

regard to these great problems, and if such a course could achieve some success, I would favour it.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [6.3]: I am deeply conscious of the responsibility that has been placed in me as a member of this hallowed House of Parliament in Harvest Terrace. I take this opportunity of assuring members that I will do all in my power to make a worth-while contribution to the welfare of this State and give faithful and efficient service to the people of the electorate I so proudly represent.

To you, Mr. Speaker, I offer my most sincere congratulations on your election to your high office and I tender to you my very best wishes for a successful and happy term as the father of this House. As the walrus has said, the time has come to speak of many things.

Mr. Jamieson: We have had that before.

Mr. EVANS: And the hon. member is having it once again. While we all may hope that our speeches may become immortal, there is no need to make them eternal. I assure the members of this House that I will say all I desire to say in the shortest time possible.

From the bottom of my heart, I would like to speak on the question of unemployment. It is extremely perturbing to see the unhealthy signs of unemployment amongst us today. Unemployment has even extended for a distance of 375 miles to the Goldfields. I sincerely hope that this is only a passing phase and the sooner it passes the better. I congratulate the Premier on the steps he has taken in an endeavour to have funds made available to alleviate unemployment and, at the risk of being compared to a disc jockey reading a commercial, I wish to give Kalgoorlie a plug when that money is being handed out from the Treasurer's purse.

The Leader of the Opposition, when speaking, reminded me somewhat of the devil quoting the scriptures when he spoke of increased charges for water because I remember when, as Premier, he increased water charges, particularly in the Kalgoorlie district. However, I would like to make one suggestion in regard to the floodwater in the metropolitan area which is causing the Government a great deal of concern. I suggest that that water should be pumped to Kalgoorlie and supplied free to the people of that district. The Government, in the future, should bear in mind that Kalgoorlie is far distant and that the people there have been paying much more for their water than residents in the metropolitan area. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned that increased charges for water would be made to metropolitan householders. At the risk of offending some of my colleagues and perhaps some of the members on the other side of the

House, I might say that when that day arrives perhaps it will be a good thing because to those who live in the city such increased charges will prove very unpalatable. I agree with the member for Eyre that a flat rate for water should be charged throughout the State. In my opinion, what is good for the goose is good for the gander—even for the metropolitan gander.

I confidently anticipate that this session members will see the enactment of legislation making it compulsory for bakers to deliver bread to any householder who orders a loaf and is prepared to pay for it. Within the last eight months the whole of Kalgoorlie and Boulder districts have been left without a door-to-door delivery as a result of an agreement between a handful of master bakers, which agreement, in my opinion, amounts to a conspiracy.

As an alternative, these bakers have instituted the practice of sending vans to appointed places in the public streets and notifying their presence by having the drivers blow whistles and ring bells and they dole out their wares to the customers who have to queue up like beggars outside a soup kitchen or prisoners in one of Hitler's concentration camps. It has been decided to make such a use of the public streets an unlawful obstruction of the traffic. It is amazing that our municipal authorities have tolerated this abuse for so long.

Let me remind members that what happened in Kalgoorlie during the last eight months could quite easily happen in Perth and Fremantle tomorrow. If this did occur, one can well imagine what an outcry would result. Long ago Parliament assumed the right to control the price at which wheat products may be sold. I say it is just as logical and just as essential, in the interests of the public, that the other conditions relating to the sale of bread, such as those dealing with its delivery, should also be controlled by Parliament.

A matter which concerns me deeply and which is an old political football is the question of decentralisation, and this time it is going to go through the goal posts. I am particularly concerned with decentralisation in this State in general and in particular with the establishment of at least one stable and major secondary industry on the Eastern Goldfields. One shows cowardly tendencies if one completely steers away from a project that is difficult and apparently impossible. I am no coward and I would like to point out to members that, with bold determination, this task of decentralisation can be achieved. With inspiration, desperation and perhaps perspiration the "difficult" can be achieved almost immediately. The "impossible" may take a little longer. It does seem to me, however, that the achievement of decentralisation on the Goldfields has taken too long.

I was very impressed to hear the member for Vasse speaking on this subject, especially as he is a member of the Opposition. My colleague, the member for Albany, also touched on the problem. I would like to stress to members that the Goldfields are far from the stage where they are no longer of any great concern. To stress my point I am going to quote from a bulletin dealing with Commonwealth loans and national savings. It reads as follows:—

Goldfields Response.

A pleasing feature of the recent Loan campaign in this State was the excellent result recorded by the Goldfields.

Kalgoorlie, which was allotted a quota of £40,000 raised a total of £50,680. This was the district's best loan result for the past twenty-one Security Loans conducted since November, 1947.

Southern Cross is not within my district, but it is definitely a part of the Goldfields which has endeared itself so closely to my heart. The figures in regard to Southern Cross were as follows:—

Southern Cross, with a quota of £2,000 raised £8,100, its best result in any loan, while Norseman-Salmon Gums more than doubled its quota.

This will certainly please the member for Eyre. Continuing—

Coolgardie, which had not recorded a single application in the six previous loans, has now rejoined the list of Pennant winners. Other Goldfields districts which oversubscribed their quota included Bullfinch, Leonora, Gwalia, Westonia and Mt. Magnet. The entire response from the Goldfields was the best for many years.

Therefore, we are not dealing with something that is dead. We are dealing with something that is vigorous, something that is alive and something that matters.

Last week I took the opportunity of visiting the Department of Industrial Development and conversed with the chief clerk whilst examining some figures he had collated. These figures showed that 90 per cent. of our population in Western Australia is conglomerated or packed into the South-West corner of the State and the metropolitan area. Yet that particular area constitutes only one-tenth of the total area of the State. Such a state of affairs is morally wrong. A Government should concern itself with the finances and the growth of the State as a whole where that is possible and, with the Goldfields, I say that an improvement is definitely possible. In Kalgoorlie and Boulder we have a population of over 23,000. That represents a healthy body of people. However, following the census that was taken in 1947 the figures show that these two districts held a population of approximately 28,000. With the effluxion of time

we lost some of this population, but there is no doubt that the Goldfields will come again. The time is ripe for us to do something to maintain our population and, not only maintain it, but increase it.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. EVANS: I now return to the wicket. I must be careful to tap down any catches as I do not want to be bowled by a yorker. To revert to my subject, decentralisation, before the adjournment I had mentioned that Kalgoorlie and Boulder—when I speak of Kalgoorlie I refer to the community of Kalgoorlie and Boulder—have a population of over 23,000. I claim that now is the time, while we have a bigish population, to do something about decentralisation on the Eastern Goldfields, and not wait until—I say this with all respect to the other goldmining towns such as Big Bell and Wiluna—these places have crumpled, not for good, I hope. The time has come for action, while there is still a vigorous population. We should not wait until these places crumble before someone takes it into his mind to try to do something. To delay is like backing a horse that is left a furlong behind.

When Wiluna closed down, an attempt, and a very praiseworthy one, was made to deal with the position, and interest was aroused in a firm in Perth known for the manufacture of confectionery and canned vegetables. This particular firm was encouraged to experiment at Wiluna. There were several reasons why this enterprise failed. I would like to see such enterprise encouraged at Kalgoorlie and to profit from that previous experience so that the next attempt will not fail.

Whilst I was in the Department of Industrial Development last week, I was informed that several years ago an experiment was started and a survey of the Eastern Goldfields was made regarding the nature of the soil. I was informed that the soil in that locality—not that I had to be so informed—for agricultural purposes is second to none. There is only one drawback. Of course, we all know what that is—water. I, along with the member for Eyre, believe there should be a flat water rate. Even if we had a flat water rate, something else would have to be done if an industry consuming water were to operate on the Eastern Goldfields.

I was informed that if the Kalgoorlie mines were to close down tomorrow, not only the community in Kalgoorlie and Boulder would be affected, but between 40 and 45 per cent. of the employees in the engineering trade in the metropolitan area would be thrown out of work the very next day, mostly men employed in the mining section. The effect would not only reach the engineering trade; it would also affect many other occupations within the metropolitan area. Therefore it is quite

evident that the question of decentralisation on the Eastern Goldfields is not merely a parochial one. It is a matter of State importance and State interest. I would like to see a committee formed with power to co-opt heads of departments to make a worth-while investigation into the possibility of decentralisation on the Eastern Goldfields. I have several ideas, but I do not intend to burden members with them at this stage.

Personally, I would like to see the Government financing an industry—I intend to give further details later on of this particular industry—so that if there were a slump in mining activities due to economic considerations, as we have now, this particular industry might be able to absorb the slump, and the Government as a whole would not be affected by having to pay out unemployment benefits and by having to find work for the unemployed, a position which the Government today is facing in the metropolitan area and in other parts of the State.

Possibly I may be termed a socialist; if I am, I am proud of it. If the Government were to finance an industry, details of which I shall give later, it would not offend private enterprise because private enterprise has shown in the past that it is not interested. I now come to the price of petrol. On the Eastern Goldfields, only 375 miles from Perth, the price is 4s 10½d. a gallon, a difference of 1s. 0½d. a gallon compared with the Perth price.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Is that for super grade?

Mr. EVANS: I am referring to super petrol. No one can tell me that the cost of transporting one gallon of petrol to the Goldfields is 1s. 0½d. I am told that the greater part of that difference is made up of insurance. If such is the case, it seems to be a very high rate of insurance, because, if my information is correct, there has never been one serious fire on the W.A.G.R. due to the transport of petrol between Fremantle and Kalgoorlie.

In other forms of insurance, after years of trouble-free service, there is a reduction in the premium rates, but there does not seem to be any reduction in the premium paid on the insurance of petrol. I would like to see an investigation carried out by the Government into this particular matter, the price of petrol. It does seem to me that the Royal Commission which recently sat, but which took a great deal of time to investigate the marketing of petrol, could have gone into the price of petrol and insurance rates paid for its transport.

The Minister for Health: Do you not think that we should have a flat rate?

Mr. EVANS: I agree there should be a flat rate for petrol. Metropolitan consumers of petrol pay 3s. 10d. a gallon for

super petrol. Alongside that they receive a great concession in the wonderful roads over which to drive their cars. People in the outback pay extra, but, of course, they do not receive the same consideration as regards their roads. What is good for the goose, should be good enough for the gander once more.

On the subject of railway lines, I congratulate the Government on much of what it anticipates bringing down this session. However, I would not be honest if I did not say that I am perturbed to hear that possibly some railway lines will have to be closed. I would like to plead for the future of those lines on the Goldfields, particularly the one between Malcolm and Laverton. The latter is a goldmining town that perhaps has seen better years; perhaps it will see many greater ones to come. However, apart from gold there is manganese at and beyond Laverton, which in the near future may prove to be of great benefit to this State. Those areas in the North-Eastern Goldfields and people who live in the outback are deprived of many concessions which the city dwellers receive. It does not seem fair or just if the means of transport for those people are taken away. I would like to point out also that the cost of substituting road transport for railway lines in that area is like robbing Peter to pay Paul, and we would still find ourselves in debt. The roads need a great deal of money to be spent on them to make them satisfactory for heavy road transport.

The railway system in our State is a public utility and should be regarded as such. In the metropolitan area the railway service is provided for workers from the various suburbs travelling to their daily employment, but that same system also serves people who like to travel in their annual holidays to the country centres. Apart from the annual holidays, very few metropolitan people use the railway lines that are available to them. However, the lines are there.

When we have regard to the country centres we find that people living there have very little else than the railways to use. They have to patronise the railways throughout the year. It is the country folk who pay for the upkeep of the railways yet the railways are a public utility. I say that the taxpayer should pay for the railways, irrespective of where he lives. If people in the outback choose to live there and a railway line is available, they should have it by all means.

I would now like to touch upon the subject of workers' compensation. It is of great importance to mine workers in all Western Australian mines. The compensation for industrial diseases such as pneumoconiosis, silicosis and miner's phthisis is the matter under discussion.

For some curious reason or other, in the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act these three diseases are described to give the impression that compensation is paid for each of them; but in actual fact, compensation is paid only for silicosis, although it is notorious that long and continued deprivation of sunshine and fresh air greatly predisposes to the development of tuberculosis. When this disease is goaded on by the miner's working under conditions where silica dust is prevalent no compensation is paid for the effect of T.B. unaccompanied by discernible silicosis. To my way of thinking, this is wrong and leaves very much to be desired.

It might be thought that miner's phthisis in general medical parlance means tuberculosis. Miner's phthisis in that case would mean tuberculosis due to mining. That is not the case under the relief Act or the compensation Act. Another matter of grave concern in the compensation Act is its application to miners under Section 8, Subsection (13) and also Section 11. If a man at work strains a part already enfeebled by industrial disease such as lead poisoning, and is thereby permanently incapacitated for work in that industry he receives full compensation. The same applies if he contracts an industrial disease such as lead poisoning or dermatitis.

The Act, however, provides that where a man who is already suffering from a heart, kidney, liver or any other disease is also incapacitated by silicosis he is paid, not the percentage he would receive for dermatitis, liver or heart trouble but only the percentage which a laboratory doctor estimates is due to silicosis. The Act requires that the degree of incapacity due to silicosis should be compared to the incapacity arising from a non-industrial disease, and the unfortunate miner then receives only a percentage of the compensation that I say is due to him.

I may be told that the assessment is made by an expert radiologist at the laboratory in Kalgoorlie. Perhaps I would be right in saying that, even as low as these assessments are, it has come to my notice that the insurance office now is referring the assessments of the laboratory doctor to a specialist in Perth; and I am informed also that the particular specialist is a distinguished member of another place, but by no means is he distinguished for his activity in the industrial battles for the workers.

Furthermore, I also point out that in 1950 the health laboratory doctor in Kalgoorlie was Doctor Outhred and he said that, in his opinion a man suffering from 35 per cent. disability—for the benefit of members the maximum is 65 per cent.—should be put out of the industry and compensated fully. I would like to quote the report of the Commissioner of Public Health

for the year 1954. The report by Dr. Alan King when dealing with tuberculosis on the Eastern Goldfields states—

It is obvious that the existing measures to date have not lowered the incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis in goldminers to that normal in the community.

A further attempt will have to be made to discover each and every infectious case of pulmonary tuberculosis in the goldfields.

There is no doubt that goldminers, by reason of their occupation, and exposure to silica dust, are more susceptible to infection with pulmonary tuberculosis.

It is seriously suggested that, in spite of a possible detrimental effect to the labour force in the goldmining industry, workers contracting silicosis in the early stage be excluded from the industry and receive some compensation for this exclusion.

I would like to bring that quotation to the minds of the members of the Workers' Compensation Board. I claim that if a man is incapacitated for future work in an industry, even though his percentage be 35, he should be put out of that industry.

A ruling was given by the Appeal Court of the High Court of England in the case of a coalminer named Reece. The case is known judicially as *Reece v. Powell Ryfryn Collieries Ltd.* This man had been working as a coalminer and he contracted a disease—blindness due to work—called nystagmus. He was placed in the hands of a medical referee whose decision was that the man could return to work but that if he did, within six months his form of blindness would return.

I claim the decision given on appeal to the High Court is that if a man is affected by his work so that he becomes incapacitated for future work in that industry, then he is due for full compensation; and I say that the Appeal Court of the High Court of England is perhaps a higher body than our Workers' Compensation Board, and that is a ruling worth considering. A man suffering from silicosis never improves. If he is lucky he will not become worse, but he never improves. By continuing to work in the mines he is slowly and progressively working himself to death. Let us not forget these men who work in the bowels of the earth where the silica dust is killing portion after portion of their lungs.

Next I refer to the goldmining award as it relates to sick pay for men who are affected by one or two, or more than two days' absence from the mines. Under the Act a worker who is away for one or two days is not required to present a medical certificate to the employers, but if he is away for two days or more he is. But the Act states that if a man is away for less

than three days he must give the employer proof satisfactory to the employer. I ask: What is proof satisfactory to the employer? And so do 3,500 miners on the Goldfields.

The employer can be presented with a medical certificate, although he cannot claim one, but if he likes to say, "I am not satisfied with that," there is nothing that can be done about it. It must be proof satisfactory to the employer. Does a man have to ask his wife to write out a note something like that which a mother writes when she sends a note to the teacher saying, "Please excuse James for being away. He had toe-ache." Some of the miners have tried that. They have taken notes, which have been refused.

I would like to see some clarification of that point in the near future. I have sought legal advice on this point and at another stage I may offer some suggestion in regard to it. I mention in passing that I was pleased to hear that it was the Government's intention to amend a very important statute, namely, the Child Welfare Act. I trust that it is the intention of the Government to amend the Act so that if a man is charged with a serious offence against a child, the right to trial by jury will be given back to him.

As I understand the position, the intention of last year's amendment was to save a young child the embarrassment of giving evidence in a crowded court in the case of a serious sexual offence. That has something to recommend it but the right to trial by jury which has been traditionally vested in every British subject is something much more precious, and I would like the Act amended to bring about a return of trial by jury. Perhaps the simplest way would be to withdraw last year's amendment.

This great anomaly was made known, and in a striking fashion too, by the decision of all five judges of our Supreme Court in the case of McGrath v. Dowson. I read in the "Kalgoorlie Miner"—I dare say this case received attention in "The West Australian" also—that it was a Kalgoorlie solicitor, Mr. Tom Hartrey—I am giving a plug to Kalgoorlie here—who defended Dowson and brought the matter to the attention of the judges of the Supreme Court.

There are many other amendments to the criminal law of this State that I would like to see adopted. The most glaring anomaly is to be found in the provisions relating to costs in a court of petty sessions, in the Police Court and under the Justices Act. That Act provides that if a prosecution launched by a police constable is dismissed, the defendant cannot be awarded costs against the police. Accordingly, if a person were convicted he would be fined, perhaps £2, but if the case was dismissed and an appeal lodged in the Supreme Court and the appeal upheld, the person involved could

be fined almost anything, together with the costs of his own lawyer and that of the Crown. He could be fined over 20 guineas or 30 guineas, whereas if he had been found guilty he could have been fined, on a minor charge, only £2 or £3.

This anomaly is giving rise to the practice of people, who are innocent but who are charged with a minor offence although perhaps with a moral stigma attaching to it, pleading guilty for fear that their defence might mean financial ruin. It is obvious that if the prosecutor wished to take advantage of that point, it would be an easy matter for him to persuade or even bluff an innocent person into pleading guilty. That is an anomaly I would like to see rectified.

The Lord Chief Justice in England recently made a statement that if the police wished to make a point, then let them pay for it. If the police like to lodge an appeal and lose it, then the Police Department should bear the costs. It should not be immune from costs, but should be treated like an ordinary individual. If I take a case against someone and I lose, I have to pay the costs.

As a member of the political party, and a very proud one too, which pioneered and indeed created the industrial laws of Western Australia, I stand firmly behind the Arbitration Court as a means of adjusting industrial differences and determining industrial conditions, but I say that the day the Arbitration Court was hamstrung by being prevented from making quarterly adjustments for the wages worker, was a bad day. It was a very bad day for the worker when that decision was given and the court moved on its own resolution to suspend the quarterly adjustments. I confidently expect that the Government—and I congratulate it on this—will bring down legislation to make it compulsory for the court to keep up with the trend of modern times.

Furthermore, I would like to see a review undertaken of the various weightings given to the items of the "C" series index. On the Goldfields we have a basic wage which trails behind that applying in the metropolitan area. When I speak of the Goldfields, I include the far-flung towns whose basic wage is based on that prevailing at Kalgoorlie. Those towns include such places as Leonora, Norseman and others further outback. Of course, the people in those places have rail freights to contend with, too. However, as I say, the basic wage in Kalgoorlie is taken as the standard in those outback areas, and our basic wage trails behind that in the metropolitan area.

I ask any member to go to Kalgoorlie and he will readily notice the difference in the price of food and clothing in particular to what is paid in the metropolitan area. I claim that too much weighting is given to rents and there is a long story behind that. I will not bother members

with it now but it is the value of houses and the rents paid which is the point of contention.

It is regrettable that an otherwise admirable Act, such as the Industrial Arbitration Act, should contain clauses prescribing penalties upon industrial unions whose members from time to time decline to offer themselves for work under conditions set down by the court. If a man wishes to sell his labour, he should be free to do so. If I open a shop I should be free to sell my wares, as most shopkeepers are; yet an industrial worker, if he declines to accept employment under conditions set down by the court, is subject to a pecuniary penalty. I would like to see such penalties removed from our Industrial Arbitration Act.

I would let my late profession down badly if I did not have something to say about education and in regard to that subject we get down to the old question of pounds, shillings and pence—in education even the pence are important. There is definitely inadequate finance made available for education and this inadequacy is responsible for shortcomings in our educational system. In my opinion the Federal Government must be made to realise that this State needs greater assistance in this regard—the education of the children of today who will be the citizens of tomorrow. There are many aspects that come under the title of education such as inadequate playing grounds, playing fields, and so on.

The school leaving age is an interesting point and I was pleased to see that the Government has once again decided to act in this connection. I congratulate the Government on the provisions it has made for school medical and dental services, but I would definitely like to see these services extended and the Eastern Goldfields visited more regularly by a school dentist, particularly the Kalgoorlie area. To my knowledge it is some years since a school dentist visited the community of Kalgoorlie and Boulder for the purpose of attending to the children's teeth.

I would also like to see some action taken in regard to homes for married school-teachers. On the Goldfields we have over 100 teachers in an area of just over six miles and there is a population of 23,000 people. It is an active body of teachers and many of them are married. The housing of these married teachers is presenting a problem and, although I believe that the problem is State-wide, I would press the needs of Kalgoorlie.

Yesterday I read a report of the Transport Board and while I offer the board congratulations I also offer some degree of sympathy because in Kalgoorlie we have our own Transport Board and we experience the same difficulties. While they may not be as great in one way perhaps, they

are greater in other directions. In my opinion, it is time that a decision was made in regard to transport—and when I say "transport" I mean the transport of people by buses and other vehicles—and as to whether transport is to be run as a business concern in the coldhearted bankers' fashion or is to be regarded as a public utility. In Kalgoorlie the Transport Board attends to the needs of 23,000 people. However, in recent years the buses have catered for only two classes of people, the very young—schoolchildren attending schools—and the very old—pensioners who are too feeble to walk and who, of course, have no other form of transport.

Many of the workers have their own cars and because of the difficulty of getting a bus at frequent intervals, those who cannot afford to buy cars travel by bicycle. The Transport Board on the Eastern Goldfields is passing through a serious stage of its existence. Within the last five years the present Government made a gesture to that Board by allocating to it used buses from the State Transport Board. They were deeply appreciated by the people concerned and with these buses the Transport Board on the Eastern Goldfields has been able to carry on. In addition the board found it necessary to call on the local governing bodies and they are subsidising the board's operations. But the time has arrived when once again the board may have to appeal to the Government and if such is the case I ask the Government to turn a sympathetic and generous ear towards these people who are catering for a public demand. So far as the Transport Board in Kalgoorlie is concerned, it is definitely a public utility.

I think that my speech has lasted long enough and perhaps some would say it has lasted too long. However, I wish to thank members for their indulgence and perhaps in the future I may be able to make a much better speech than I have done this evening.

MR. COURT (Nedlands) [8.8]: With the advent of the Premiers' Conference on the 16th August, I feel that we all have a duty to make some contribution to this particular problem. I trust that before the Premier leaves for the conference he will take the House into his confidence as to what are his own suggestions and ideas as to the best way to deal with the present transition period. I think members who read financial articles and listen to lectures by finance people will agree that it has become a popular pastime among some of those gentlemen who profess to be experts on the subject to present a very carefully considered document on all the things that ail us at present—and in the main they are in complete agreement as to those things—but when it comes to the final part of their paper, book or talk, as the case may be, they balk at putting