it was spurious and argued with the second that it was real, the argument would never cease. I have travelled the State from Hopetoun to Marble Bar, and I do not think the great bulk of the people care a twopenny stamp whether there is a surplus or a deficit. They are simply not concerned. While on the eve of an election it may be good propaganda to talk of a surplus in order to hoodwink the electors, it is poor argument to introduce in a new Parliament with three years of life ahead of it. The Government say there is a surplus, and we are bound to accept their word. The question that in the South Province transcends all other questions is that concerning the mining industry. Mr. Seddon has delivered a long, carefully-prepared and well-presented dissertation on the mining industry. I do not intend to quote figures, but I shall, as is usual with me, speak candidly. It is rather strange that a man who for many years ranged on the industrial side and argued across the table time after time with representatives of the mining companies, should stand here to-night and put in a plea for the companies. Yet that is the position in which I find myself. The gold-mining industry from Hopetoun to Marble Bar reminds me of the unwanted child. The Prime Minister when in Kalgoorlie recently was candid in his remarks about the future of the industry. While I have a good deal of admiration for Mr. Bruce as a big Australian, I am slowly but surely acquiring a greater admiration for him as the appointer of Royal Commissions to shoulder the responsibilities for many important questions. Mr. Bruce said the Federal Government had given the State £167,000 to assist the mining industry, and the money had not been expended. What was the State going to do with it? He also said that unless and until the shareholders were prepared to do their part, he could see no way of putting the industry on a better footing. Sir William Lathlain, in

speaking the other night, condemned the mining companies, and referred particularly to the load that had been accumulated as a result of miners' phthisis. I interjected that that was the result of failure not so much on the part of the mining companies as on the part of the legislature. Before members condemn stock holders for the dividends that were drawn years ago they should make sure of their facts. I venture to say that not 10 per cent. of the shareholders have profited by their investments. As a general rule those who invested money in the Golden Mile have lost. That is the position as I visualise it in our mining industry. It rose from being a mere nothing to a position that earned for it the admiration of the world. In the Golden Mile we possessed the most valuable area of ground for its size that had ever been discovered. We went along the even tenor of our way. The Government pointed with pride to our wonderful gold production, and to the wonderful dividends that were being paid by the mines. The Labour Government led by Mr. Scaddan, renewed all existing leases after the expiration of 20 years in the same letter and word as those in which they were originally executed. All succeeding Governments honoured those leases, and never for a moment questioned the policy governing the mines. Our Legislatures devoted no thought to what was going to happen in the end to the industry. They did not interest themselves, and the Mines Department did not interest itself in the question, as to whether or not the managers of the companies were doing the necessary development work, were conserving their ore to the best advantage, or were obtaining the gold under the most economic treatment. Parliament allowed things to go on as they were, and trusted to the good judgment and management of those in control of the mines, for the reason that gold was being produced and weekly dividends were being paid.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The Premier was then Minister for Mines.

Hon. J. CORNELL: He was no more to blame than other Ministers. All Governments are to blame. The Scaddan Government renewed the leases without any conditions as to development work. The Wilson Government, the Lefroy Government, and the Mitchell Government carried on

the same policy. Not one Government laid down definitely and emphatically any policy that was to be pursued by the mining companies, and yet the companies are being condemned to-day. If any blame is to be attached to the shareholders and to the management of the mines, all Governments should share equally in the blame. We cannot, like the ostrich, hide our heads in the sand and declare that we are not culpable. And yet the Premier said that no relief will be given to the industry unless and until the stock holders are prepared to put more capital into it. Even if we assume that 50 per cent. of the stockholders of the Golden Mile drew anything in the way of dividends, what inducement is offered them to-day to put more money into the industry? We have heard of the wonderful wealth that has been produced from South African mines, but only during the last 12 or 18 months I read a report dealing with the mines there. Despite the gigantic output of gold from the South African mines, which produced more than half the gold given to the world, these mines have not paid $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on the capital investment. I venture to say that not $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. has been paid on all the capital invested in gold mining in this State.

Hon. H. Seddon: Certainly not.

Hon. J. CORNELL: In the circumstances would the stockholders be expected to jump into the breach and put their money into mines that have proved unprofitable to them in the past? If they have money to invest, they can put it into Government bonds and receive from $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 per cent. interest without any trouble. The hon. member put the matter in a nutshell when he said that our mining could not be looked upon as an investment. It has always been looked upon as a speculation. For what it is worth, I offer the suggestion that if stockholders would agree to find £150,000 or £200,000, which in the circumstances would be a very fair amount to ask for, they should be guaranteed interest at the rate of 5 per cent. for a given period. They would then possibly risk their money for that time, knowing that they would receive interest upon it right away. Apart from that I cannot see any hope of inducing stockholders to put up their money as has been suggested. The position is a serious one and will be hard to rectify. I

wish to enter a plea on behalf of the mine managers on the Golden Mile. They are being condemned, horse, foot and artillery. They were condemned by Mr. Kingsley Thomas, who was associated with South African mining conditions, which are not applicable to or comparable with our mining conditions. The Technical Committee of the Migration and Development Commission practically endorsed Mr. Thomas's remarks concerning our mine managers, with the exception of the Sons of Gwalia mine. The chairman of the Technical Committee practically began his mining experience in Western Australia. Let us assume that Mr. Wainwright had been associated with the Horseshoe mine in place of Mr. Jack Sutherland. The latter gave the world a filterpress and some of the most advanced improvements in metallurgical discoveries. Had he been in Mr. Wainwright's position, and Mr. Wainwright been in Mr. Sutherland's position, we would probably have had the spectacle of Mr. Sutherland condemning Mr. Wainwright. Mr. Sutherland is as good a man as the other. I understand that most of the members of the Technical Committee were drawn from the Broken Hill mines. In the case of those mines the price of the product has advanced, and has made it possible for them to reach the affluent position they now occupy. Before the war some of the Broken Hill mines were in the same precarious position as is the Golden Mile, and indeed closed down for 12 months. That which resuscitated them and gave them the necessary impetus was an advance in the price of the material that was being produced, so that they could meet the advanced charges and still show a profit. The reverse has occurred in our gold mining industry. The grade of ore is lower than it was, the ore bodies are reduced in size and in depth, and the charges have increased by between 35 and 40 per cent. As I said in the Arbitration Court in Kalgoorlie between three and four years ago, the main factor that affects the life of our mining industry is the grade of ore. If it was to be taken as the principle governing the wage paid to miners that they should receive wages according to the grade of ore worked, what would happen if the grade dropped to 1 dwt. of ore? That which has brought Kalgoorlie and Boulder mines to a premature death is not so much bad management,

because a few years ago our managers were heralded as the paragons of perfection in gold mining, but it is the drop in the grade of ore. Was it not said that our managers got rid of all the Yankees from the industry, including Mr. Hoover? Owing to the circumstances brought about by the war, the rise in the price of materials, the decline in the grade of ore treated, and the difficulty of working lower values at depth, our mines fell upon troublesome days, but the mine managers are said to be responsible for the position. Just as I would defend the men who worked in the mines, so would I defend the mine managers, who are not by any means responsible for all that is laid at their door. My own opinion regarding the Golden Mile is this: One of the factors that has brought about the decline is that the grade of ore is not so good as it was and the lodes are not so easily worked. In the old days it was possible to work the lodes vertically on a small area, because the values were good. Let us take the South Kalgurli mine as an example. That is one of the biggest dividend payers in Australia. It is working the smallest acreage on the Golden Mile. It never had a very large plant in comparison with the other mines, did not treat a very large tonnage, but was able to work its lodes vertically, and those lodes are stable. The manager of that mine would not set himself up as a better manager than the others on the Golden Mile, because in their case they are handling mines in which the grade of ore has fallen and they cannot now be worked at a profit. We will take the question of amalgamation. There is amalgamation on the goldfields at the present day. The Lake View mine had its separate plant; so did the Main Reef, Hannans Star, Chaffers, and Ivanhoe. They are all working under one control. The Lake View plant is recognised as the last word in up to date-ness. I do not wish to make any invidious comparisons, but, as a mining man put it to me, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and one can judge only by results. Taking the results of the Lake View plant and some of the obsolete plants still operating, the comparison is in favour of the obsolete plants, both regarding extraction and costs. I am afraid I have become somewhat heated in consequence of the strictures levelled against mine managers, mining companies and the stockholders. That sort of business will not get us anywhere at all. If the most perfect manage-

ment that is possible on earth were applied to a gold mine, the inevitable result would be the same. There comes a time in the life of every gold mine when an end is reached and there is nothing further but to close down the mine. Several questions arise. Is the mining industry worth preserving? I say that it is undoubtedly worth preserving. How can it best be preserved in order that we may get the last possible advantage out of a mine, and thus extract all the gold of any economic value at all? Casting aspersions on individuals or corporations and throwing blame on this or that concern is not best calculated to serve our interests. We recognise that a political party will always accept the word of its leader and stand by his word. Similarly, the share holders in London will accept the advice of their representatives here. I resent the unwarranted condemnation that has been indulged in regarding some of the representatives of mining companies here, for they are men who have done all that is humanly possible in the interests of the industry. If those men are adversely criticised after adopting the attitude they have, it is not likely we will get from them a recommendation to their people in London such as we would desire. As to traffic matters in the metropolitan area, I heard with interest the remarks of the Chief Secretary on the regulations discussed earlier in the sitting. I congratulate the Government on the appointment of Inspector Hunter to take charge of the Traffic Department. I have known that officer intimately for many years, and I know he is a good and conscientious officer who will do his duty without fear or favour. He is approachable and has much tact and common sense. There is one traffic matter to which I particularly desire to refer. Men who use motor cycles are not compelled to insure against accident. The rectification of that position should be made by the Government immediately by way of amended legislation. We insist upon the owner or driver of a motor car insuring against accident, and we should see to it that owners and riders of motor cycles insure in the same way. A man is just as likely to get killed by a motor cycle as by a motor car, and it is ridiculous to say that one shall insure and not the other. We know that irresponsible youths are able to get hold of motor cycles and speed along the roads at anything up to 40 or 50 miles per hour, and yet they are not compelled to insure. I hope the Leader

of the House will bring that matter seriously before the Government. To-day lads can get a motor bike capable of taking them at speeds of 40 or 50 miles along the road at a price almost equal to that for which I could get a Rotherham watch in my younger days! Another alteration that should be made is that the traffic regulation should make jay-walking an offence. In the larger cities of the world jay-walking is an offence, and the onus should not be placed altogether on the owner or driver of a motor car, but should rest with the pedestrian as well.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are quite right.

Hon. J. CORNELL: People are in the habit of meandering across streets like woolly-nosed sheep. I have done it myself and I deserved to be run over. With the increase of traffic in the metropolitan area it is unquestionable that Inspector Hunter's view is correct; we should have one-way traffic in certain parts of the city. If the Government were to bring in regulations to provide for the matters I have dealt with, it is certain that many sections of the community would be up against them for a while, but the fact remains that with a man of integrity in charge of the Traffic Department, setting himself the task to run the traffic properly and in the interests of life and safety, the position would be quickly rectified. By that means improved traffic conditions will operate in the city. As to the question of unemployment, during his remarks Mr. Kitson referred to the problem as it affects Perth. While at election times we hear contending parties blaming one another for the unemployment, I do not intend to charge the present Government with having failed to alleviate the difficulty in that regard. At the same time, I cannot exonerate them from the charge that they told the people that if Labour were returned they would alleviate the trouble altogether. No supporter of the Government who has gone into the question can find a way out of the difficulty. Unemployment is not peculiar to any Government in particular. It is like the poor—always with us. Mr. Kitson, who is socialistically inclined, will admit that unemployment is a necessary corollary to our present system, which is based to a large extent on surplus labour. If there were no such thing as unemployment, there would be no surplus labour and then there would be no necessity for arbitration courts or any of the other industrial paraphernalia, for the worker would be able to command his

own price. There is one aspect, however, to which I particularly desire to refer, and that has reference to the influx of southern Europeans. While Mr. Kitson was speaking I interjected that some Australians would not work. What I meant to say was that some Australians would not do some work. I have it on the best authority from men who own virgin land that they found it practically impossible to get Australians or Britishers to undertake clearing work and that, much as they disliked it, they have had to rely upon southern Europeans. If Australians are not prepared to do the work and the other fellow is prepared to do it, there should be no valid objection to southern Europeans, once they are allowed to come here, being permitted to do the work. The history of the woodlines on the gold-fields for many years was that, practically from the inception, the employment of foreigners represented about 65 per cent. as against the percentage of Australians. That was accounted for by the fact that the Australians had no decided liking for wood chopping in the backblocks. If Australians will not do the work, they cannot grumble at foreigners being allowed to do it. Much has been said about America. Personally, the only migrant I would admit into Australia if I had my way would be the man of Nordic blood. It was said in the Legislative Assembly that we should introduce the quota system as is in operation in the United States. From my observations I would say that the quota system in the United States was introduced for one reason only. Because of the open door system, the position of the Nordic races had been seriously threatened by the influx of other races. Therefore the quota system was imposed in order that the permanence and predominance of the Nordic races would be secured in the United States. Wherever I went in America I was warned against the southern Europeans, and particularly against Italians. The advice the Americans usually gave me was, "Keep your country white, and, if possible, keep it British. You may in the long run take a long while to develop Australia as it will be developed eventually, but you will develop it along the only sound line possible, and that is by running it along the lines of your own race." Despite the glowing accounts we get of Canada and the United States, particularly the latter country, there is not the slightest doubt that the United States has yet to

reap the whirlwind of her own sowing regarding unrestricted migration. Here in Australia we have by far the greatest percentage of Britishers, and we are entitled to keep it British. Personally I would rather see the Hun admitted, for he is of Nordic blood, than I would the southern European. There are one or two other points I wish to make. I hope that before the summer something tangible will be known in regard to water supplies in the Yilgarn agricultural area. I understand that the Minister in charge of water supplies has the matter in hand, and I hope work will be completed before next summer. I hope some intimation will be given that will put heart into those men who are settling what might be termed the arid areas of Western Australia, and demonstrating what can be done with them from an agricultural standpoint. I also trust that the question of jetty facilities will be given serious consideration. I know it will be, but the matter may escape the memory of the Minister for Works who, I regret to learn, is not too well in health. I too, have been in indifferent health and I wish the Minister a speedy return to his former good state of health. The Minister gave a definite promise to a deputation from Esperance that improvements would be made. Of course, we could not expect a new jetty. I am anxiously awaiting the report of the Engineer-in-Chief, because I believe it will contain a recommendation for the provision of facilities that will meet the requirements for the next 50 years. What the Minister for Works promised was that the jetty would be reinforced so as to ensure next season's harvest being shipped from the Esperance port. I know the Chief Secretary has a warm corner in his heart for the distant settler, and that the promise made will not be forgotten. Another question is the reduction of the freights on wheat from Hopetoun to Fremantle. I just raise this issue because you, Sir, and I, together with Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Corboy did our best to secure a reduction last year. I wish here to publicly thank the Chief Secretary for his efforts in that direction, and I hope that again he will put up this request to the Government in the hope of securing some alleviation for the farmers in that part of the State. Another matter to which I wish to allude relates to the Electoral Department. I do not intend to recount what happened at the last elections. I exonerate the Elec-

toral Department to a large degree for the abuses that crept in, but these abuses were attributable to interested parties. The experience of the last election, should be a guide for the Electoral Department, and I hope that it will be possible to prevent a recurrence of the abuses. The position of the Electoral Department to-day in its relation to members of Parliament, is important, but we find that the Chief Electoral Officer is without power to act and that he is under the aegis of the Under Secretary for Law. That position should not exist; the Chief Electoral Officer should be given the status it is necessary he should have. He should be the head of his department, responsible alone to a Minister of the Crown. I am sure all members here will agree that that is a desirable course. The less this officer is interfered with by members of Parliament, or by Parliament, the better service will be given and the more respect will he command. If faults have been found in the past, they have arisen out of dual control, and also insufficient funds with which to conduct operations. I hope the dual control will be removed, and that more money will be provided. In the Governor's Speech there is only one matter to which I wish to refer, and it is in regard to the proposed legislation. There is reference to a Bill to amend the Constitution. I am not aware what shape that legislation will take, but if it takes the shape that I am hoping, it will receive my hearty support. The Constitution to-day requires that there shall be six portfoliod Ministers and that one shall have a seat in the Legislation Council. In addition to the six Ministers, we have three Honorary Ministers. The Constitution under which we are working is 30 years old, and if six salaried Ministers were necessary when the Act was passed so long ago, it is obvious that more are needed now. We find that the Government for some time past have fallen back on the expediency of appointing Honorary Ministers and paying them from their own—the Ministers—salaries. That is really unconstitutional, and if the Government will introduce a Bill to provide an increase in the number of Ministers who shall hold full rank, that Bill will I am sure receive the hearty support of every member of this House. With the progress that we are making and the work that there is to be done, the Government are justified in following the course I suggest. I have nothing more to

say other than to hope that the Leader of the House will be shown every consideration during the current session and that he will extend similar courtesy to the House as he has invariably done in past years. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. A. Burvill, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.23 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 9th August, 1927.

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

SWEARING IN OF MEMBER.

Hon. G. Taylor (Mount Margaret) took and subscribed the oath, and signed the roll.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to inform the House that I have appointed as temporary Chairmen of Committees the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo), the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert), and the member for Menzies (Mr. Pantou).

QUESTIONS (2)—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.

Kalgarin project, legislation.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: Do the Government intend to introduce during this session a Bill for the con-