

condition. Producers can slaughter their stock in the abattoirs and have the same rights as any butcher operating there. I would emphasise that genuine producers in the outer abattoirs area, who cannot conveniently market their odd cow or a few pigs, will be permitted to slaughter them on the property, to be forwarded to the meat market for inspection previous to sale.

Because the Department of Agriculture has been prepared to give permits for that purpose, the regulation to which the hon. member objects has been framed with the object of taking away from the area previously covered by the regulations certain localities outside the 25-mile radius, in the interests of the small producers. Yet the hon. member desires to have this regulation disallowed because, otherwise, he says, hundreds of small producers will be seriously affected. Under the conditions of the permit, pork carcasses must be forwarded to the markets with the head, liver, and lungs attached. In the case of beef, carcasses must include the tongue in addition to the organs mentioned.

To date permits have been issued to 20 producers covering 30 pigs, 3 cows, and 2 bulls. Calves up to 150 lbs. weight can be slaughtered without a permit within the abattoirs area. The department is assisting the producers by controlling the slaughter of stock within a reasonable area. Several producers now realise that the extension will prevent stock losses since the department will have a check on carcasses being forwarded to the markets. Even the meat market interests that at present are responsible for most of the agitation will eventually realise that they will benefit by the extension of the abattoirs area and the branding regulations.

It will therefore be seen that the motion, if agreed to, would not have the effect Mr. Baxter suggests. An exactly opposite effect would ensue, and, in view of the information which has been supplied to me, and which I have endeavoured to give to the House in a comparatively brief form compared with the time I could have occupied in presenting the facts, I feel that members will agree with the department that it is doing only the right thing and that the regulation should stand. In any event, if this regulation be disallowed, the abattoirs proclamation will still stand, as the hon. member admits, and

the position will be worse from the point of view of the producers whom, the hon. member states, he desires to assist.

I do not propose to say any more on the subject, except to remark that the whole aim of the departments concerned is firstly to protect the public from a health point of view; secondly, to ensure that those people using the abattoirs are given the protection from unfair competition to which they are entitled; and, thirdly, to make sure that the meat markets shall not be in a position to unload on to the people, either wittingly or unwittingly, meat the sale of which would not ordinarily be permitted if the regulations applying at the Midland Junction abattoirs had to be complied with. I therefore hope that, notwithstanding the statements made by the hon. member, the House will not be prepared to disallow the regulation.

On motion by Hon. G. B. Wood, debate adjourned.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.10]: May I, Sir, add my congratulations to those already offered you on your re-election to the position of President of the Council. I hope your occupancy of the Chair will be a long and a very happy one. I want also to thank those members who have made such kindly references to my entry into Parliament. I thank them not only for their references in this Chamber but also for their generally helpful attitude within the precincts of the House but outside the Chamber. I may mention that I was pleasantly surprised to find such a spirit of comradeship throughout the House, in spite of political differences of opinion. As a junior member, I think I can safely say that my outlook is at least untrammelled by a too close-up view of politics.

I feel it would be a mistake on my part to view the Lieut.-Governor's Speech merely as a statistical record, and let it go at that, because a close examination of the statistics appearing in the Speech has proved very interesting and illuminating to me. Such statistics should be a measure of

the State's progress, and the yardstick by which one should measure the success or failure of the Government's policy. I recognise that some Governments are assisted by a set of fortuitous circumstances, and this Government has enjoyed better economic conditions during the past three years than prevailed in former years. This has resulted in the collection of £4,372,476 in land, income and emergency taxation, against a total of £1,310,158 in the three years previous to Labour taking over the Treasury benches. In other words, this Government has benefited from those three sources alone to the extent of more than £3,000,000. I suggest that there is not sufficient evidence of general improvement to indicate that the Government has taken full advantage of the better conditions bequeathed to it by forces over which it had no control. That brings me back to the Speech, from which we find that the State has virtually regained financial equilibrium. But it has done that on an added income of £3,000,000, which does not suggest to me any very marked achievement.

We learn from the Speech that the number of men dependent upon the Government for relief work or sustenance has been fairly steady at a figure of 6,500 during the past year. Surely there is something disturbing in this admission by the Government that it has failed in its attempt to solve the unemployed problem; for we must accept the statement that Western Australia has a permanent army of 6,500 unemployed as disclosing failure on the part of the Government to deal with the unemployment problem adequately. If I may again quote the figures, business establishments have increased their employment from 14,810 in the year 1932-33 to 22,712 in the year 1937-38, an increase of approximately 8,000, so that the Government has been relieved of the necessity to find sustenance or work for 8,000 men. Now, the building trade, which is looked upon as a fair barometer of business conditions, has also been responsible for absorbing a large number of men: over and above the 8,000 to whom I have referred as absorbed by business establishments. The Government, in spite of these two avenues of relief, is still obliged to admit an army of 6,500 unemployed. Perhaps some Government supporters may regard the maintenance of such an army as essential, for from that army can be expected a con-

tribution of £8,000 a year under the iniquitous system of compulsory unionism which the Government has forced on the indigent whom it claims to protect. The fact that nothing it has done has provided work, or any prospect of work, for these 6,500 men is evidence of the Government's failure to cope with the unemployed problem. I have come to the conclusion that the Government's so-called unemployment policy—if it can be described by so grandiose a term as a policy—has broken down of its own weight.

Before leaving this highly important question of unemployment I wish to make just one more point. It is this. I am informed that the majority of men who go to make up the vast army of 6,500 unemployed are unskilled; and a closer examination of the position might reveal that here is the starting-off point of an extremely important inquiry. If a survey could be made of the circumstances under which these unskilled men were launched on the employment market, we might find one of the most potent factors creating unemployment. I have the idea that we might find the potent factor to be that period of time in a youth's life just after the completion of his primary education. Now, primary education costs Western Australia something like £750,000 a year, and each year 4,000 boys and girls are launched on the employment market. I ask hon. members, what facilities do we provide for those 4,000 children to become skilled artisans? The answer is, all too few. Our annual expenditure on technical education is the totally inadequate sum of £18,300. This, as has already been pointed out by Mr. Bolton, does not provide for the training of sufficient youths to fill the technical occupations that are available, so that a much larger sum could and should be spent on technical education. Opportunities in apprenticeship are all too few, and much too circumscribed. In many cases, because of the drain on the family budget, it is necessary for these boys and girls to seek employment immediately they leave school, the result being that they are hurried into jobs without much inquiry and after very little thought. One of our principal difficulties, I feel, is that we have no satisfactory link between the potential employer on the one hand and the potential juvenile employee on the other. And I believe it is these boys who contribute largely

to the unskilled unemployed. The Government is doing very little to provide opportunities in trade for our boys. We constantly hear of artisans coming from other States and even from overseas and obtaining employment that should rightly belong to our own boys. In one trade—I refer to stone masonry—foreigners have completely ousted Australian boys. There is little credit to the Labour Government in that fact.

Further on in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech I notice that the Government takes credit for giving assistance to some 600 men at present under the prospecting scheme, and that 7,012 men have received help from it since its inauguration in 1933. The total return from these operations is valued at £203,122. That looks an imposing figure, but upon examination it is not so imposing. Indeed, I go so far as to say that it is extremely disappointing, because an examination of the figures reveals that 7,500 men have averaged £28 each over the period of five years that the scheme has been in operation. Probably all hon. members know that at least one of these prospectors struck a very rich find, so that the actual average of the remainder must be well below £28 per head, and the percentage of total failures must have been extremely high. As a means of getting men into the gold-bearing areas, the prospecting scheme had its appeal; but as a permanent contribution to the solution of the unemployed problem it needs to be viewed with caution. It is high time that the whole scheme was thoroughly investigated and completely overhauled.

Attention was drawn by Mr. Baxter to the powers of the Commissioner of Native Affairs under the regulations governing control of the natives. I particularly draw the attention of hon. members to that part of the regulations which provides that the Commissioner appropriate a portion of the native's wages and place that portion in a trust account. A careful scrutiny of the regulations fails to reveal any provision for an annual statement of that trust account, nor do the regulations reveal any provision for the native to possess himself of the amount standing to his credit in the trust account. I should like the Chief Secretary in the course of his reply to advise the House what would be the position of a native who sought to recover the amount standing to his credit in this uncontrolled trust account. It may be worthy of the Govern-

ment's thought, in dealing with the regulations, to consider the possibility of appointing a board rather than the creation of a dictatorship, which these regulations envisage.

Reference was also made by Mr. Baxter to the provision for the construction of a high school in Geraldton, the Premier's electorate. Further, Mr. Baxter referred to the need for schools in less favoured centres. I may inform hon. members that since my election to Parliament I have been asked by a parents and citizens' association attached to one of the schools in my province, to investigate a request which was made on their behalf by my predecessor for the top-dressing of the playground with a water-proof material. I made investigations in the proper quarters, and found that an estimate and plans had been prepared, and that it had been ascertained that the sum required for this highly essential work was between £200 and £300. The Treasury advised me that it was unable to allocate this money, but also advised me that it would provide the modest sum of £15 with which to do the essential patching. I regard that as just toying with the job, because at the first heavy rain the repair material would be simply washed away and the playground would be in as bad a state as before, or worse. I know that new facilities are needed, but the point I wish now to make is that existing facilities should be maintained in a proper state of repair. I do not doubt that a high school is needed at Geraldton. I am sure that a high school is wanted on the south side of the river. That would relieve the congestion which, I understand, is in evidence at the Modern School, and would also save the high cost of transportation which parents of children on the south side of the river have to meet. The need for secondary schools on the south side of the river has already been recognised by private secondary school authorities, several of whom have built schools there; but, unfortunately, education in those secondary schools is available only to the children of parents who can afford to pay the required fees. A high school is also needed, I am given to understand, at Fremantle. Pressure has been brought to bear, I see by the Press, for the erection of a high school there. Midland Junction, too, is in need of such a school. But perhaps Canning and Midland Junction and Fremantle are not so seriously in need of pre-election promises.

A few moments ago I said that existing facilities should be maintained, and I make no apology for repeating that statement, since one of the fundamental principles of business is that it is essential to maintain capital investments at their full asset value. I shall repeat that statement so that it will be indelibly impressed upon the minds of members of the Government in this Chamber and on those of members generally, for I have reason to hope that some of the latter will occupy Cabinet positions in the near future.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do not be too optimistic!

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I repeat, it is essential to maintain capital investments at their full asset value. On the other hand, I point out that the present Government has completely disregarded that sound business principle. This can be realised when we consider what Parliament House is like. We enter from Harvest-terrace and we find the doors, window frames, venetian blinds and all the exposed woodwork shrinking and rapidly deteriorating through want of a coat of paint. The Nedlands school ground to which I referred previously is being speedily washed away on to the road simply for want of top-dressing. The Bunbury harbour, to which Mr. Craig referred, is silting up for want of dredging. These represent some of the country's capital investments, and they are rapidly deteriorating for want of proper maintenance. It should be borne in mind that the adequate maintenance of the country's investments will provide employment, and the provision of that employment will relieve the Government from the necessity to find sustenance money at a time when it is not easy to raise funds.

Hon. W. J. Mann: For 6,500 men.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I was particularly interested in a statement appearing in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech concerning the Perth Hospital. In carefully chosen phraseology, the announcement, inter alia, stated—

The first section of the work to provide additional bed accommodation and facilities for the treatment of out-patients would involve approximately £445,000, and will be initiated as early as possible. Preparation of the comprehensive plans and specifications will occupy some time, after which immediate construction will commence, and will take approximately 2½ years.

I ask hon. members to mark those words. The paragraph continued—

Upon completion Perth will have a splendid modern hospital, adequate to meet the needs of the community.

That sounds very nice indeed, but what does it all mean? The actual facts are these: Almost a year ago it was decided by experts, whose opinions have since been confirmed by other authorities, that to meet the then need—that is, the position a year ago—would entail the expenditure of £765,000. The Government has now decided to make available some of the money necessary for part of the vitally-needed work to be carried out, and at the end of 2½ years from the time the plans and specifications are completed, Perth will be in possession of portion only of what was sadly needed in its entirety four years ago. It may be true that upon the completion of the building Perth will have "a splendid modern hospital, adequate to meet the needs of the community," but when will the building be completed, and how long does the Government intend to allow the present dangerous position to continue? What we require from the Government is a statement to indicate that its gesture is not, as it would appear to be, an election promise to still the public clamour regarding a vital and urgent need.

Hon. G. Fraser: The present Government never does that sort of thing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I think it never does anything else.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I recognise the urgent need for some immediate action on the part of the Government to deal with the serious situation confronting the wheatgrowing industry, and I trust the Government is fully alive to the position. I hope that every effort will be made to co-operate with the Federal Government and the other State Governments to effect some control over the industry. Whether that control should be by way of a home consumption price, by a bounty or by some other means, I am not prepared to suggest at this stage, but I am just as anxious as any Country Party member and, I believe, as most Labour members, to secure some solution of this most urgent national problem.

During the course of his remarks, Mr. Angelo referred to the unenviable record of this State regarding road fatalities. They are an indication that something should be done. But I think Mr. Angelo was wrong

in attributing that lamentable state of affairs to speeding. His remarks were likely to convey a wrong impression. Admittedly, if all motorists travelled at 20 miles per hour, fatalities and accidents would be fewer, but there are hundreds of miles of roads in Australia where cars can be driven with absolute safety at three times that speed by even the more mediocre type of driver. Although I agree with Mr. Angelo's opinion that magistrates deal too lightly with the drunken and reckless drivers by the penalties they impose, I am just as surely convinced that some magistrates impose penalties all too high for trivial breaches of parking regulations.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I believe that our large army of traffic police who are almost wasting their time in dealing with trivial parking offences could be much better employed in attending to more serious traffic breaches. I suggest that the head of the Traffic Department could, with advantage, be sent to the larger capital cities of Australia to investigate the method of handling the traffic in those centres. Their problems are the same as ours, but on a much larger scale. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [5.39]: I also desire to associate myself with other members in extending congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the presidential Chair. For once at least I agree with the remarks of Mr. Holmes that members generally should be given an opportunity to fill positions such as the one you occupy, and that held by the Chairman of Committees. I go further and say that members generally should have an opportunity to sit on the sessional committees. From year to year the same members are nominated by the Leader of the House and no objection is taken to the selection. That is done not by one Government alone, but by all Governments. We are quite satisfied that the members so nominated do their best and carry out the work required of them very well. It would be better if we recognised that in all these positions a member having served a term of office should stand down and allow another member to be elected to the position whether it be as President, Chairman of Committees, or a seat on one or other of the sessional committees. It is a pity that principle was

not adopted long ago. I extend my congratulations to those members who have been returned unopposed. Notwithstanding what was said on one occasion to the effect that it was just as well to have an election, we all envy those who are returned without the necessity to shoulder the expense of fighting for their seats. I also join in welcoming the new members. We have just listened to a speech by one of them, Mr. Dimmitt, with very great pleasure. I envy him. He gave us an extremely fine address, and we shall look forward to hearing him again.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And so did Mr. W. R. Hall.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I did not hear Mr. Hall; that is a pleasure to come. With deep regret I refer to the death of Mr. Elliott whose sincerity of purpose appealed to members; we miss him greatly. I am sorry to hear of the illness of Mr. Williams and hope that he will soon be with us again. Although it may come as a shock to members, I intend to be as brief as possible in my remarks. I heard Mr. Wood say that at one time he considered the Address-in-reply debate a waste of time, but that he now recognised it afforded members an opportunity to "let off steam." After having been a member of this House for about ten years, I am sorry to say that more than ever do I consider it futile. I do not wish to hurt anyone's feelings, nor do I wish to be disrespectful in making that statement. Perhaps it is not the right attitude to adopt towards the debate, and I certainly do not expect every member to see eye to eye with me. Nevertheless, that is how I view it.

Irrespective of the drift of our form of government and with all its defects, I certainly prefer it to a dictatorship such as we read about, and so we must content ourselves with what we have. Nevertheless, I feel that we cannot achieve anything, even though we do express our opinions. Members have a duty to their constituents and they can perform it free from heat, as Mr. Holmes once reminded me when he remonstrated with me about some remarks I had made. We are expected to speak as fairly as we can in presenting our views. If no notice is taken of us, we at least have the satisfaction of knowing that we endeavoured to point the way. Not only is no notice apparently taken of the statements of members who do not see eye to eye with