

partaking of not one, but in some cases two or three whiskies and sodas or cocktails within the house. These girls are to be the mothers of our future Western Australians. They were not ordinary flappers, but evidently girls of the higher class, well dressed, and of some position in the State. Not content with one drink, they had two or three brandies and sodas or whiskies and sodas, but particularly did they have cocktails. There should surely be some provision in the Licensing Act to prevent the landlord from allowing this to go on. If the landlord was possessed of any decent feeling, he would know the harm that was being done, and his honour and better judgment should prevent him from allowing this sort of thing to take place.

The Minister for Mines: It is not a very good outlook.

Mr. Teesdale: Was this in the morning?

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. This was taking place at one of our fashionable hotels in Perth, and is going on every day. So seriously did I regard it that I thought it ought to be given publicity. I do not know if the parents of these young girls or the husbands of the women know what is going on there. I hope when the Bill is brought down every effort will be made by hon. members to do away with the evils that befall those who do not know when they have had enough to drink, while at the same time not interfering with the liberty of those who only take it in reasonable quantities.

Mr. Lambert: Some of these young girls smoke as much as they drink.

Mr. ANGELO: Most of the girls I am speaking of had cigarettes in their mouths while they were drinking their cocktails. I am delighted with the tone of the debate so far as it has gone. We are all agreed it is necessary to economise. All sections of the House have said so. The speech of the Leader of the Opposition was most generous. Most of the other members and most people outside say that the drift must stop and that there must be no more deficits. The Leader of the Opposition has been most generous in his desires and suggestions. He says that so long as he sees we have turned the corner, and that the Government are cutting down the deficit by £250,000 for the present year, and will continue to cut it down by £100,000 in the years to follow, he will be satisfied. This should be possible, and with the assistance and advice of the entire House I think the Government should be able to accomplish it. The speeches which have been delivered by other members also give promise of good support to the Government. I was particularly interested in the speech delivered by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum), who has considerable influence with the workers. If he means all that he said—and I do not doubt him—there appears to be a silver lining upon the cloud of industrial unrest that has been causing so much trouble in the past to the industries of the State. If

we all work together and do our utmost to assist the Government in their task, I feel sure the State will speedily emerge from its trials and difficulties, and become once more a flourishing unit in the greatest and most glorious Empire the world has ever seen.

Mr. RICHARDSON (Subiaco) [8.10]: I wish to follow the precedent set by many other hon. members, and to congratulate the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) upon being the first lady to be returned to any Parliament in Australia. I have been associated with her on many occasions outside the House in connection with various organisations. I say without fear of contradiction and without any hesitation that there is no woman in Australia more fitted to take her seat in Parliament than the member for West Perth. I desire also to pay a tribute to the Leader of the Opposition for the able speech he made on the Address-in-reply. Unfortunately, through illness, I was unable to attend the House on that occasion, but since then I have taken every opportunity of reading and studying his remarks. Perhaps the greatest compliment I can pay him is to say that I have set his speech as an example in moderation for myself as a new member. The new members of the House owe a great deal to the Premier for the trouble he has taken in presenting the financial reports to the House. He said that he had given more time to and taken more trouble over the preparation of the figures than on previous occasions because he desired that new members should thoroughly grasp the situation. I do not assert that I have thoroughly grasped the situation as yet, but while he was speaking I did learn many things I did not know before. The figures were so set out that by going into them carefully one could obtain a very thorough insight into the financial position. I am not unduly appalled by the five million deficit. I have sufficient faith in this young country to believe that if every member gives his whole attention to the finances, and does his best as a member, Western Australia is prolific enough and wealthy enough to rise above the present position. I have dissected the figures with the idea of boiling them down so that I might understand them myself and be able to discuss them reasonably before the House. It is evident, notwithstanding what has been said in the Press and on public platforms, that instead of the State trading concerns showing a loss, they have added over £7,000 to the general revenue during the last financial year. I have also discovered that the general revenue is almost, if not entirely, sufficient to cover our general expenditure. That being so, we have to find out where our actual losses are occurring. I find that these come under the heading of business undertakings, or public utilities. We are losing, for instance, a considerable amount on our railways. The reason for that is not far to seek, and my contention is that when we know exactly how it comes about, and why,

our railways are losing such considerable amounts of money, it will not be a very difficult proposition to discover a remedy. The whole financial position, it seems to me, may be described as due to the over capitalising of our public utilities, and more particularly the railways. The unfortunate part of it is that we are over-capitalised by loan moneys. The position is just the same as that of a man putting, say, £50,000 into a business and then finding that he can get only a turnover of £50 per week. The proposition is simply unsound. However, I shall not unduly criticise any past Government because of this aspect of the State's finances. I am reasonable enough to recognise that any other members of Parliament—and there are some hon. members now present who are implicated in this matter—would have adopted the same policy. For my part, I should have done so. At the time we were borrowing money to extend our railway system for the purpose of giving facilities to the settlers on our lands, there was a firm belief that the holders of land along the railway lines would do their duty, by making their land productive and thereby providing the railways with traffic sufficient to yield interest, sinking fund, and working expenses. To-day we find that that has not been accomplished.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course, the war overtook us a couple of years afterwards.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes; and that is why I do not intend to criticise the Parliaments of the past on the score of our having a deficit of five millions to-day. No matter what Government had been in power at that time—whether the present Opposition or the present Ministry—we would still be faced to-day with a very large deficit. The circumstances confronting past Governments have been abnormal, and it is unreasonable to suppose that Western Australia could have come out of them better than any other country in the world has done: all countries are in the same boat. But now that we have discovered our losses to be in great measure due to the fact that our public utilities are far in advance of present requirements, it remains for us, in our wisdom, to discover the best possible means of building up our transactions so that the public utilities may become payable propositions. In this Chamber I have heard two means suggested for reducing the deficit. The member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy), speaking on the Supply Bill, mentioned that 30 per cent. of the present strength of public servants could be done away with; and the hon. member suggested that those 30 per cent. should be given axes and sent into the country to clear land. I do earnestly hope that that pronouncement does not embody the policy of the Leader of the Opposition and of members sitting behind that gentleman. If we are going to cut down the Public Service by 30 per cent., throw one-third of our public servants on the cold world to find work at a moment's notice, we shall, I think, be doing some-

thing for which we shall be extremely sorry afterwards. As a new member I am not able to say whether the Public Service is or is not over-staffed; but I will say this, that if the Public Service is in fact over-staffed, I am going to stand behind any Government prepared to seek economy in the right direction when dispensing with some proportion of the public servants. Let me add that on every occasion when retrenchment is suggested, it is always the man on the lowest rung of the ladder who is to become its subject. I venture to say there are to-day in the Public Service many men who have been drawing tiptop salaries, having spent the best of their years in the Public Service, and having given of their best to that service, but who are now to a considerable extent past their usefulness. It may be contended that we should retain those public servants by reason of their former merits. But those men have been for years in a position to save money against their old age. The Minister for Agriculture said last night that there is no sentiment in business. I agree with him. If we find that those public servants are beyond the age when they can give a fair and full return for their salaries, I think we should start retrenchment at the top of the tree, if we are to have retrenchment in the Public Service. We have in that service young men who have entered it with the ambition to serve their country. I for one would hesitate very long before I agreed to those young men, full of vitality and energy and loyalty, being dismissed, while I know that there are in the service men who have outlived their usefulness, and are therefore due for retirement, or perhaps for retrenchment. On the other hand, another suggestion has been made for reducing the deficit. I was surprised and interested to learn from the Premier the other evening that practically the whole of the lands abutting on the railway system of this State are held by private persons. For some two or three years I had the opportunity of travelling over practically all the railway lines of Western Australia; and as a result of my observations I can state that there are millions—I am quite safe in saying "millions"—of acres of land lying practically undeveloped alongside the existing railway system. The Governments who built those railways built them in the belief that the lands abutting on the lines would be brought into production. Seeing that that anticipation has not been realised, it is our duty to cause the lands to be rendered productive at the earliest possible moment, so that our Railway Department may be enabled to render its operations payable. A further object to be achieved by the adoption of such a policy would be to assist genuine settlers, by enabling their freights and fares to be reduced considerably from the present figures. If the holders of the lands in question will

not bring them into production, we must find a means of making such holders pay to the State the equivalent of the freights and fares which their lands, in a condition of productiveness, would yield to the Railway Department. That appeals to me as a perfectly fair proposition. The lands I refer to are being held for one purpose, and one only, namely, the obtaining of the unearned increment which must result from the construction of railways through these properties. As land is continually being taken up and developed nearer to the metropolitan area, and as people are thereby being compelled to go further out, land necessarily becomes dearer in those portions of the country, and as land in the remoter districts increases in value by, say, £1 per acre, the land which lies nearer to the metropolitan area will advance in value by 30s. an acre.

Hon. P. Collier: We ought to have the *betterment principle* applied; that is, a charge on the land as its value is increased by reason of new railway construction.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The question of land taxation is one which the Government will have to take up very seriously, if they are going to assist the Minister for Railways to make his department a paying proposition. I repeat, it is in the Railway Department that our greatest loss is incurred; and therefore the Government must stand behind their Minister for Railways and absolutely tax unused land so as to obtain from it an equivalent of what it would yield to the railway system if put into production, by way of freights and fares. It appeals to me that as time goes on there may be a disposition to regard progress on the lines which I have suggested, as too slow. But I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we are not going to get rid of our five-millions deficit within one year, or within five years. That work is going to take a long time. However, as representative of a metropolitan electorate, I am quite prepared to assist the Government in every possible way so long as I am satisfied that they are earnestly endeavouring to reduce the deficit, to secure economy in all directions, and to make our railway system pay. This is perhaps dealing directly with the finances as we find them to-day; but if we are going to build up this young country we must go further, and provide population, so that we may be enabled to develop Western Australia along proper lines. I listened with great interest to members on the Opposition side speaking on the immigration question, and similarly to members on this side of the House. I am in favour of an immigration policy, but that I am not in favour of any kind of immigration policy. I believe every member of this House will agree that our metropolitan area is at present overloaded with people. There are too many of our population living between Midland Junction and Fremantle for the work that is being

provided. In connection with any immigration policy that we adopt, we must see that we introduce into Western Australia the kind of people that we need. Let me say that I want, as immigrants, people of our own race, people from the British Isles. Even as regards such immigrants, we want to be informed regarding their merits, not when they arrive in Australia, but before they leave the Old Country. Before they embark, we want to be satisfied that they are the right class of immigrant, that they are men who will tackle our land problems, go out into the country and become agriculturists. I would strenuously oppose any other description of immigration policy, because it is only by introducing people who will become producers that we shall be able to build up this young country of ours. We have raised the cry "Produce, produce, produce"; but we cannot progress much further until such time as we bring more population into this State. If only we bring the right class of population, there will be no fear whatever of our future. In my opinion, the Britisher is the best class of immigrant. We should endeavour to bring him here, and to retain him here, and to settle him in a practical way, with every facility necessary for success. I hold that we should at all times afford our farmers adequate facilities. I have had some experience of farming, and I know the disabilities under which the agriculturist suffers. What we have to strive after is the production of wealth. It is no use our pointing to the unlimited potentialities of wealth in Western Australia, if we do not utilise those potentialities; and the only way we can do that is by bringing additional population here. Now I want to touch on another question; it necessitates my reverting to the railways. We have a considerable extent of our railway system running through auriferous country. I have had sufficient experience of prospecting to know that in our auriferous belts there are many hundreds of square miles which have never yet been properly prospected. I hold that the Government would be justified in giving every facility to prospectors; but I want to point out that there are prospectors and prospectors. From personal knowledge I can say that the geological conditions of this country are so very peculiar that a man must spend many years in prospecting before he becomes a really capable prospector.

Mr. Munsie: This country has proved that the geologist knows nothing about his subject.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I quite agree with the hon. member; and that is my reason for making this reference to prospecting. Western Australia has its own peculiarities as regards geological construction. If the Government are going to send out prospecting parties, I would advise them not to assist any party unless a first-class prospector of proved capacity is in charge, and, moreover, one who has a knowledge of the district which the party intend to prospect. At least one genuine expert prospector should be included

in each party. I believe that we are not likely to find another Golden Mile in Western Australia. We do not know what is under the earth, but it is very rarely that ever two mining districts of such a character are found in the one State. If history does not repeat itself in this instance, and we have another Golden Mile discovered, I am sure everyone will be pleased to admit that the predictions were wrong. We can only expect that in the future our mining industry will be spasmodic. I do not believe—and I hope I am wrong in that attitude—that we will find any more great mines in Western Australia. There can be no doubt whatever, however, that there is a considerable amount of wealth distributed throughout the auriferous areas and if we could only prospect the country properly and find that wealth, even though the discoveries were spasmodic, we would assist in the development of the State very considerably. There is no need to reiterate the arguments against the taxation placed upon prospectors' deals. It is needless to say that I am entirely opposed to such taxation. Should the Government have any taxation proposals which they intend to bring forward, which will unduly tax the prospector or the prospective buyer, I shall be entirely opposed to them. I believe that if a man has the temerity to go out prospecting under all sorts of adverse conditions, he is entitled to every penny he gets through the sale of any mine he may find, and I do not think the Government are entitled to take one penny from him for taxation arising out of any such sales. If we intend to build up this young country, we must give serious consideration to the development of secondary industries. The Minister for Railways stated the other night that the Government were paying particular and immediate attention to our secondary industries. I was delighted to hear that and I believe that the Minister was quite sincere in his remarks.

Hon. P. Collier: At the same time we are lamentably behind with it all.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I admit that.

Hon. P. Collier: The trouble is that we do not know where we can get our boys employment.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I was pleased to hear the remarks by the Minister, because I think that the Government have awakened to the fact that we must help secondary industries, not only to provide cheaper material for our people but to provide employment for our boys.

Hon. P. Collier: We train them here and send them to other countries to get a living.

Mr. Underwood: And yet we are bringing tradesmen here to-day.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Secondary industries are growing in Western Australia. They are already making headway despite all sorts of adverse conditions. That such should be the case should provide encouragement for other

men and companies with capital to come to Western Australia and start factories of one description or another. One point, however, must not be lost sight of. We must assure to people who have capital that their interests will be conserved, for otherwise we will be doomed to failure. We may build up firm structures on our primary products, and we may encourage our secondary industries, but unless the workers of Western Australia are to get a fair deal from the employers, we will not see very much advancement achieved. It is for this Government, and for any other Government, to see that we have industrial peace. It was stated by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) that we had not experienced as many strikes in Western Australia as in other parts of Australia. That fact was well known to members before he made that statement, but its repetition served to indicate that there is something in Western Australia which has prevented strikes. That hon. member gave a great deal of credit to the secretary of the Employers' Federation and I want to endorse his remarks regarding that gentleman. Notwithstanding the fact that he is the secretary of the Employers' Federation he has been a good friend to the workers of Western Australia, because he has endeavoured on every occasion when a dispute has arisen, to bring about a conference between the parties so that work should not stop and the workers lose no money on account of that cessation. There is another phase to this question; there are other interests which have prevented strikes here. There are thousands of workers and good unionists who do not lend an ear to the doctrine of direct action. These men go into the highways and byways and denounce direct action. As a result they have held up strikes. I was very pleased to hear the member for South Fremantle declare in such strong terms that he was in favour of arbitration. I agree with him in many of his remarks regarding the Arbitration Court. If we are to have industrial peace, we must expedite matters in connection with union claims when a dispute arises, and the Court is approached. Unions are held up for month after month with the result that what at the start amounts to a little bit of ill feeling grows into a great measure of discontent. It is for this Government and for this Parliament to go into this question and ascertain if we cannot expedite matters arising out of these disputes.

Hon. P. Collier: Parliament has been mainly responsible for industrial disputes in the past through not providing adequate machinery for arbitration matters.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am inclined to agree with that contention.

Mr. Mann: We will support any amendment to the Arbitration laws to that end.

Mr. RICHARDSON: It is because of these facts that I stress this position.

Mr. McCallum: My proposals would not involve an amendment of the Act.

Mr. RICHARDSON: If we are to have industrial peace employers and employees

alike must feel that they will have a fair deal. From time to time, when we have seen that disputes are held up because of the congestion in the Arbitration Court, it has appealed to me that in any other business when circumstances arose which led to congestion, the position would be immediately taken in hand and those conditions rectified. It seems unreasonable to suppose that we have only three men in Western Australia who are prepared, and fair minded enough, to arbitrate on matters of this description. If our Arbitration Court is so congested that disputes cannot be taken before that tribunal, is there any reason why we should not appoint three other men to arbitrate? I fail to see any reason why that course cannot be adopted. I believe we have many men in Western Australia who are well able to take up such positions. If the work of the Arbitration Court is congested, let us appoint other members of the Court and clear up the position. A considerable amount of discontent is engendered by reason of these delays. I am in this Chamber in order to endeavour to promote industrial peace and if we cope with these reasons for discontent, we are going to eliminate much of this trouble and lead to contentment between employer and employee. There are a few little pin pricks which annoy the workers of Western Australia to-day. The member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) stated that she would like the wives of unionists who were involved in a dispute, to be entitled to vote on the question whether the men should go on strike or not. I will not go into that aspect, nor will I express any opinion on that proposal. I contend, however, that when an industrial dispute exists, and the question has to be decided whether or not there is to be a strike, there should be a compulsory secret ballot so as to get an exact expression of opinion from every member of the union concerned.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Have you any instance where that has not been done during recent years?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I have instances.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Would you mind narrating them.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I will not do so now. The hon. member knows them as well as I do.

Mr. Troy: There is the usual evasion.

Mr. RICHARDSON: It is not a question of evasion, nor is it a question of giving time or instances in which it has not been done. I put this suggestion forward as one method by which we could help to secure industrial peace. I will not argue the matter, but content myself by that expression of opinion.

Mr. Davies: If that secret ballot were adopted, would that not legalise strikes?

Hon. P. Collier: I think it would.

Mr. Davies: We would have to amend the Act in those circumstances.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Parliament has considerable power and we could amend the Act in that direction. There is another matter which gives rise to ill feeling between unions. I am referring to it because I believe that if members sitting on the Opposition benches placed themselves in the position of very many good unionists throughout the State, they would realise that those men are suffering under an injustice. We find to-day that many men who belong to their unions have to contribute towards political funds notwithstanding that there are thousands of them who are not in favour of the whole of the A.L.P. political platform.

Hon. P. Collier: The position was the same in the old days.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am aware of that, and if the Leader of the Opposition chooses to look back over the Labour statistics he will see that I opposed this practice 23 or 24 years ago, and I am still opposing it.

Mr. Munsie: The biggest unions in Australia do not make it compulsory for their members to contribute towards the political funds.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The fact that the biggest unions of Australia do not make it compulsory, does not alter the position that there are thousands of unionists in Western Australia who have to do it. If we do an injustice to ten unionists we are creating a feeling of discontent among the workers. My ambition is to see that that position is safeguarded.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Would you agree to a ballot on the question whether members of the union should have that levy? Would you accept that ballot?

Mr. RICHARDSON: That is a matter the unions would have to decide for themselves. I am laying it down as a principle. If members on the Opposition side of the House were sincere in their expressions, they would relieve those members of the unions to whom I refer of the responsibility for the payment of contributions towards these political funds.

Mr. Troy: We cannot find them, because they vote for us.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I can bring the hon. member a thousand of them. I am laying down these few things because I desire industrial peace. So long as we have these little pin pricks we shall not get absolute industrial peace. If we are to have industrial peace we must have cheaper food. I am looking to our friends of the Country Party to assist us in that direction.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the most disturbing factor of all, the cost of living.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I have no objection whatever to the formation of a wheat pool, but I want to see that the consumers get a fair deal.

Capt. Carter: How is that to be done?

Mr. RICHARDSON: There are several ways. On the 29th September of last year

the member for Menzies in this House moved the following motion, which was carried:—

That in the opinion of this House the practice of making world's parity the basis for fixing the prices of commodities produced and consumed in Australia is unsound, and that the cost of production and forwarding to market should be the factors considered in fixing such prices.

This House carried that motion last year. The Government have not attempted to make any move in that direction. For my part the wheat farmers can have their pool. I believe that at the present juncture it would be unwise to endeavour to restrain them from getting it. I am speaking as a farmer with 25 years' experience of wheat growing and sheep raising. I understand the disabilities of the farmers. I know that they do not have as many luxuries as are enjoyed in town. They have not the same opportunities for enjoyment, and they have to contend with many hardships.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That is only in the pioneering stage.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am going back to that.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Did you ever get through it?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am prepared to assist the farmer in every possible way. During the last 17 or 18 years successive Governments have assisted the farmer, and the majority of the people of Western Australia have applauded them for it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The farmers themselves did not.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We now require to point out to the farmers that it is their duty to assist in the development of the State in other directions. If the farmers are genuine in their professed desire to return the good things we have done for them in backing their bills, they will not complain if we ask them to let us have wheat at 7s. per bushel.

The Minister for Agriculture: Who backs the consumer's bills?

Mr. RICHARDSON: The consumer gets very little out of the Government. I am glad the Minister interjected, because it has served to draw my attention to him. Last night he told us—I give the Leader of the Opposition credit for having drawn it out of him—that they have sold wheat to foreign countries at 7s. 7d. He said he had not had a complaint from any farmer on the score that wheat was sold at that price, and he pointed out to the Leader of the Opposition that the consumers alone were complaining. We who represent the consumers are not complaining that wheat was sold at 7s. 7d. What we complain about is that the farmers do not want to sell wheat to us, their own flesh and blood, at the same price as they are selling it to foreigners. That is our complaint. I am prepared to support the wheat pool, but I want to see a fixed price. In the creation of secondary industries, we want to know

where we are financially. We require to be able to say to the people, 'You are going to get your bread for such and such a price for the next 12 months,' and we require to be able to tell the poultry farmers, the pig raisers, and the dairymen, exactly what their wheat will cost them for the ensuing 12 months. Then those people can go ahead, knowing what to expect. But if we are to place everything on a sliding scale, nobody will know whether it is 5s. or 15s. that will have to be paid, and so we cannot hope to make much advance. When it comes to the wheat pool, I hope the Country Party will have consideration for the views expressed by consumers. If the farmer could be guaranteed 7s. for his wheat for the next 10 years, he would jump at it.

Mr. C. C. Maley: Make it 5s.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes, or even 5s. We are prepared to give them 7s. at present. I see no good reason why the members of the Country Party should not agree to that price.

Mr. Hickmott: Make it 5s. for 10 years.

Mr. RICHARDSON: In this morning's paper was a statement given out by Mr. Monger that the Cabinet has three Country Party members, and that therefore they are controlling half the Government. The metropolitan area, with a population of 160,000, has no representation in the Government, and therefore we as private members have to fight to secure what our constituents require. Mr. Monger has said that the Government are a Country Party Government. I say that neither Mr. Monger nor any other man is going to manufacture my politics, bottle them up and hand them out when he wants to.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think that what Mr. Monger said was that the Country Party had equal representation in the Government.

Capt. Carter: It was Dr. Earle Page who said they had control of the Government.

Mr. RICHARDSON: It might have been Dr. Earle Page, but whether it was he or Mr. Monger, I say that, while I am here to assist the farmers, I am not going to have my politics manufactured outside the House.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They want to control your majority over there. We shall have to amalgamate.

Mr. RICHARDSON: There are a few matters of local interest which I should like to touch upon. I cannot understand any hon. member representing the metropolitan area being opposed to the extension of tramways. In Perth, in West Perth, in Subiaco, and in other suburbs abutting on the Perth boundary, we are becoming congested. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) referred to the housing problem. We have to consider where we are going to place those people who to-day are living three and four families in one house.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Encourage them to go into the country.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I would if I could. I believe in decentralisation, but so long as people will insist upon living in the metropolis we have to find housing accommodation for them, while for the poor man who has to go into an outlying district to make a home, we have to find transport facilities to carry him to his work. I believe the time has arrived when the Government should begin tramway extensions. It is proposed to extend the tramways first to South Perth and Como. I offer no serious objection to that, because I believe the departmental officers are better able to say which should be the first extension than is a layman like myself.

Capt. Carter: Do you think the departmental officers should dictate the financial policy of the future?

Mr. RICHARDSON: If the officers of the department,—who, I take it, are qualified to say which extension is most required, which is going to be the most profitable—say that the first extension should be in a certain direction, I am prepared to abide by their decision. But I want to know when they are going to make a start with the extension to Claremont. There is a very large settlement situated between Claremont proper and Nedlands. Those people have been settled there, some of them for 25 years. They are workers in every sense of the word. For 25 years those men and women have walked a mile and a half to the nearest point of contact with railway or tramway. Figures can be produced to show that this line will be payable from the outset.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not at the present cost of construction.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The Government, once they have constructed the South Perth-Como line, would be fully justified in building the extension through to Claremont.

Mr. O'Loghlen: What about Belmont?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I take it the member for Canning can deal with the Belmont proposition.

O'Loghlen: The people there have four miles to walk, and only an old 'bus to look to.

Mr. RICHARDSON: If we are going to encourage our people to provide homes of their own, and I take it it is the function of every Government to encourage people to do this, we must make available cheap land and the facilities for them to get to and from their work. Tramway extensions would achieve this. Some of the finest building land in the State is to be found between Nedlands and Claremont, but it is lying idle because there are no means of communication.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I can recommend equally good land at East Fremantle having a tramway running through it.

Mr. RICHARDSON: That is a different proposition altogether, but the hon. member

is energetic enough to get that district settled if the locality appeals to people.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is the most progressive district in the metropolitan area.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I realise that there is a big programme of work ahead of the Government in the metropolitan area. The Government have been shelving these works for the last two or three years, but it is necessary for them to tackle the problem seriously for the simple reason that we have outgrown all our facilities. Let me mention the question of the water supply. The whole of the metropolitan members were so interested in this matter that they decided to meet.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Some of us were not invited.

Mr. RICHARDSON: That was due purely to an oversight on the part of the convener. We would have been glad to have had the hon. member present, because he could have given us a lot of information which we required and could not obtain. If ever another gathering of that description is contemplated, I shall take an early opportunity to see that the hon. member has been asked to attend. The question of the water supply has become a serious one, not only in my electorate, but in the metropolitan area generally, and it extends right down to Fremantle. The people of Fremantle have perhaps a worse supply even than the people of Subiaco, and therefore I am prepared to assist to secure not only an adequate, but a pure water supply from the hills for the whole of the metropolitan area.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And we are prepared to pay for it.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes. I am convinced that we pay for a lot of water that we never use. We have been told that we shall have an ample supply during the coming summer. It is gratifying to hear this, but I would point out on the other hand that it will be bore water. I am not partial to bore water either for human consumption or for garden purposes. I have spoilt one good garden with bore water and I should be very sorry to spoil another. If bore water is not fit for garden purposes, I am satisfied it is not fit for human consumption. I know that it will be impossible to get an adequate supply from the hills this year, but it behoves the Government to realise that they must begin this work right away. I trust that members will see that the Government take up this matter in earnest. They have been dilly-dallying with it, they have been putting us off with this engineer's report and that engineer's report until the present time when we do not know whether we are going to get an adequate supply or when the Government intend to start the work.

Mr. Hickmott: Is that your method of economy?

Capt. Carter: The metropolitan people are prepared to pay for what they get.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are paying for it now.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We are prepared to put this matter in the hands of a board.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I am not too sure of that.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We are not going to ask the country people to pay for the metropolitan water supply; they will have enough to do to pay for their share of the Mundaring scheme. The question of the water supply appeals to me in a double sense. Let me explain the position regarding the sewerage of Subiaco. Subiaco is the largest suburb in Western Australia; it has the largest population and is the most congested. The Government for some reason or other brought the sewerage system to Leederville and West Perth, right to our boundaries, and refused to carry it further. Consequently, we are condemned to put up with an obsolete system which we are afraid might land us any day in a serious epidemic. Times out of number we have had reports from health officers who have informed us that this suburb is in danger. The question of the extension of the sewerage system will have to be faced by the Government. The eastern portions of Subiaco are congested and there is no reason that I know of why, when the Government had the plant and the men available, these works should not have been extended to Subiaco.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It would be of no use extending the sewerage works unless you had the water.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I remarked that I was doubly interested in the question of the water supply. Until we have a sufficient water supply we cannot claim to have the sewerage system extended, because it would be unworkable. For this reason I strongly advocate that the Government should take steps to provide an adequate water supply. The present sanitary system is a menace not only to my electorate but to the electorates abutting on Subiaco. If an epidemic occurs there, it will assuredly spread to adjoining districts. Therefore, this question affects not only Subiaco, but all the surrounding districts, and members should see that the Government do not remain inactive and so court disaster.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Subiaco is one of the healthiest districts in the State.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Quite so, but to preserve the health of the district costs considerably more than should be the case. While dealing with the question of an adequate water supply, it may seem somewhat paradoxical that I should speak very strongly on the question of drainage. In many portions of my electorate the water has been rising for years and years. In one particular spot in Jolimont, where a fairly large settlement has taken place, a miniature lake has made its appearance. Some 20 residents have already had to move from their houses, and there are still a score of others on the verge of this lake. One resident told me that he fishes in his own kitchen every morning for his breakfast, and a lady told me that her family had no occasion to pay for amusements as they had a good combined concert there day and night by mosquitoes and frogs. The question of

drainage is one that must be faced by the Government. We approached the Minister for Works on this question but he, with a mighty wave of the hand, said, "There are many parts in the same condition and I am preparing a comprehensive scheme." Surely we have engineers in the Government employ who are capable of suggesting some partial remedy to relieve the present situation. I cannot believe that among our full-fledged engineers there is no one capable of doing this. Yet we are told that we must wait until this comprehensive scheme, which will cost millions of money and which is to be designed to drain the whole of the metropolitan area, is completed before we can get any redress. It was wrong of the Minister for Works to suggest such a thing. He should have given due consideration to the facts and not contented himself with saying that nothing could be done until the comprehensive scheme was put in hand. Members of the Opposition should be able to support me in this request. Workers are losing their homes on account of the lack of drainage and they are the people who can least afford the loss. They went out into this particular district because the land was cheap and built homes there. Fifteen or sixteen years ago there was no sign of any water there the Government, however, constructed a large storm-water drain, and emptied it alongside Jolimont, and it is believed by first class engineers that the reason for the water rising is that the water is discharging on to higher ground, filtering through and coming out at the lower part of Jolimont. If this is a fact, it is a disgrace that the Government should permit it to continue. An easy and simple method of disposing of the drainage water would be to take the present 6-inch drain a quarter of a mile away where there are no inhabitants. I protest against the attitude adopted by the Minister for Works, and I hope he will review the situation and afford us some relief. There are one or two small matters with which I wish to deal. We have heard continual complaints, and rightly so, regarding the high cost of living, and some provision was made to meet the difficulty by appointing a price-fixing commission. There is another cost to which no reference has been made whereby poor people and small shopkeepers are being absolutely plundered. This is in connection with their rents. It is essential that a fair rents court be established in Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: This House has passed a motion to that effect.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am pleased to hear that, and I hope such a court will be brought into operation at the earliest possible date. This burden falls on the poorer people who have no redress whatever. If their rents are raised, there are no other houses available for them and the landlords know it. Consequently, the landlords are clutching for more rent with both hands. The small shopkeeper is penalised, too, because he does not know how long he will last in business, and there-



fore does not secure a lease. Immediately the landlord finds that a shopkeeper is progressing in business, he filches a little more from his poor and struggling tenant. I was quite unaware that this House had passed a motion in favour of a fair rents court, and I hope that the Government will give effect to the resolution at the earliest possible moment. Considerable injustice has been done to many ratepayers, not only in the Subiaco electorate, but in other parts of Western Australia, owing to the methods which are adopted in raising the rates. I notice in the Governor's Speech that it is proposed to amend the Municipalities Act. I intend to urge, and strongly support, an amendment enabling municipal councils to rate on the unimproved value of land. This is a step in the right direction. The right to do this has already been given to road boards, and I am rather surprised that members in the House at the time did not insist that it should also apply to municipalities. There may have been some reason for this of which I am not aware. I hope the measure will be passed through at an early date so that municipalities whose financial year ends on the 30th October may have an opportunity of rating next year under the new system. I also notice from the Speech that it is intended to do something with regard to assisting our hospitals both in the metropolis and in the country areas. I will uphold anything that is brought forward in that direction. Something ought to be done. There are people in the community who are unable to help themselves. If the Government can do anything to assist them the House should stand behind them and give them their support.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It all depends on the basis of the Act.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I take it the Act will be framed so that assistance is given to our hospitals; if so, it will have my support. There is one organisation which I hope will not be overlooked, namely, the St. John's Ambulance Association. Members of that organisation work entirely gratuitously and give their services free both day and night in the relief of suffering. I shall be willing to support anything that will recognise the work of that body. As a new member I think I have had a fair innings. Most of the new members have given the House a concise idea of where they stand. I am a member of the National Labour Party. Owing to that fact I have the right of free speech and free thought in all matters political and otherwise. I intend in this House to exercise that freedom of thought and speech. I am prepared to support any measure brought before the House that I believe to be for the good of the country. I do not care where the measure comes from, but I am prepared to support it if after looking carefully through it and giving every consideration to it I am of opinion that it should be given effect to. On the other hand I am pleased to notice the moderation shown by members in their speeches. It is

true that members opposite have criticised the constitution of the Country Party, and that members of the Country Party have criticised the constitution of the Labour Party.

The Minister for Agriculture: Those are their long suits.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I do not care one iota what the constitution of either party is. That is their business. I presume they do not care a great deal about the constitution of either side. Whilst, however, they are bickering amongst themselves as to their constitution I am afraid they are wasting good time. Neither party will alter the constitution of the other because of that criticism. Although I believe the criticism has been offered in a friendly sense, more perhaps to create some little amusement, for my part I should like to see less of it. I trust as time goes on and I become more fully acquainted with the procedure of the House and have grasped matters more in detail, and when I have obtained a good deal more information about matters in general than I possess at present, I may be able to add something that will be of benefit to the House. Let me assure hon. members that if I make any personal enemies in the course of my sojourn here I will consider at the end of my time I have not fulfilled my duty. I do not believe in bickering or in personalities between parties. I am here to do my best for my country according to my way of thinking.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. TROY (Mount Magnet) [9.21]: During my fairly long term in the House I have never heard a more unsatisfactory programme than that outlined in the Governor's Speech, presented on the occasion of the opening of Parliament. His Excellency certainly acquitted himself by reading the Speech impressively, but beyond that the Speech placed in his mouth was both disappointing and despairing in nature. It conveyed nothing but excuses for the present state of the finances, and hopes more pretended than real that the Government had grasped the position of affairs. I knew the weak points of former administrations, that they could repair past defects, and that they were now proceeding on safe and sound lines. We were told in the Speech that the deficit is nearly five million pounds, and that there was a surplus in June of £200,000. The backwash in July, however, was so great that it wiped out almost completely that June surplus. Last year the estimated deficit was £285,000, and the excuse offered for exceeding that estimate was that owing to a falling off in railway freights, due to strikes and other industrial disturbances, the Government did not receive that amount of revenue which the Premier had forecasted. Surely, as the freight which would have been car-