

ties in the North than those revealed in the Southern or Eastern areas.

[*Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.*]

Mr. LEWIS (Canning): I rise to support the adoption of the Address-in-reply in accordance with the usual modesty that characterises our party in the hour of victory, whilst in the hour of defeat we can be equally brave. The most pleasing feature of the recent election was the circumstance that such a large percentage of electors exercised their privilege. While the people take so keen an interest in the government of the State we can rest assured that the Government will carry out faithfully the task entrusted to them. It is also satisfactory to note that the electors have returned a party that preaches nationalism. One factor that helped to return the Labour party and defeat the Liberal party was the recognition by the people of the splendid record put up by the same party in the national Parliament. Both from an administrative and a legislative point of view that party have put up a record of which the people of Australia are proud. Further than that, education has been the means of enabling the people of Australia to return from the ranks of the workers practical men who realise the difficulties the people have to suffer under and who can take control of the legislation and administration of the State and do more effective work in a short period than their predecessors have ever done before. During the short time the present national Government have been in power they have achieved more effective work than had previously been done in the history of the Commonwealth. Many reasons have been stated for the marvellous overthrow of the Liberal party at the recent elections. I realise that the most important factors in that were education and adult suffrage. People are beginning to realise that the party who in the past have controlled the destinies of the State have worked in the interests of a few privileged people, without regard for the great masses. I am pleased to congratulate the Minister for Lands on having instituted a policy which, I believe, will effectively develop the lands

of this State. Any casual observer travelling over the railway lines of the State must realise that the land close to the existing railways is in many districts nothing but a wilderness, while genuine settlers have to go out into the interior of the country under a diminished rainfall in order to gain a living from the soil. Clearly in the past speculators have held the land close to the railways for the sake of the unearned increment, and have thus retarded the progress of the State. I am pleased to see that every effort is to be put forth to assist the settlers on our land so that those who desire to take up land and utilise it shall have an opportunity afforded to them such as has never been afforded in the past. Owing to the dry season in certain parts of our agricultural areas at the present time we realise that settlers have to struggle with many difficulties, and it is pleasing to note the prompt action on the part of the Government with a view to alleviating the discomfort of these people. The Labour party realise that if we are going to have progress in the State it is essential that we should develop every industry. The more avenues of employment opened up, the better for the State and the Commonwealth generally. Therefore we are a national party. There is no attempt to set the goldfields against the coast. One of the sins the late Administration had to carry was that they always endeavoured to set the coast against the goldfields with a view to securing a further lease of power. The present Administration recognise that the coast and the goldfields are indissolubly linked together, and recognise also that if we are to have progress we must do all we can to assist those in our agricultural areas. And so we see to-day the national party in Western Australia having representatives, not only from metropolitan constituencies but also from agricultural constituencies, and a monopoly of representation from the goldfields constituencies; and this party is going to work unitedly to develop every industry. I am pleased to know that at last we have an energetic Minister for Mines who is determined to do all he can to open up new fields, the greatest stimu-

lus which can ever be experienced in this State. We realise that an industry which employs large numbers of men is deserving of every encouragement. We also intend to do all we can to build up the manufacturing industries in our metropolitan area. By doing that we create a market for our producers on the land. The Labour party, being all practical men, realise it is necessary to do this in order to promote the development of the State we are all so proud to belong to. There is also mention in the Governor's Speech of the importance of constructing railways. We realise it is necessary to build railways in order to develop this vast area, and the party to which I have the honour to belong will do all in their power to hasten this. They will see that the railways will not be opened up, as was often the case in the past, to enhance the value of the land of some who had a certain amount of political patronage, but they will see that the lines are built to serve the larger body of settlers. We should extend our railway system in the metropolitan area. I would like the Government to take into consideration the necessity for building a line along the south bank of the Swan river, as the progress of the district it would serve has been retarded owing to the need for communication. Besides opening up settlement, such a line would remove the congestion on the main line and would ensure more economical railway working. Trains are now hung up for hours because the lines are congested. By opening up the South-side railway a lot of the traffic from the Eastern line could be diverted. The line would do a vast amount of good and effect economies so far as departmental administration is concerned. We have, I am confident, at Como one of the finest beaches in the State, a clean, sandy, fine beach. If this railway was opened up it would enable our wives and children to visit that beach, and Como would prove a fine asset to that particular railway. I welcome the introduction of a Parliamentary Committee of Public Works. I believe public works should be inquired into and reports submitted to Parliament, so that Parliament can have something to

guide them as to the necessity for works. The committee might also consider the desirability of establishing State brick works. I believe there is a ring existing now, and that bricks cost from 50s. to 55s. at the kiln. I believe that by the State manufacture of bricks this ring could be broken up, and that we could manufacture bricks at from 30s. to 35s. a thousand. This would enable people with limited means to build homes for themselves, which they cannot do now owing to the monopoly that exists. I hope the Government will speedily deal with the early closing question, and have the referendum as to the weekly half-holiday. The Saturday half-holiday has been instituted in Melbourne and Adelaide, and though on its introduction some employers strenuously opposed it, they now realise the boon it is, and the advantage it is to have a little respite at the end of the week to be able to take a week-end journey that equips them for the work of the following week. I am glad it is intended to deal with this matter as soon as possible. I do not intend to discuss all the paragraphs in the Governor's Speech. I support the remarks of several speakers that too much time can be taken up by discussing the Address-in-reply, time which might possibly be devoted to work of a more urgent nature. Most matters have been very exhaustively dealt with already, but there is one there is no reference to, and I would like the Government to give it their earnest consideration, because it is in accordance with their policy of the nationalising of public utilities. I urge on the Government the necessity to go thoroughly into the matter of endeavouring to secure the nationalisation of the Perth tramways. Recently a Traffic Commission sat in Melbourne and took evidence with regard to the Melbourne Tramway Company, a monopolistic concern which in 1887, the year of the Centennial Exhibition, paid 72 per cent. dividend, and in another year 57 per cent. dividend, and in another year 38 per cent., and for several years over 20 per cent. dividend, the lowest dividend paid being 9 per cent. during the years of depression. The capital cost of that concern is £1,705,794. Interest and sinking

fund per annum is £123,750, and the profits per annum, including provision for reserves, exceed the latter sum. It is estimated that the profits of this company, owing to the increased population, will, during the last two years of their lease, amount to something over a quarter of a million. This is an example sufficiently striking to show us and demonstrate to the Government the need for securing the valuable asset of the Perth tramways. The settlement and progress of the district I represent has been largely retarded by the want of communication between the district and the City. The sole desire of these monopolistic concerns is to secure profit, and profit only. Repeatedly deputations have waited on the Melbourne Tramway Company, as they have in Perth, urging extensions to suburbs which have grown into existence, also urging the establishment of penny sections or penny fares; but at all times these requests have been refused. On the other hand we have in New South Wales a tramway system run by the Government who have introduced penny sections, and that system carries the bulk of the suburban traffic. If we compare the Sydney tramway traffic with the Melbourne tramway traffic we find that in Melbourne, with a population of 598,000, the passenger journeys per head of the population are 140 per annum, and the receipts are £700,000; whereas in Sydney, with a population of 635,000, the passenger journeys per head of the population amount to 312 and the receipts reach £1,161,184. In Melbourne the bulk of the suburban traffic is carried on the railways, because in the outer suburbs the people have no opportunity of getting tramway extensions, owing to the fact that the Melbourne Tramway Company exists solely for profit and has no regard whatsoever for public convenience or public interests. I believe, if the matter was thoroughly gone into to find out the value of the Perth tramway concern, the Government could submit a report and have a Bill brought in authorising them to immediately secure the system. It has been urged that our tramways should be municipalised, but under Government control they could be managed more economically.

By having them placed under the Railway Department, one staff would be sufficient to deal with the accounts, etcetera, of both systems, and it would prevent undue competition between the railways and the trams. I believe the trams could be placed under the management of a superintendent who would be controlled by the Commissioner of Railways. We would then link up the suburbs and not have lines running parallel to the railway, and transit facilities would thus be distributed over a big area, and the people of Perth would secure facilities, as they have in Sydney and Adelaide, to develop suburbs previously not in existence. The universal experience is that cheap and extensive travelling facilities create traffic. I hope the Government will go into this matter at an early date to find out how it stands. It is estimated the profits of the trams this year will be about £39,000. However, these figures are disputed; there is some doubt as to their accuracy, and I have not gone exhaustively into them. In the district I represent, at Belmont, Cannington, and South Perth, we would find settlement immediately taking place if tramway communication with the City were brought about. South Perth is an ideal suburb. People wish to live there but they have no means of communication. Again, it is the desire of the municipality of South Perth to municipalise the ferry system. They want a channel cut from Mends-street to Coode-street, by which means they could have a circuit and run boats, provided they got control of the channel. This, if brought about, would enable the people to have frequent and cheap facilities of transit for travelling across to South Perth, and this also would undoubtedly promote settlement in that suburb. I congratulate the Government on bringing in an amendment to the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. It is necessary that the Act should be amended so as to simplify it and provide some method to deal with disagreements before a dispute actually arises. If this is done I feel certain the Arbitration Court would be more effective in preventing disputes. We should simplify the Act by doing away with many of the judicial decisions and technicalities.

Such an amendment would create more confidence in the court among the workers. The Act has been found to be unworkable in many instances, and the workers would rather resort to other methods, because they have no confidence in the Act as at present constituted. I hope the Government will take into consideration the need for simplifying the Act and facilitating matters in connection with its administration so as to enable disagreements to be referred to the court and decisions given so as to prevent disputes. If we can prevent disputes we have done good work. It is the desire of our party to prevent industrial strife. We realise that when it takes place, if there is one section of the community that suffers more than another it is the wives and families of the men. We desire to do all we possibly can to constitute some tribunal that will prevent disputes. We realise that not only do those immediately concerned suffer, but also the dislocation in trade does a vast amount of injury to others not connected with the dispute at all. In fact we are all intimately associated; we all depend on one another; society is one living organism; if we inflict injury on one section the whole is more or less affected. I realise this, and therefore I feel the Government will, at an early date, amend this Act.

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

Mr. LEWIS: Before the tea adjournment I was referring to the amendment of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. I would just like to emphasise this point. We should do all we can to prevent industrial warfare and to bring about peace, and when any dispute is brought before a tribunal that tribunal should be one in which the men have confidence. It is noticeable when a matter is being thrashed out in the Arbitration Court a great deal of emphasis is laid on the fact of trying to arrive at what is the cost of living. I think we should also endeavour to ascertain what profits are made in the various industries. That is a matter that should be inquired into so that the employers who are making huge profits out of the

efforts of the workers should have to disclose the profits they make, and thus we would arrive at a true basis for the remuneration of the worker. In connection with the public service I welcome the fact that the constitution of the Public Service Appeal Board is to be altered, and that there is also to be a reclassification. It is a remarkable feature in regard to bringing about a reclassification of the public servants that those most vitally concerned are never consulted in the matter. The Public Service Commissioner draws up a classification without consulting those immediately concerned. We should endeavour to do justice to those who are concerned; the public servants should be consulted and their views ascertained. That is the only way to arrive at a satisfactory solution which both parties are agreeable to. Those concerned should have an opportunity of ventilating their grievances and of stating how they are situated. There is another matter, the equal political rights to public servants. The leader of the Opposition stated that the public servants of the State would by and by dominate the State, and the result would be that the people of the State would rebel against it and take the franchise away from the civil servants altogether. That has been tried in Victoria by Mr. Irvine, but public opinion was so strong against it there that the Government had to restore the franchise to the public servants. The same thing was tried by Mr. Wade in New South Wales, where a similar proposal was brought forward. But I have found when you attempt to effect coercion against the British race the inherent sense of fairplay is so strong that people will not tolerate it. The leader of the Opposition when at Cranbrook was feeling that his political doom was coming on the 3rd October, and seeing that three Government servants intended to contest the constituencies of Claremont, Canning, and Geraldton, he sent a wire from Cranbrook to the Commissioner for Railways informing him that if Mr. Dooley, Mr. Burchell, and myself persisted in standing for election our services would have to be immediately determined. With the result that it created an electric spark

that kindled a flame throughout the State, and so aroused public indignation that on the Sunday after the Premier was quite pleased to back down and withdraw the very iniquitous instructions which he had given. In connection with that matter I say we realise, although we are Government servants the moment we are elected, we first of all represent the State, and our constituencies next. As to doing justice to the public servants we should not allow that to interfere with our duties as representatives first of all of the State and then of the constituencies we represent. It is not a right policy to adopt to try coercion. If one political party cannot educate the people to their ways of thinking then it is not right to attempt coercion, for if that is done rebellion takes place and it reacts on those who instituted it. There is another matter I would like to see considered by the Government, and that is in connection with main roads. Some scheme should be devised to overcome the difficulty that affects many municipalities and roads boards at the present time. In many scattered districts of Western Australia the roads board or municipality has to carry out great development work and to maintain main roads from which no revenue is received. It is a great tax on these bodies, and some scheme should be evolved to overcome this difficulty. It would create a benefit to many of the scattered parts of the State. I will not take up the time further as far as the Address-in-reply is concerned. Most of the items in the comprehensive programme to be introduced this session have been thoroughly dealt with. I thank members for the patient hearing they have extended to me.

Mr. LANDER (East Perth): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on the high and honourable position which you now occupy, and I trust your career will be as lengthy and as honourable as that of Sir Jenkin Coles of South Australia. I also congratulate the Government upon the able manner in which they tackled the serious question of the wages of the railway men of Western Australia. I consider it reflects

great credit on the Minister for Railways and the Premier for the action they took in reference to raising the wages of the lower paid men in the Railway Department. I think it was a scandal that men were asked to work for a mere pittance in the railway service. I trust the Government will also take the case of other lower paid public servants in hand and bring their wages up to a living amount. There is not an elector in Western Australia at the present time who will not say that there are some public servants who are not receiving a fair wage. There are some police officers in receipt of a pittance of 6s. 6d. a day, which is a scandal to Western Australia, and while we are paying such low wages living is very high. Take the difference of the wages in South Australia, where the Government pay junior constables 8s. a day and 1s. a day allowance; here we pay 6s. 6d. a day. It is a scandal to pay men such low wages when we have to put them on the streets and place property under their control. I am sure this is a question that will be taken into consideration. In reference to station-masters, as the member for Murray stated some were receiving a pittance of 10½d. per hour. It is a wrong thing to allow such a state of thing to continue. If we make a comparison, which has been quoted often, between the Commonwealth Government and this Government, it will at once be seen that it is time the House took action to rectify the matter. There is another subject I wish to speak on. I regret to say that in some agricultural areas some of the farmers are meeting with hard times. I am pleased the Government have taken steps to try and relieve the farmers of their trouble in the way of water cartage. I trust that not only will the Government cart water for them, but that they will go a little further, if necessary—perhaps it is warranted—and provide seed wheat and other necessaries required to keep the people on the land. I am sure it is very hard for the people in the back dry areas having to suffer such hardships. There is another matter. If I am informed rightly the produce carted on agricultural lines to and from the