

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: The stations have gardens with irrigation plants.

Hon. T. Moore: They would afford some proof.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I hope the Government will give prompt consideration to this offer and give the Jewish people a favourable answer as soon as possible. Time is the essence of the contract. If we are going to save the North-West, we must populate it. The sooner Dr. Steinberg is informed that he has the support of our Government, the sooner will he be able to go to Canberra and secure the approval of the Commonwealth Government. Then, probably at the end of the next wet season, when cooler conditions arrive, a start might be made on this scheme. There are other matters that I intended to deal with, but I shall defer them until another occasion. I content myself by supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. V. Hamersley, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 6.11 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 22nd August, 1939.*

	PAGE
Questions: Railways, Narrogin stockyards .....	220
Agriculture, wheat stabilisation conference, as to basis for payment .....	220
Address-in reply, eighth day—amendment .....	220

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

### QUESTION—RAILWAYS, NARROGIN STOCKYARDS.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Railways: What was the lowest price quoted to the Commissioner for Railways by any Western Australian foundry or by the Midland Junction Workshops for the pump and

electric motor recently purchased from Castlemaine, Victoria, for £139 and installed at the Narrogin stockyards?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: No price was obtained, as the order was based on tenders called three months before for a similar plant, in which case the lowest local quote for suitable plant was approximately 40 per cent. above the Victorian tender.

### QUESTION—AGRICULTURE, WHEAT STABILISATION CONFERENCE.

*As to Basis for Payment.*

Mr. SEWARD asked the Premier: In the report upon the recent wheat stabilisation conference it is stated that the proposed assistance to wheatgrowers will be given on the amount of wheat marketed. Does that mean all wheat the farmer sells, including wheat sold for home consumption, and to poultry-growers, etc.? Assuming that a sum of £3,500,000 is provided, and it is paid on 140,000,000 bushels, what amount would the farmer receive per bushel at a siding with a rail freight of 4d. per bushel, excluding handling charges, world price, and home consumption payments?

The PREMIER replied: No definite decision has yet been reached in regard to any of these matters. It is hoped that finality will be obtained at a further conference to be held this month.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Eighth Day—Amendment.*

Debate resumed from the 17th August.

MR. ABBOTT (North Perth) [4.35]: I wish to express my appreciation to all members for the kindness and assistance they have extended to me as a new member. Particularly do I wish to thank members on the Government bench for suggesting that my name should be included with the names of other new members in the welcome that was given them by the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald). This was a little hard upon the hon. member, since in the first place, I was thrust upon him by the electors of North Perth, and, secondly, because members of the Government insisted that he should welcome me here. I trust I



may always rely upon like support from members opposite.

The first matter to which I wish to refer relates to the North Perth electorate. The fare sections for passengers on trams proceeding north are not reasonable. When people desire to go west from the Town Hall, they may proceed for a mile and a half to Thomas street for 2d., but when they go north, starting also from the Town Hall, a similar distance costs them 3d. I understand the explanation is that people who go north may board the trams at the Barrack street jetty and proceed north for the distance of a mile and a half for 2d. The fare section should not straddle the city but should commence at a central point. I feel sure that if the Minister for Railways will consider this modest request from North Perth, in conjunction with the far less modest requests that have been made by the member for Canning (Mr. Cross) and the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan), and will bear in mind the justice of this one, he will have no difficulty in granting it.

The Government proposes to bring down amendments to the Industrial Arbitration Act. This statute is of vital importance to the economic life of the community. When the Act was first passed some 37 years ago, it was passed with a view to providing machinery for the settlement of industrial disputes. The decisions of the court seriously affect the community, but the community as such is not represented during the hearing of any plaint. The Act should be amended so that the community may be heard. Very often the community is affected by some industrial agreement that has been registered. An employer may have a monopoly, and may say, "It does not matter what wages I pay because I can pass them on." The agreement may be registered without the community being heard in the matter. The Act, therefore, should be amended so that the people may be represented in the court.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Why not include industries as well? Eventually they have to carry the burden.

Mr. ABBOTT: Of course, but the community itself should be represented. Again, I consider it would be beneficial if the constitution of the court were altered. At present the court comprises three members, a president who must have the qualifications of a Supreme Court Judge and two ordin-

ary members. One of the latter has to be appointed on the nomination of the union of employers and the other on the nomination of the unions of employees. I do not approve of the appointment of the two ordinary members in the manner indicated. Members of a court so appointed are likely to be imbued with the views of the parties recommending them, and are unlikely to have that impartiality of mind that is usual with persons appointed under the British system of jurisprudence to act in a judicial capacity. That the ordinary members are unnecessary is proved by the fact that their services are seldom availed of in arbitration cases dealt with before the Federal court. Before that tribunal, any party may demand that assessors be appointed, but that course is seldom adopted. There have been, with justification I believe, many complaints about delays in the hearing of cases before the Arbitration Court. Mr. Mann, the chairman of the Fremantle Disputes Committee, when speaking regarding the dispute at Mills & Ware's factory, was reported in the "West Australian" as saying that the "objection from the employees' point of view to having the dispute referred to arbitration was the delay likely to occur in having the matter heard." I think employees are fully justified in objecting to their cases being heard before the Arbitration Court if they are required to wait for a considerable time to have their plaints disposed of. In my opinion, all members of the court should be appointed under conditions similar to those applying to the president. If that were so, it would obviate the delay that now exists in the court procedure. Provision could then be made that evidence on a plaint could be heard before a single judge, and then, if thought fit, the whole of the evidence and addresses could be considered by the full Arbitration Court bench and the decision of the court issued. Under the provisions of the Federal Arbitration Act, although a single judge has power to hear the evidence on a plaint, he can, should he think fit, require other judges to sit with him. As there is no appeal from a decision of the Arbitration Court, it would be as well, before an award or a decision of the court was delivered, that the full Arbitration Court bench should review the evidence. Such a system would be somewhat similar to the method adopted in the hearing of civil cases that go to appeal. In such instances, the whole



of the evidence is taken at the outset by a single judge and that evidence is then considered by the court of appeal, and the decision finally given. This course would, I think, overcome much of the delay that at present exists in the Arbitration Court procedure and could be accomplished at very little extra cost to the Government.

No one doubts that Western Australia has entered upon a new economic phase. The wealth and prosperity of the State in the past have been founded on the annual returns derived from the large export trade developed from the growth of its great primary industries, particularly those of wheat and wool. On the other hand, the intense nationalism that is being practised by the nations of the world, with the supplementary policy of self-sufficiency, has severely restricted our trade in relation to our primary products. Germany and Italy were large importers of our wheat before the war, but now they have imposed restrictive tariffs against our wheat and have themselves largely increased areas under cultivation for the production of this cereal. Staple fibre is being produced in increasing quantities. The German Institute of Business Research published the statement that in 1938 the world's production of staple fibre was 867,000 tons, an increase of 20,000 tons over that of the previous year. Germany, Italy and Japan are producing 90 per cent. of the total production of this commodity. In the past both Germany and Japan have been large purchasers of our wool. Britain has found it necessary to reduce the quota of mutton that may be imported into the Motherland. The reduction on Australian mutton for that purpose is 3 per cent. These facts make it clear to my mind that Western Australia is facing an era of new economic policies, which will bear particularly hard upon this State, which depends, as in the past, mainly upon its primary industries to provide work for its people. In support of that statement, I would draw the attention of members to the fact that in 1937 the value of Western Australia's industrial output was £18,313,000, while our imports were valued at £18,028,000. Imports from the Eastern States alone represented a value of £11,857,000, while we exported in return during that year only £3,000,000 worth of goods to the Eastern States. A very large proportion of the imported goods consisted of manufactured

articles. As we can no longer depend upon the sale of our primary products overseas to liquidate our adverse trade balance with the Eastern States, we must reduce that balance by manufacturing within the State more of the goods that our people require, and by this means provide employment for those who have in the past depended, directly or indirectly, on our primary production. Our industrial output per head is much lower than that of four of the other States of Australia. For the year 1937 the industrial output of New South Wales represented a value of £28.63 per head; that of Victoria, £31.7 per head; that of South Australia, £20.86; while that of Western Australia was only £17.59 per head.

Every member in this House must appreciate that the Minister for Industrial Development has done a good deal to overcome the difficulty with which this State is faced in not having its secondary industries developed. Our economic conditions must, to a large extent, be reorganised and the State should have the very best advice to enable it to be safely guided through this difficult period. Consequently, although the Minister has done far more in this direction than have past Governments, he has not, in my view, gone far enough. We should have an economic adviser. The Bank of New South Wales has had such an adviser for some years and in that capacity some of the ablest brains and best economists in Australia have been employed. If that institution requires economic advice, surely the State of Western Australia is entitled to the best counsel that can be obtained. Such an adviser should be above the control of party government and party politics. He should be a servant of and under the control of Parliament with a status similar to that of the Auditor-General. The people of the State have a right to know what is a wise and a just economic policy for them, and this House should have the responsibility of ensuring the implementation of such a policy.

I venture to advance to the Minister for Industrial Development a few suggestions whereby perhaps certain new secondary industries might become established in this State. They could be known as protected industries and would be such as in the opinion



of the Minister warranted introduction to this State. I suggest that industries of this kind might for a period of, say, five years be free from all rates and taxes and that the State Insurance Office should cover the insurance charges in connection with workers' compensation at a rate not higher than would be required to cover workers' compensation in the manufacturing industries of the Eastern States. I submit that we already have certain industries that almost come within this category. For instance, the Wyndham Meat Works has paid no rates and taxes and, I suggest, no insurance. I think I am correct in asserting that the State Brickworks might also be classified as a protected industry as it, too, pays no rates or taxes and has contributed little indeed to the coffers of the State. That Western Australia is one economic unit with the Eastern States has to be admitted. So long as we cannot manufacture goods that can be retailed to compete with those of the Eastern States, the people of Western Australia will naturally continue as Australians to buy goods in the cheapest Australian market.

I think that every member of this House believes in the general principle of democracy, namely, that we should do the best we can for the majority. At the same time I consider that our civilisation has progressed far enough to enable us to modify that principle in some degree. Where it clashes with our duty to a minority, that minority is at least entitled to justice. There is one minority in this State that is not receiving justice from the Government and it consists of men that depend on sustenance. We might classify them as the permanent sustenance workers. Surely every human being in Western Australia is entitled to sufficient to enable him to feed, clothe and provide shelter for himself and dependants, but I venture to suggest that no man will contend that 7s. per week for each person will do all that. I think every member must constantly have men or women coming to him with tales of great hardship on this account. One man came to me the other day. He was the sole support of his aged mother and he was totally deaf. He said, "I cannot get unemployment relief because I am so deaf that they will not employ me. I cannot support my mother and myself on 14s. a week." I therefore urge upon the Government—and I am sure I shall have the

support of every member—that it should try to increase the allowance to this unfortunate minority. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [4.58]: I desire to add my congratulations to those already extended to you, Sir, on your elevation to the office of Speaker. I am sure that all those who have been associated with you in this House in past sessions fully appreciate not only your capacity to fill your present position with credit, but also that they need have no fear of your judgment. I should also like to extend congratulations to the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) on his appointment to the position of Chairman of Committees. To the new members of this House I desire to offer my felicitations. That we have some excellent talent in the newcomers is obvious. As one who is also a young member, I wish to express the hope that they are not early disappointed in what they expected of Parliament. All of us, at some time or other, have been amongst the newcomers, and, I am sure, judging from my own experience, have passed through certain stages of disappointment in our initial days in Parliament. I feel that as the interest of the new members in the work of Parliament increases, so will they become better and more useful members.

On this occasion it is not my desire to reply to any criticism that has been raised in the course of this debate. It may be unusual that at this stage I should make a fairly lengthy speech—for I am afraid it will be lengthy—and that it should yet not be in reply to complaints or criticisms. There were perhaps speeches that called for some reply, but since on this occasion my intention is to be informative rather than provocative, I will leave comment in that connection until some other time.

I desire to deal primarily with the position of wheat and the position of wool in this State. It has been my privilege in recent months and during last year to have access to many documents of a highly informative character, particulars of which will be very interesting to the House and will be valuable at other times for reference. I desire to deal fully with these subjects, appreciating that the prospect is not very cheerful, but the time is opportune to make