

have told us that we should have a comprehensive Municipalities Act. As an old municipal councillor myself, I say that there are many anomalies in the Act and many improvements required. I hope that before the session finishes we shall have a new Municipalities Act. A great many in the House and outside it have asked what the policy of the Government is. It appears to me that it is the same that every Government has followed for the last 20 years in this State. I can see no particular difference in it. There may be a few items here and there that are different, but the bold basic principles in the policy adopted by all our Governments has been to borrow extensively, and spend lavishly and quickly.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is the easiest policy.

Mr. BROWN: It is an easy-going policy and unfortunately for the last eight years we have had evidence of the effects of it. So far as I can see we are going to continue that policy. I hope the House will decide that instead of increasing our loan indebtedness, unless we are going to increase our revenue in some direction, this system of extensive borrowing and lavish expenditure is stopped. We were told by the late Treasurer, the member for Irwin, the other night, that he could effect some thousands of pounds' worth of economies if he were given a free hand. The time is not far distant when we ought to adjudicate between Ministers and the heads of departments in the Public Service. The Minister for Mines a few days ago put forward a very feasible proposition in connection with the claims of the railway men, in which he said if they would appoint a board of three to go into the matter, see what could be done, and place their views before him, he would consider them. If some person or board was able to go through the various departments and tell the Ministers what was required, I think if the Ministers asked the House to support them in any action that they thought it desirable to take, that support would be given. I am satisfied that small payments for services rendered are a failure. The Public Service to-day is over-manned and underpaid, and if the men were of a better class fewer would be required, and better payments could be made and better work would be done, while those others now employed in poorly paid positions would have to find employment elsewhere. I congratulate the Premier on the clear and concise way in which he replied to the leader of the Opposition on the amendment to the Address-in-reply. The hon. gentleman evidently satisfied the whole of the Country party, and when that is done the House must be fairly well satisfied. We should also congratulate the Minister for Works on the splendid effort he has put forward in trying to house all our officials in, I will not say, smaller spaces, but in a more concentrated form. In the past the Government offices have been scattered all over the town.

Mr. Munsie: I wonder what his opinion is of the frosted windows.

Mr. BROWN: I heard there was a disagreement as to whether the light was too strong through the clear glass, or whether it was necessary that the windows should be frosted. If, however, that is necessary, instead of the department frosting the windows the officers used glasses, it would be possible to see whether the officers were asleep or at work. Anyhow, I am certain that the Minister, by the housing scheme which he has adopted, will save a considerable sum of money, and I trust he will go on until he can get all the staffs in close proximity to each other.

Mr. ROCKE (South Fremantle): The true function of government is the provision for the happiness and contentment of the people. There never was a period in Australia's history when so much discontent and unrest prevailed as at the present time, and there never was a time when the occasions were so many to justify the discontent which we find on every hand. How to overcome that discontent, how best to legislate in the interests of the community, is a matter for the Government of the day to consider, and to put into operation. If we are going to find out what is the cause of the trouble with which we are faced, the truth must be told regardless of the consequences, and regardless of the feelings of privileged persons who may be injured. The profiteer is not entirely a product of the war. He was in existence before the war. In fact a most diabolical gang of profiteers were operating prior to August, 1914. They were working under the style and title of the International Armament Trust. They consisted of 16 huge financial concerns. Five of them were British, seven German, two French, one Austrian, and one Italian. These concerns were not combined for the purpose of the protection of humanity, not even for the protection of that portion of humanity which is known as Belgium. They were combined for one object, and that was to protect their own profiteering interests, so that, when the outrage against humanity was to commence, they could sit back and reap their blood-stained profits. The profiteering which has been going on during the period of the war, and which is continuing now, is but another phase of the conspiracy against the people. From every platform in the Commonwealth and in most British-speaking communities, we have had the cry go forth to the world that the conditions at the close of the war would never be like those which preceded the war. I am not able to find a man or woman to-day who would not gladly exchange the conditions which were ruling in the first half of 1914 with those which prevail to-day. I refuse to believe that the remedy for the unrest lies by way of a blood-spilling revolution, but I must point out that the position is pregnant with the gravest danger, and unless Governments who are in power for the time being take care and legislate in the interests of the

people rather than in the interests of the favoured few, who fatten upon the sufferings of the people, I would not like to say what may result. However, the people are determined that they are not going to suffer and endure indefinitely the conditions they are enduring at the present time. We know that the troubles in the world are caused by the private control of money, so that obviously the remedy is the nationalisation of currency. The statement is sometimes made that the Commonwealth Government have taken some steps in the direction of the nationalisation of currency. But the Commonwealth Government have done nothing of the sort. What the Commonwealth Government did was to open an ordinary branch of a banking institution and over the name of that institution to write the words "the Commonwealth Bank of Australia." There was no attempt at the nationalisation of currency. Certainly the Government did take the people's gold and they gave to the people paper. They proved the point which I desire to emphasise, that the commerce of the world does not rest upon the world's gold supply, but it does rest upon the organised credit of the people. The ancient Egyptians, when they built their pyramids, started at the base. They put in a solid foundation and they built up to the apex. But the financial magnates say that we should not build our pyramids in that way, that we should build them from the apex and make the apex the base and build up and out, and they call the apex the gold production of the world. By manipulation this may be moved so that the pyramid begins to lose its equilibrium and then we have a clash of armies and navies in the mad effort to uphold something which is against

tent of about 70 million pounds and with that he built up the agricultural industry of the country. In the next year he issued a similar sum of paper money which was guaranteed by the credit of the people, and he built up secondary industries; and so on each year until, in the course of a very short time, he had everything so thoroughly organised that he was able to throw into Germany the amount of gold which they needed to satisfy them for their war indemnity. As a result, the industries of Germany were almost paralysed. Germany had no idea that France could recover herself so quickly and pay the debt which was hanging over her head. The thing was accomplished by the nationalisation of currency, and I believe that any system of reconstruction into which we may enter must have as its key the nationalisation of currency, and if we are going to face this problem as it must be faced, I am convinced that we must strike out on new lines. This Government, as well as other Governments in the Australian States, and the Commonwealth, are trying to meet the abnormal state of affairs by methods which were considered inadequate during normal times. No Government has launched out with any concrete proposal which can in any way remedy the position. The Government of Western Australia say that the whole cure for the disease lies in increased production, but that cry of increased production must become a mere platitude if producers are kept away from the markets. We have numberless instances where producers are not able to get to the markets.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. T. Walker: The law of equilibrium.

Mr. ROCKE: As my friend the member for Kanowna says, the law of equilibrium.

The Minister for Works: What is equilibrium?

Hon. P. Collier: Balance, which you never had.

Mr. ROCKE: At the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 France found herself bleeding and suffering and in a state of abject terror lying at the feet of the Prussian oppressor, who was then the victor. She was left with what was considered in those days a financial burden which was almost unbearable. She did not know how she was going to carry it. However, France did not sit or lie down and just complain that the burden could not be carried, or the position could not be rectified. She advertised the world over for a man who could come into France and arrange her finances without crippling her industries, and to put her industries and her finances on a sound financial basis. The selection fell upon an Englishman named Law. He made the one and only attempt I know of which has been made to nationalise currency. He called in the gold of the nation and upon that he organised the credit of the nation. In the first year he issued paper money to the ex-

Mr. ROCKE: Before tea I was endeavouring to point out how production is adversely affected by the market-rigging tricks of men known as middlemen, who are parasites upon the community. Those men must be placed under control if we are going to have a system of production which will help us over our financial difficulties. It is often pointed out that the law of supply and demand will create the markets, but the fact that the markets can be rigged by two or three men to the detriment of the whole of the community is proof that there is no such law. Supply and demand are certainly very great factors, but the fact that those factors can be manipulated is proof there is no law of supply and demand. Some time ago we had a famine of onions and potatoes. There were none on the market, although there were plenty in the country. The trick adopted by the middleman was to go to the grower, buy up his crop on condition that he would store it on his premises, and then effect a condition of the market which would bring an enormous profit, and throw the price up to such an extent that it was almost impossible for the people to purchase these very necessary commodities. We have other instances in Western Australia which have taken place within

the last two or three months. In May of this year, we received three shipments of butter by the s.s. "Wyandra," s.s. "Dimboola," and s.s. "Junea." These shipments comprised a supply for the requirements of this State for five weeks. At the end of two weeks, the grocers of Fremantle were notified that they could receive no more supplies of butter, because supplies had become exhausted. I knew then that we had three weeks' supply still in the State, and got into touch with the price-fixing Commissioner of this State, who was just closing his office that week under instructions from the Federal Government. I then got into touch with Mr. Whitton, of Melbourne, the Price Fixing Commissioner for the Commonwealth, and he evidently wired Mr. Rae to go to Fremantle and make an examination to find out whether my statement was correct, and report to him. Evidently Mr. Rae visited Fremantle and was shown empty stores. I received a message from Mr. Whitton in which he said he had received a report from Western Australia, and that there was no evidence that merchants were holding up supplies. During that week, an increase of 2d. per lb. was allowed on the selling price of butter, and immediately the grocers were notified that they could then obtain supplies, because supplies were on hand. As a matter of fact, not one pound of butter had entered the State between the time they said supplies were exhausted and the time they notified the grocers that supplies were available. Again, we have the case of the beef buccaneers of Perth. Some little time ago when they forced up meat to a prohibitive price, it will be remembered that the butchers refused to buy from the wholesale men until the price of meat was reduced to a certain figure.

Mr. Underwood: Did not the seamen's strike have something to do with that?

Mr. ROCKE: No, it was not on then.

Mr. Munsie: Of course not.

Mr. ROCKE: After a little fight between the master butchers and the wholesalers, the wholesalers came to terms and the price of meat was reduced to a level more in keeping with the circumstances. This proved that the high price of meat was not due to supplies at all. It was simply on account of the thieving propensities of the men who controlled the market. Recently, Messrs. Foggitt, Jones & Co. have written to the Press, with an air of injured innocence, wanting to know why they should be attacked by a Federal Labour member for Western Australia. I am not conversant with the subject matter of Mr. Corboy's complaint, but I would like to know if Foggitt, Jones & Co. will deny that, during May of this year when they succeeded in cornering the pig market, they forced up the price of bacon to 1s. 3d. per lb. when Melbourne was quoting 12¼d. or 12½d. These people have posed in this State as philanthropists, a company who were going to do a fine work for the State by creating a new industry

and yet, at the first opportunity, the price is forced up so that the people are again made to pay over and above the value of the commodity.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Were not they sending their bacon to Melbourne?

Mr. ROCKE: I cannot say. The Fremantle Gas Company some time ago evidently found out that there was going to be a curtailment in the consumption of gas. A regulation was issued under the War Precautions Act that gas could be consumed only during certain hours. Gas consumption during the other hours of the day was prohibited, unless residents obtained permission from the Naval Director at Fremantle. Before the date of the curtailment of the consumption, the Fremantle Gas Company took good care to advance the price to the consumer so that, although they would have a lower consumption to cater for, their profits would amount to the same figure, if not more.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Then people should use electricity.

Mr. ROCKE: So we find, on every hand, the people are being crushed between the two thieves, privilege and monopoly. If the industries of the State are to be put on a sound basis, it stands to reason that the market must be made available for producers, so that it is necessary for the Government to take over the services now rendered by the middlemen; that is the Government should take over the means of distribution. It may seem socialistic, but the time has come when the interests of the people must be protected. If the State is to be lifted out of its difficulties by production, it cannot be done if the producers are shut off the market. Dairying has been recommended as one industry which will help the State. I believe this industry will do what is being claimed for it. I need only remind members of the conditions which existed in Victoria in 1890. I remember, in that year, married men were glad to work for 3s. 6d. a day on relief works so that their wives and children would have sufficient food to keep body and soul together. The condition of Victoria then was lamentable. Words would hardly describe the industrial conditions. However, dairying was taken in hand and, by the assistance of the Government, the State of Victoria was lifted from a condition of bankruptcy to a position of affluence. I know men in Victoria whose only means of locomotion in 1890 was a one-man power wheelbarrow; to-day there are few of them who are without a motor car, and it has all been done by the dairying industry. I know there are disadvantages with regard to this industry. It is difficult to get some people to take up the work. It is slavery, and its conditions are not attractive; but I believe, by Government aid, it can be made so attractive that we shall be able to induce our people to undertake the work of providing for this State all the butter, cheese, etc. necessary,

to purchase which we are now sending out of the State many thousands of pounds every week. To do so, we should place under dairying operations, land which is in close proximity to the metropolitan area. By doing that, we shall make up in a measure to the people who are working under disadvantageous conditions, something for what they will have to contend against, because they will be able to enjoy some of the luxuries of life through being in close proximity to the metropolis. There is a large area of land between Fremantle and Mandurah. Attention of the Government has been called to this land which is fine swamp land. At present, Lake Kogolup, in the Jandakot area is being drained and I am told that the principal factor for the successful conducting of the dairying industry there has been proved. They are able to grow 60 tons of maize to the acre and anyone knowing anything about the dairying industry is aware that if the land can be made to produce the feed, that is the principal factor that makes for success. If a dairyman has to go to the fodder merchant for feed for his stock, he is courting disaster from the outset. Regarding dairy produce or any produce of the soil necessary to the people I would strongly advocate that every need of the people in the State be considered before one pound of food stuff is allowed to be exported. For that reason I would like to see the South Fremantle Freezing Works become the property of the people of the State. We then might be able to get some control, and perhaps the Government could be induced to see the wisdom of supplying the needs of their own people before the needs of people outside the State. As to the method of developing various portions of the State, we have our great South-West, of which much has been said, and we have the near North-West. I am convinced that these portions of the State cannot be properly developed by railway communication alone. There are cases of other States which have developed parts of their territory by means of small steamers. That I believe is the surest way to develop the South-West and the near North-West of our State. The North and South Islands of New Zealand have been enormously developed by small steamships. The same thing applies to New South Wales, and to the Gippsland and western districts of Victoria, and also to South Australia. As regards Queensland I cannot speak, not having been there. If we adopt the same system here, the steamships must be under Government control, since in the hands of private enterprise they might become the means of extortion by rapacious people. Even in the matter of protective tariffs we find that the people get no benefit. The protection of an industry to the extent of 40 per cent. means that the manufacturer puts 39 per cent. on his cost to the public. The manufacturer keeps his price only about one per cent. below the cost of the imported article. Thus the manufacturer

reaps the benefit every time, and the consumer has to pay the piper.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Does not the importer reap a profit?

Mr. ROCKE: I do not say that industries should not be protected, but I say that the people should also be protected. From the "Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics" I have obtained some very interesting information regarding exports during the war period. Nobody denies, nobody can deny, the profiteering which is going on. But it is interesting to learn that through all the distressful circumstances of the last four or five years those people who controlled the means of living did not suffer any of the hardships under which the mass of the people suffered. In the year 1913-14 the export of butter reached 75,795,642 lbs., for which was received the sum of £3,564,925. For the year 1917-18 the butter totalled 72,277,526 lbs., and the money received for that amount of exported product was £4,904,421. From these figures we find that the quantity of butter exported during the last year of the war period was less than that exported during the year immediately before the war by 3,518,116 lbs., whilst the money received for the smaller quantity exceeded that received for the larger by the enormous sum of £1,339,496. During that time the Australian people were not able to obtain supplies of butter, because of the price put on the commodity. The exporters, of course, could get their price and pay huge shipping freights and still make huge profits. A similar position was created in connection with Australian beef, the weight of which exported from Australia during the year 1913-14 was 218,918,606 lbs., for which the money received was £2,652,275. The quantity exported during the year 1917-18 reached only 180,249,301 lbs., for which the sum received was £3,698,693. In this case the quantity exported during the last year of the war period was less than that exported during the year immediately preceding the war by 38,669,305 lbs., but the money received for the lesser quantity exceeded that received for the greater by no less than £1,046,418. Now to take the other side, and find out how these exporters contribute to the revenue of the State. Hon. members who have to make returns of stock for income tax purposes will have observed on their taxation sheets a statement of the values of cattle in various parts of Australia. In the case of Western Australia cattle are valued as follows: East Kimberley £1 15s., West Kimberley £2 5s., North-Western Division £2 10s., North-Western Division south of the Tropic of Capricorn £3 10s., South-Western Division £4 10s., Eucla and Central Division £2 10s., Eastern Division £1 15s. Recently a cattle king, writing in the columns of the daily Press, stated the cost of marketing a Kimberley bullock at Fremantle as £8. If that amount is added to the statement of value as fixed by the Commonwealth Government, the aver-

age value of a bullock from the North-Western Division delivered at Fremantle would be about £10. But the bullock is sold in Fremantle for as much as £34 per head. The beef buccaneer pays income tax on the £1 15s. value, but he receives for the bullock £34 less £10 for cost of transport and marketing charges.

Mr. Pilkington: That is not the case. The owner pays on the selling value realised from the bullock.

Mr. Harrison: The bullocks are not all prime beef.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The Commonwealth figures may be as unreliable as Knibbs's.

Mr. ROCKE: But Knibbs's figures are reliable.

Mr. O'Loghlen: They are not worth twopence, and that has been proved.

Mr. ROCKE: I think the pastoralists should be made to pay on what they receive, and not on the value of the bullock in the North-West.

Mr. Pilkington: The pastoralist does not pay on the value shown on that slip; but on the value he receives.

Mr. ROCKE: The member for Perth may be correct, but I fail to see it.

Mr. Pilkington: It is so.

Mr. ROCKE: Suppose members when making up their income tax returns stated the true value of their Parliamentary allowance, which true value is £150. I wonder what the tax gatherer would say to that. He would not pass that. We have to pay on the full amount of our allowance.

Mr. Underwood: Suppose there are two bullocks, and you get £20 for one and nothing for the other, what is the value of each bullock then?

Mr. ROCKE: There are very few bullocks that fetch nothing. Very few die on the voyage South. I speak of matters as they existed prior to the shipping strike. Of course, all of us realise that very few cattle are now coming down from the North-West; but the present does not by any means indicate the past in this connection.

Mr. Harrison: That being so, your estimate of £39 per bullock is not correct.

Mr. ROCKE: I spoke of £34 as the maximum price. Some time ago the New South Wales Premier was approached regarding the high cost of living, and he pointed out that shipments of food and shipments of other commodities changed hands many times during transit. We know that that was taking place during the war. There was one shipment of barley which changed hands four times in transit, and thereby its value on paper was increased about 400 per cent. And the same thing is going on now. In the interests of the people that class of speculation must be stopped. It is the middleman who is doing the damage all the time. He toils not, neither does he spin; he simply sits down transferring property from one to another and making his profit, and the increased cost is passed on to the people. No doubt the middleman tells a few tales into the bargain. If Governments are really in

earnest about improving the condition of the people, if they really want to lighten the burden of the people, then the middleman must go and the State must take over the work of distribution. Nationalisation of transport is essential also to any successful form of re-construction, because so long as private enterprise controls transport any Government can be defeated at any time. I would strongly advocate, in addition to nationalisation of currency, the nationalisation of all transport services; and then I believe we should be in a fair way to make a great improvement in conditions not only in Western Australia but in Australia as a whole. We are told over and over again that Western Australia leads Australia. It is up to Western Australia now to try to show to the world the way out of a position which is full of danger, which is extremely delicate, and therefore requires very careful handling. Next I come to the liquor traffic. In my opinion, the time has arrived when this question must be dealt with from an economic point of view, when the matter must be lifted above the level of jocularly on which it is so often treated. Every Government occupying the Treasury benches in this Chamber of late years has been approached by people who feel that the liquor traffic is against the best interests of the community. Those people have not requested the abolition of the liquor traffic, or the prohibition of the liquor traffic; but they have asked for amendment of our local option legislation so that the community may at least have the right to say whether the traffic shall be abolished, or continued, or curtailed. No community can afford to drink all or nearly all the money it receives for, say, its wheat. Western Australia has the highest drink bill of all the States in the Commonwealth. In 1914 we spent £2,672,745 on drink. In 1915 it was £2,374,009; in 1916 it was £2,334,890; in 1917 it was £2,155,798, or a total for the four years of £9,537,442, for which the State receives practically nothing in comparison with the benefits received from other industries. And in addition to receiving comparatively nothing, it has a burden to carry in the shape of increased taxation which has to be levied for the upkeep of gaols, asylums, and other institutions which are the direct result of this iniquitous traffic. The Victorian drink bill per capita is £3 5s. 6d., that of Queensland £3 4s. 11d., that of South Australia £2 17s. 5d., that of Tasmania £2 14s. 5d., and that of Western Australia £6 19s. 8d. No community can stand such a drain on its resources. If the Government are truly sincere they must allow the people to say whether or not this traffic shall continue. Nearly every monopoly is denounced from Labour platforms, except the monopoly of the liquor traffic, which is the worst of all because it returns less to the workers per £100 invested. I think the figure amounts to about £7 per £100. The boot trade, the second lowest on the list, returns £28 per £100. Economically, therefore, the liquor traffic is wholly unsound. Last night a returned soldier lost his life on the

Perth railway station. The newspaper report states that he was intoxicated. The man had been away and done his best for his country, and had returned, only to become a victim to this foul thing licensed by the Government. Do the Government really believe that the few pounds received from the liquor traffic is reasonable compensation for the lives lost and for the offences against public decency for which the traffic is responsible? Last Monday night on the Perth railway station it was impossible to get along Nos. 1 and 2 platforms without coming into contact with the vomit from drunken men. It is a disgrace to our State, and should be abolished. The publicans at Fremantle have to close their hotels when a troopship comes in, but the returned men are hurried away to Perth, where they can get as much liquor as they choose. If the hotels are to be closed in Fremantle they certainly should be closed in Perth. If they are to be left open in Perth, so too should they be left open in Fremantle. I claim justice for the publicans, just as I would claim justice for anybody else. To reduce the thing to a farce is enough to make one ill.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It would be all right if they did not send special trains down to bring the soldiers to Perth.

Mr. ROCKE: Yes, it shows that the liquor traffic has a pull which is decidedly unfair.

Mr. Underwood: Perhaps it is the liquor that has the pull.

Mr. ROCKE: I hope the Government will take some steps, if only in the direction of impressing upon the Federal authorities, who at present have control of the public-houses, the need for better arrangements when returned soldiers are in port. We cannot afford to lose the lives of our men. Moreover, the traffic is a very grave menace to the coming generation. I want to see things made as easy as possible for the next generation. We of this generation have had it hard enough, and we want things to be a little brighter and easier for those who are to come after us.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton): After the two socialistic speeches to which we have listened, it is scarcely necessary for a member of the Labour party to carry on in the same strain. To-night we have heard members on the other side stressing the importance of nationalising various industries and socialising others. Let me refer to the change of Ministries which has occurred during the past four or five months. A number of members who could not support the Lefroy Government find no difficulty in supporting the present Government. Yet I have never heard from any of those members anything to show that the policy of the present Government is in any way different from that of the Lefroy Government. Of course anything which the Lefroy Government did and which has since turned out disastrously, is now repudiated by the present Government and its supporters, who

at the same time are ever ready to claim credit for the successes of the Lefroy Government. Much has been said about the influence of the "West Australian" on local politics. The "West Australian" never ceased carping and criticising until it managed to get the present Premier into power. I am not ready to believe that everything in the garden is lovely just because the "West Australian" is going to boost the present Government. The Premier has been referred to as an irresponsible optimist. Quite recently I saw in an illustrated paper a picture of a man falling from the roof of an eight or 10-storied building. So optimistic was he that as he passed each storey he waved his hand and said, "I am still all right." I am afraid that when we reach the end of Mr. Mitchell's term of office the State will get just as severe a bump as was coming to that man falling from the high roof. We have heard a good deal about the cost of living. I do not think the Government can take credit for the proposed introduction of a Price Fixing Bill. The credit belongs to the Labour party, because it was the Labour party who woke up the people of the State to the necessity for action and who clamoured until the Government were simply forced to do something. When the Price Fixing Bill was in the Council some three years ago, Mr. Colebatch declared that any interference with the law of supply and demand was bound to end in disaster. That is the gentleman who, presently, will be introducing the Price Fixing Bill promised by the Government. One of the reasons which have conduced greatly to the high cost of living is the difference in the rate of interest charged by the banks. The Commonwealth Government are condoning that offence, for we find that during the past 12 months the Commonwealth Government in floating a couple of loans, notified the financial people of Australia that if they did not contribute to those loans the money would be taken from them by force. See how profiteering in regard to the value of money is carried on by the Commonwealth Government! Before the war the interest paid on any loan floated by the Commonwealth Government was $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., yet when the Government have to threaten to take money by force, they pay a rate of interest two per cent. higher. The world wide custom is for the banks to base their interest charges upon the price of Government stock.

Mr. Underwood: What is the overdraft rate to-day?

Mr. WILLCOCK: About eight per cent. It depends on the value of securities.

Mr. Underwood: It is the same to-day as it was before the war.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The farmers' overdraft rate is seven per cent.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It is peculiar that the farmers can get money from any bank at seven per cent. while the State has to pay at least six per cent.