

ties to-day are so great and serious that we should welcome help from whatever quarter it may come, so that relief may be afforded those in need. Undoubtedly the Government have been faced with a very difficult task during their term of office. I cannot share the views of Mr. Moore regarding the Premier. Sir James Mitchell has shown himself to be a loyal and patriotic man, and no one can refute or deny the fact. There is no more loyal citizen of Western Australia than the present Premier, and he has been ably supported by his colleagues in his efforts to rehabilitate and revive industry. In the face of conditions that exist now, can it be expected that we in Western Australia can suddenly rehabilitate and revive industry when the rest of the world is suffering, in common with us, from depression unheard of in history before?

Hon. T. Moore: Why should one-third of the population starve in a field of plenty?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I would like to know in what way Mr. Moore can prove that one-third of the population are starving.

Hon. T. Moore: Sustenance is next door to it.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It shows that the Government are seeking to meet the present position of adversity and are endeavouring to afford relief to those in need. The Government are making every effort to re-establish industry, for only by a revival of industry can the people prosper. The law of supply and demand is closely allied to that governing employment. If there is not the demand, there is a lack of employment.

Hon. T. Moore: But not of food.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Does Mr. Moore suggest that those in need should take what food they like.

Hon. T. Moore: If I were short, I would do so myself.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There are methods whereby such matters can be properly regulated. In conclusion, I hope that some good will emanate from the conferences that have been, or are taking place at present. We must not lose sight of the importance of the Lausanne Conference. The holding of that gathering for the settlement of reparations was a step taken in the right direction, with the one view of rehabilitating industry as the best means of securing relief for those out of employment. Then again the Ottawa Conference is of great im-

portance, and we await the determinations of the delegates with great interest. I believe there is a brighter light in the firmament now than has been apparent of late. I am hopeful that much good will arise from the conferences, and that there will be a re-awakening of activity in industrial life with a gradual absorption of the unemployed, thus destroying the nightmare through which we are passing. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. C. B. Williams, debate adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Supply Bill.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [6.16]: As hon. members are aware, it is necessary each session to pass a Supply Bill to give the Government authorisation for the expenditure of money. Unfortunately the passage of the Bill this session has been delayed. I anticipate that the Bill will be before this House for consideration to-morrow and under the Standing Orders it is necessary that a statutory majority, which is 17 members, inclusive of the President, shall be present to pass the legislation. In the circumstances I trust hon. members will make it their business to be present to-morrow in anticipation of our receiving the Bill.

House adjourned at 6.19 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 17th August, 1932.

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

QUESTION—SETTLERS' APPEAL BOARD.

Eviction or Foreclosure Notices.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Premier: 1, Will he agree to the instituting of an appeal board to deal with group and Agricultural Bank settlers' eviction or foreclosure notices, such board to be constituted on the lines of that of the Arbitration Court, namely, one representative of the Government, one representing the settlers in the district concerned, and one independent practical man conversant with South-West conditions as chairman? 2, Will he agree to no further eviction notices being sent out until after such appeal board has been appointed? 3, From now on will he instruct that copies of any adverse reports from supervisors, inspectors, etc., shall be sent to the settlers concerned?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. The Trustees of the Agricultural Bank cannot surrender their powers as mortgagees over the disposal of securities. Notices of dispossession are issued only by express direction of the Trustees. 2, Answered by 1. 3, No. The reasons for the Trustees' decision are conveyed to the settler prior to the issue of formal notice of dispossession.

QUESTION—SANDALWOOD PERMITS.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Minister for Forests: 1, How many applications for permits to cut sandalwood have been made from Broome, Derby, and Wyndham respectively in the past twelve months? 2, How many permits were granted, if any?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS replied: 1, None. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—WILUNA ARSENIC PLANT.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Health: Is it the intention of the Government to lay upon the Table of the House Dr. Atkinson's report on the arsenic plant at Wiluna?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: There is no report. Dr. Atkinson in his capacity as Commissioner of Public Health made an examination of the arsenic plant

with a view to safeguarding the worker and assisting the management. The Commissioner is closely watching the matter. If the hon. member desires to see the papers, he can do so at my office.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motion by the Premier, sessional committees were appointed as follows:—

Library Committee—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Angelo, and Miss Holman.

Standing Orders Committee—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Griffiths, Mr. Parker, and Mr. Panton.

House Committee—Mr. Speaker, Mr. H. W. Mann, Mr. Munsie, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Wells.

Printing Committee—Mr. Speaker, Mr. J. MacCallum Smith, and Mr. Withers.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,225,000.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. Richardson in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported upon the motion of the Premier: "That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year ending 30th June, 1933, a sum not exceeding £2,225,000."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon.

T. A. L. Davy—West Perth) [4.40]: There was much in the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy with which I found myself in agreement, and I think the whole Committee agreed with the protests made against the Federal Government's habit of continually extending their activities. Indeed I recollect that at the first Premiers' Conference I attended a strong line of protest was taken against that tendency. It was initiated by Mr. Hill, the Premier of South Australia, and strongly supported by the Premier of this State. It is a hopeful sign that we may achieve something in the way of constitutional reform when all parties are agreed that the activities of the Federation should be kept within much more severe limits than they have been in the past. It appears to me the only way to ensure that they will not everlastingly increase their encroachments upon the State's

domain, will be by reformation of the Constitution. Otherwise the tendency will always remain, and although we might drive them out of a particular field of activity for a time, it appears to me they will always come back again. Also I found myself in agreement with the member for South Fremantle in his suggestion that a move should be made towards endeavouring to obtain an honourable reduction of the rate of interest on our overseas indebtedness. That was mooted at the first Premiers' Conference I attended. It was thought then that the first thing we should do before we invited our overseas creditors to come to our assistance would be to put our own house in order ourselves and to make our own sacrifices, after which we could with some decency go to our overseas creditors and ask for their assistance. However, the criticism of the Government's unemployed relief policy appeared to me to be unjust and illogical. It seems to me we are, as it were, six castaways in a boat, and the total supply of water in the boat is six cupfuls, and the skipper of the boat has determined that those six cups shall be distributed, one cup to each of the six inmates of the boat. The skipper having made that determination, one of the castaways stands up to criticise and says, "We cannot have that. The proper standard of water for a man is two cups per day, and if you give only one cup to each of these six men you will be reducing our standard." The skipper would say, "I cannot help your standards, but I do not propose to give two cups to three men and none to the others, because if I do so those others will die." Then the same critic who urged that two cups should be given to each of three men and none to the rest, stands up and says, "By the way, there are two more people on this boat and they have a private store of water, and they must have a share of the six cups also." I can imagine in those circumstances the skipper of that boat would tell the critical castaway to cease his criticism unless he could make some practical suggestion for obtaining more water. I can imagine the critical castaway suggesting that the best way to get more water would be to approach the Almighty with a prayer that He should make it rain. That is a fairly good analogy.

Mr. Sleeman: To what do you liken the water? To money?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That point of view may be wrong, but I protest that if it be wrong it is not wrong on the ground of inhumanity. I do not think that the bulk of the unemployed in this State believe it is wrong on the ground of inhumanity.

Mr. Raphael: And yet there was a demonstration on the Esplanade of 7,000 unemployed against it!

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There were twelve dissentients, and five hundred men were picked up the next day. I protest that it is not wrong on the ground of inhumanity. I was brought to my feet to make these remarks because of the attitude of the member for South Fremantle on this debate. It is not the first time he has taken up a similar attitude, namely, that he and his party have the sole monopoly of the milk of human kindness, that only they care what happens to the under dog, that only they have any sympathy for their suffering fellows, and that we and all who do not belong to his party are callous, indifferent and contemptible in our behaviour towards the under dog. I resent that attitude. It is one which is bad for the community. Some people may believe the hon. member if they do not know us or know him. I ask those who are in the habit of attending the proceedings of this House to put to themselves the question, "Who is it that says cruel and bitter things in the House that hurt? Is the holder of the monopoly of the milk of human kindness the member for South Fremantle, or is the Premier the leader of a large collection of bloodsuckers who do not care a hang about their fellow creatures?"

HON. J. C. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [4.50]: I am surprised at the outburst of the Attorney General. He says we are unjust and illogical. He talks about six men in a boat and water rations for them. The world to-day is not in the position of so many men in a boat. The world is producing an abundance of everything for those who dwell within it. The Attorney General pictures a world of four or five people cast away in a small boat and with a few drops of water between them. He referred to the six Australian States. We say that civilisation has brought us to the stage when there is an abundance of everything for the needs of humanity. In Australia itself there is everything that a man can want. We say it is all a question of management, as to how

the people shall get what is requisite for them to maintain themselves. I could understand things being bad if we had suffered from some unprecedented famine, from serious bush fires or droughts, or some other calamity which had affected production. In such circumstances we might be in the position outlined by the Attorney General. But these things have not happened. Industry in Australia has produced almost everything we could want. We have everything God can give us, and everything with which Nature can supply us. Mankind has all it wants to carry on under peaceful and comfortable conditions. But because there is a screw loose in the scheme of currency, finance and distribution, thousands upon thousands of people are condemned to utter desolation, starvation and hardship. How are we going to get out of our troubles? I do not agree with anyone who accuses the Government of having a monopoly of inhumanity, but I say there is plenty of room for better management of the affairs of State and of the affairs of Australia generally. Our stock has not been destroyed by bush fires, no earthquakes have ruined our factories, and nothing has happened seriously to affect industry. The world is better off to-day than it was yesterday, and was better off yesterday than it was the week before, and so on. Our methods of production are continually being improved, and yet we say to one third of our people, "You are condemned to absolute pauperism if the present conditions continue." We were told 12 months ago that there was production in plenty and work for all, and that we only required confidence to restore ourselves to prosperity. Some seven or eight months ago we were told that confidence would be restored if we elected the Lyons party to govern Australia.

The Minister for Lands: That would not provide us with a market where we could sell our goods at a profit.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Things that are produced in our State in abundance are not made available to the people. Wheat, wool, fruit, butter and eggs are produced here in abundance and yet are not available to many thousands of our people. My great objection to what is happening now is that one-third of our workers, who in the past have been the backbone of the State, are liable to be reduced to absolute pauperism. This is how the system of sustenance is operating. A man may be the best citizen in the world,

he may have been engaged on all the principal public works in the State, on railway construction, harbour works, irrigation and other things. During times of plenty as a result of his thrift he may have saved £200 or £300. During the past two or three years, because of the sustenance policy, such a man is told that there is no possible chance for him to get any work such as would enable him to keep himself in the necessaries of life. There is something wrong with our civilisation and our administration when we can cold-bloodedly say to such a man, "Before you can get any work you must be reduced to absolute pauperism." Fully 30 per cent. of our people are being brought below the bread line, and until they reach the stage where they have not a shilling in the world they are denied work. People who are willing to work and have always worked in the past should be given the right to work now, so that they will not be mulcted in their life savings. I know of an old couple who have been in this State for 40 or 50 years. They have always been exemplary citizens, and have done all they could by their children as well as by the State. They have carried out the highest duties of citizenship. They own a house and have been receiving a pension at the hands of the Federal Government. Because there are now four or five persons living in that little home, it is deemed, under the sustenance policy, that this pension aggregating 35s. a week, is sufficient to withhold from the occupants of that dwelling the right to earn. Until every member of that family becomes a pauper and is left without a shilling in the world, none can get any work. When the Labour Government came into office members of the Opposition used to ask what we were going to do about finding work for everybody. They did not say, like the present Government, "It is the duty of private enterprise to find employment for the people." What they did say was, "It is the job of the Government." I now ask, what are the Government going to do? Are they going to say that the old age pension must be used to relieve the Treasurer of the need for finding work? Is the old age pension to be used to enable other than old age pensioners, not to live, but to subsist, to sustain mere life? I feel strongly about our people being brought to such a condition of pauperism. We shall never get anywhere as a nation while that state of things obtains. The Government's present policy is a direct incentive to people

to become pauperised, to be thriftless, absolutely to waste money. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the case of a man who two or three years ago had saved a hundred pounds, and managed somehow to support his family until recently, but who in the meantime was not allowed to earn a shilling anywhere. We should be able to do a little better than that, anyhow. Now, as regards the man with children reaching the age of 14. When the children reach that age, there is no sustenance allowance made for them. The position is that they cannot get work and cannot get sustenance. Heaven only knows how they are maintained.

The Premier: That was your system.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: It was not.

The Premier: Yes, it was.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Having had something to do with operating the previous Government's system, I am in a better position than is the Premier to state the facts. At the present time people are turned into paupers, and allowed to get a millstone of debt round their necks, and that millstone will drag them down for years and years. I am quite aware that the Government cannot alter the economic position of Western Australia within a couple of years. I bear in mind that for the past four or five years about £4,000,000 of loan money has been expended annually in this State.

The Minister for Lands: The national income was much larger then.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I know that the national income has been reduced considerably. However, it should not be beyond the Government's capacity to see that the people are not absolutely pauperised.

The Minister for Lands: The unemployed are being better treated here than anywhere else in Australia.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) indicated what should be done in regard to the Federal incubus.

The Minister for Lands: The duplication which the Leader of the Opposition mentioned—

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I am not now talking about duplication.

The Minister for Lands: There would be more money available but for that duplication.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: How have we arrived at the position that when the Com-

monwealth say to us, "This must be done," it is done? We are a sovereign State, with responsibilities to the people of Western Australia; and we should not allow the Commonwealth Government to say to us, "This has to be done, and you must do it or else pack up your bags and go home." We should be able to manage things better. I am not complaining on the score of want of humanity on the part of the Government. However, we were told 12 months ago that if confidence was restored, things would be all right. The return of the Lyons Government was to restore confidence. That prophecy was not fulfilled. Then the defeat of Lang was to restore confidence, but so far there has not been a return to prosperity as the result of that. Next we were told that if our stocks were about par, confidence would be restored. We were told that it was the absolute hall-mark of confidence in a country if its stocks were at par, that then everybody had confidence in the country, and things would be all right. Our stocks have been above par during the past week, at premiums of 5s. and 7s. 6d. Other stocks have been only about 1s. below par. Still there is no improvement. On the contrary, things are getting worse. To judge from the prices of our stocks in the old world confidence in us has been restored. High prices are being obtained for our stocks in London. And yet there is no return of confidence. I do not wish to sound a pessimistic note, but I feel bound to point out that with all this alleged confidence less work and less business are being done in Western Australia than was the case 12 months ago. People try to delude themselves that things are better here. I do not say things are worse; but I do say that as regards business the position as reflected by the Clearing House returns was worse last week than it was a year ago. At present less money is passing through the Clearing House than was the case at this time 12 months ago, when we believed that Western Australia was in the very depths of depression. The fact remains that business is worse now than it was then. Applying that test, we must recognise that we are proceeding along wrong lines, and that an alteration of policy is necessary. The very people who deserve employment and encouragement are the people who are denied those things under the present policy. What encouragement, I ask, is there for the future? The town of

Geraldton has been told that no more people are to go on sustenance there. I do not know whether that is the Government's policy, but such a statement has been given out by the secretary of the local unemployment board.

The Minister for Works: Those people are all at work.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Not so. A meeting was hurriedly called on a recent Saturday morning by word of mouth, not by advertisement, and 50 unemployed turned up. Some of these people had been living on their savings, and had gradually got down to the bedrock level where they had nothing whatever. While for the past two years it has been possible for some of the people to get sustenance, at this stage it was announced that no other person would receive sustenance. Why should a halt suddenly be called at this stage? I know of a man with nine children, the man having worked for five or six years on the basic wage—a pretty rough spin for a man with such responsibilities. However, he pulled through. He has been out of work for four or five weeks now, and has been told that he cannot get sustenance. Surely that is not the policy of the Government. The Premier has been telegraphed to three or four times about this matter. Every two or three days two or three more unemployed come in at Geraldton. Men who have been working have exhausted their resources, and reached the stage where they must have either work or sustenance; but they cannot get sustenance.

The Premier: Were some of them lumpers?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The man on casual work during the past two or three years has not had a very good spin. The average earnings of such a man from the middle of November to the end of June would not be more than about £3 or £3 10s. a week.

The Premier: In the busy times?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: From now to the middle of November there is nothing whatever such a man can do; there is no work of any kind offering.

The Minister for Lands: How did such men get on in the past, before sustenance came into existence?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Minister knows it is ever so much harder now to get a job of any kind than it was in the past. Formerly things were really busy during the busy season, and during the slack season the

lumper could get a few shillings to carry on with; but now nobody has any money to spend. While people are receiving only 7s. per week per unit, there is no money available for the carrying out of any casual work. The Geraldton unemployed have a hopeless blank wall in front of them until shipping starts again, in the beginning of November. Meantime they are told they cannot get sustenance. I hope that that is not so. I understand the Government's viewpoint. From that aspect, what they did in the first place was all right in the circumstances existing at that time; but those circumstances do not exist now. The Ministers administering unemployment relief—the Minister for Works in collaboration with the Minister for Labour—state that there are 220 persons unemployed in Geraldton. All right; out of the money for which this Bill asks, let work be found for those 220 people, and that difficulty will be cleaned up. But unemployment is increasing and increasing. A few more people every now and then are becoming unemployed and requiring sustenance. The system of sustenance cannot be stopped in one minute, or in one day. In this respect, what difference is there between the 30th July and the 31st July? On the 31st July a man may get sustenance, but on the 1st August another cannot do so. We cannot alter a policy like that in one day in the circumstances I have outlined. If something unexpected occurred that would warrant such an alteration, it might be all right. But nothing of that sort has happened, and, in fact, the position has been getting worse. That being so, the former conditions should continue. The Government must be fair and just. Ministers have taken the oath to do justice to all men. What justification is there for saying that on the 31st July they will give sustenance to anyone who applies, but that it will not be forthcoming to the man who applies on the 1st August? The Government of the State cannot be carried on in that way, and there must be an alteration in the Government's proposals. I trust that as a result of the present debate, the Government will give us an indication that the policy regarding sustenance will not be altered, as has been suggested. If the Government cannot do any better, they should continue as in the past. I understand that a farm hand who could be picked up for employment if he were not

on sustenance on the 31st March, cannot be considered for employment at this stage. What special merit is there in the 31st March as against the 1st April, apart of course, from the fact that the 1st April is All Fool's Day?

The Minister for Lands: You have a very good idea why that was done.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I have no idea.

The Minister for Lands: Then it would be very easy for you to find out.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: What was the idea? You do not suggest that farmers would put men off so that the latter could get the benefit of the 7s.?

The Minister for Lands: I would not suggest that; I say definitely it has been done.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: It is a poor look out for the State if people, who are said to be the backbone of the country, will resort to that sort of thing.

The Minister for Lands: What is the good of saying that? You know that sort of thing is done, more or less, by most people, if given the opportunity.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I have a better conception of human nature. I am sorry that a few years of office have so warped the Minister's opinion of human nature.

The Minister for Lands: The same sort of thing was put up to you when you were in office.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Perhaps so, but that did not convince me that human nature had become so warped that all people were capable of such a thing.

The Minister for Lands: I said, more or less.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: My conception of human nature is better than that. I admit there are some unscrupulous people, but I do not say that all are of that description. It is indeed regrettable that two strenuous years of Ministerial office seem to have changed the hon. member and he is no longer the genial soul we knew two years ago. If that is to be the effect upon him of his Ministerial duties, I advise the Minister to get out of his job. It is too much if it breaks down his soul. We all recognise that the sustenance system was introduced as a temporary measure, and we all hoped that the necessity for it would not be spread over a long period. At that stage we believed that the people had some reserves that would enable them to tide over a time of temporary depression with a minimum of expenditure.

On the other hand, the difficulty has continued year after year, and the temporary phase has passed. The system has become a permanent condition in its application to industry, and the worst feature of it is that it has been extended to all sections of the community. I am not content to allow the Bill to pass at the present stage because I am not satisfied with the manner in which the Government have been spending money. I believe it could have been spent to greater advantage. We have wasted a lot of money by employing men to clean up footpaths, make recreation reserves, and so forth.

The Minister for Works: The Government have not done that.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes, they have. They spent money at National Park, on a road to Yanchep Caves, and so on. The Government provided the local authorities with money so that men could clean up my footpath three times in a week, although I do that work for myself.

Mr. Panton: It does not say much for your style of cleaning up the footpath.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Minister for Works says that this was not done by the Government, but his colleague, who is the Minister in charge of unemployment matters, knows, in his capacity as chairman of the road board that expended the money I refer to in my neighbourhood, where the money came from. The local authority received it from the Government.

The Minister for Railways: But the people received that money in the form of sustenance payments.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: That is my point. I claim that the money was not spent in a proper manner and that it could have been spent to far greater advantage. If any one of the Ministers were to go to England, he would be tendered the usual dinner and would make a speech there that would be read by the people of England and the Continent. In the course of the speech, the Minister would inevitably refer to the scope for development and work in Western Australia, and the advantages that would accrue from the expenditure of money in this State. The Minister making such a statement would be telling the truth, but if he were to say that the money available during the past two years had been spent on cleaning up footpaths and making roads through a national park or to a cave, he would probably be asked if that was the best way in which the money could have been used. Certainly we

could have spent money to much greater advantage than has been the experience of recent years.

The Minister for Lands: That is so, but such expenditure would have been shared by fewer people.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Not at all.

The Minister for Lands: I am afraid that would have been the position.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: We must continue increasing production within our borders. If agricultural and pastoral production do not prosper, the future of the State will be jeopardised, and therefore that production must prosper. Could not more money have been spent in that direction? If that had been done, and people were enabled to produce more, the result would be more advantageous for the State. There is a vast field for water conservation, and the Minister for Works is fully aware of the fact.

The Minister for Works: But we could not get enough money for that this time.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Government could proceed with water conservation. People are able to cart water themselves and conserve it. The Minister knows what an immense field there is for water conservation.

The Minister for Works: Several undertakings have been carried out already.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: And more could have been undertaken with the money that has been expended. I commend my suggestion to the Government as a field for expenditure, because it would be immediately reproductive, and so benefit the people. I do not know whether we shall get down to the level indicated by Mr. Stevens, the Premier of New South Wales. The other day he told the people of Sydney that if they renovated their houses the Government would be prepared to find two-thirds of the cost. What an awful admission of incompetency to make to the people of Australia! What an admission that the leaders of the Government in New South Wales are so bankrupt of ideas that the only suggestion they can make is that they will advance two-thirds of the cost of renovating houses! What a dreadful exhibition of incapacity! Fortunately we are not quite so bad as that in this State, but we have been spending money in directions that practically get down to the same level. I would like to refer to the mining industry, particularly that relating to the production of gold. I do not hold any brief for that industry, and my con-

stitueney is to a small extent only indirectly interested in it. Money spent in that industry at present must be well spent, because gold is the best field for production. Often we have spoken in terms of gratitude of the mining industry for the manner in which it caused the back country to be opened up and developed. We have railed at the Federal Government and others for placing burdens on the mining industry and now we have an opportunity to give something back to the industry and secure more wealth from it. This year the Federal Government have given the State £200,000 extra, free, and a little while ago there was a further amount of £145,000. What better avenue for production could we have than the investment of some of that money in the gold mining industry. There is a market for gold in every part of the world. The Minister for Lands interjected some time ago it was useless to produce if we had not a market.

The Minister for Lands: I did not say that. We must go on producing to get us out of our difficulties.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Minister said the difficulty was to get a good market.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, a profitable market.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Minister's argument could not apply to gold. There is plenty of scope for that industry, and if we produce more gold, we shall be working along right lines. The Minister for Mines has indicated that he has not the necessary money at his disposal. I welcome his announcement that there are 102 persons being kept in employment in the mining industry. Unfortunately that activity has only just been inaugurated, but I strongly commend it to the Government. That policy should be extended to the utmost limit to encourage the production of gold. I am aware that some people in the industry have not derived much benefit, but others have done very well. In some instances the Government have approved of sustenance payments being transferred to the goldfields for men while employed in the mining industry. We could do more along those lines in a better organised way. I read with considerable pleasure the article in this morning's "West Australian" by the former State Mining Engineer, Mr. Montgomery, who pointed out a field in which the Government could do much better in the expenditure of money

than they have done to date. Even if one-tenth of the people, who were engaged in work such as that suggested, were successful, they would produce much wealth for the State. Though conditions in this State are almost desperate, the position would have been much worse but for the gold mining industry. During the past two years the industry has employed considerably more than 2,000 additional men.

Hon. A. McCallum: On wages alone.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes. That does not take into account the prospectors who are working all over the State. It has been estimated that every man actively engaged in gold production makes employment for at least five other people. If those 2,000 extra men had not been employed, over 10,000 additional people would have been out of work. If we could increase the number of men engaged in gold production by another 2,000, reckoning on the same basis, 10,000 more people would find employment, and the unemployment difficulties now being experienced by the State would be practically overcome. Those additional men could be employed at £3 10s. or £3 15s. a week if the Government used the extra money now being received from the Commonwealth in that way. I hope the Minister will consider this aspect and be more importunate with the Treasurer. I know that the whole of the Premier's thoughts are for agriculture, but at this stage expenditure on gold mining would make all the difference. In 1928 one ounce of gold would purchase 45 lbs. of greasy wool. At present one ounce of gold will buy 252 lbs. of greasy wool. That shows the difference between the value of gold and wool.

The Minister for Lands: Gold is a depreciating asset while wool is an increasing asset.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: To some extent gold is a depreciating asset, but there is any quantity of the precious metal still to be found in this State. During the last two years the gold production of Western Australia has increased greatly, and that shows the scope that exists for further exploitation.

The Minister for Lands: You can remember when the production was going down and down.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: At the present time we cannot concentrate on anything more profitable than on gold production.

The Minister for Lands: Show us how we can do that with wool and wheat, and we will know where we are.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I am not dealing with wool and wheat.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Let us produce something for which we can find a market.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Minister referred to wheat. In 1928, one ounce of gold would purchase five bags of wheat. Now it will purchase 16½ bags of wheat. When a commodity attains such a value, we should concentrate on its production. Gold is the one commodity that is of value to-day.

The Minister for Lands: Then should it not be sufficiently attractive without requiring Government assistance?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: It has not proved so.

The Minister for Lands: It ought to have done so.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Government ought to have found work for all, but they have not been able to do so. There are lots of things that ought to have happened.

The Minister for Lands: Government assistance to industry to-day is crippling Australia.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Government is receiving an additional £345,000 from the Commonwealth.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister's statement is balderdash.

The Minister for Lands: I was referring to tariffs and bonuses.

Hon. P. Collier: What are your Country Party members going to do about it?

The Minister for Lands: They will do their best.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Many people rail about the Federal Government but they are making us an absolute gift of £345,000. That money, expended on wages in the gold mining industry, would keep 2,000 men fully employed for a year.

The Minister for Lands: The Commonwealth grant is spread over the year.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: And the work of the men would be spread over the year. If work could thus be provided for 10,000 people in all during the year, our difficulties would be almost over. I commend this matter to the attention of the Minister. I do not know whether the Minister has any idea of spending more money on the industry.

The Minister for Mines: No one has ever accused me of not spending the money provided for me.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: But the Government should consider the gold mining industry and the possibilities it presents. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Church) took the first opportunity in this Chamber to tell us that wool was being produced at a loss. I believe that is a fact. Consequently we do not want to spend our funds on things that are being produced at a loss. Gold mining is an industry that can be carried on at a profit, and it offers immense scope for exploitation. Gold is of tremendous value to Australia in every way, and the comparatively few pounds that the Government have received by way of a free gift from the Commonwealth, applied to gold mining as I have suggested, would accomplish much for the State. I know of no other avenue that offers such an opportunity for the successful investment of money and the Government would be well advised to consider the proposal. The industry is deserving of every shilling that can be spared to further its development. I should like a definite assurance from the Minister that all decent citizens will have an opportunity to secure work before they become pauperised. I hope the 31st July will not be selected arbitrarily as a date after which nobody will be able to secure sustenance. In my electorate there is talk of holding a public meeting, but the people do not want a public meeting. They want the Government to grant assistance as before, meagre though the assistance has been. The Minister has stated that conditions are improving.

The Minister for Lands: I wish I could say they were.

Hon. P. Collier: That sort of thing is generally said after a nice dinner.

The Minister for Lands: That is when men say nice things.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I hope that the sustenance system will be continued and that those who unfortunately become eligible for assistance will be able to obtain it irrespective of the date when the need arises. I wish to remind the Minister that gold mining put Western Australia on the map. If encouraged it will put the State on the map again. The Government have the money and should expend it on an industry which is capable of so vastly improving the present condition of the people.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall) [5.44]: Last night a good deal of criticism was directed

against the Government regarding the expenditure of the money provided for in the Bill. During my nine years in Parliament I have never heard any Government criticised in connection with the expenditure of money included in a Supply Bill. It is the practice of Governments to carry on existing works until the Estimates are approved. Many works are already in hand and unless we are allowed to carry them on, they will have to be shut down. We in the Works Department have no new works in hand. The work being carried on consists of drainage and irrigation schemes in the South-West.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not correct; there are new works.

Hon. A. McCallum: Who is doing the Causeway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: So far as my department is concerned, there are no new works. We are carrying on drainage and irrigation, works which were started last year, and continuing the Fremantle and Geraldton harbours reconstruction work, as well as reconditioning the goldfields water mains. The one new work in operation is the Wicherina dam. There has been a good deal of criticism in connection with the attitude adopted by the Commonwealth Government as far as the finances of the State are concerned. Hon. members will realise why that is. It is because of the passing of the Financial Agreement which was submitted to Parliament by the party now on the other side of the House.

Mr. Panton: Absolute rubbish! It was carried by the people of the State.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) mentioned that we were the first people to break away from the roads agreement. That statement is not correct. The Federal Aid Roads Agreement was signed originally by the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth and the then Premier of Western Australia in October, 1926. The next agreement was signed by the Prime Minister and the present Premier of Western Australia in 1931. Up to the date of the signing of that agreement, all work done on roads had to be approved by the Federal Government in detail. It is really only since the passing of that agreement in 1931 that it has been possible to do any work on roads without the Federal Government's approval. We have

also been twitted for not having done our best for the unemployed, and we have been told that all men are on part time. The number of men employed by the Government on the 30th June last was 16,304. There was only one year in this State when more men were employed by the Government.

Hon. P. Collier: You cannot put that over us.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In 1927 there were 16,553 men employed by the Government, approximately 200 more than are at work to-day. Of the number this year, 10,153 are employed full time.

Hon. P. Collier: That is an absolutely dishonest statement, and you know it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member not to reflect on the Minister.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I ask, Mr. Chairman, for your protection, so that I may be able to give to the House all the particulars that I have in my possession. On the 30th June, 1926, the number of men employed by the Public Works Department and on main roads and on metropolitan water supply was 4,228. In 1927 the number was 5,087; in 1928 it was 3,395; in 1929 the total was 3,772; and in 1930, when there was a change of Government, the figure was 5,211. Of that total 3,372 were employed by the Main Roads Board on wages. The number employed in 1932 was 6,844, which was a greater number than had ever been employed by the Public Works Department.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a deliberately untrue statement, because some were on part time, and others on full time. You can't put that over us.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: On the 15th January, 1930, the number of men employed on roads was 2,706; in February of the same year it was 2,922; in March, 2,386; in April 2,139, and on the 30th June, 1930, the total was 3,848.

Hon. P. Collier: Your well-satisfied satellites put that up for you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I want to make the position clear because of the criticism of the member for South Fremantle last night. When the present Government took office, the men employed numbered 2,139, and on the 30th June the number was increased to 3,848 and all were on full time. At that period we had not started part-time work. There was money in the Treasury, and the member for South

Fremantle could have spent it because there were then 4,000 unemployed.

Hon. A. McCallum: Why not be honest in the statement you make?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am honest.

Hon. A. McCallum: You are not.

Hon. P. Collier: It is the most dishonest statement ever made in this House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have submitted these figures in reply to the statement made by the member for South Fremantle that I had kept back £22,000 or £24,000 in order to build a bridge to provide work. When we took office, we put on 1,860 more men on full-time work on roads. Now we are being severely criticised because we are not employing men on full time. After all, we have a duty to perform to the whole of the people of the State, with the limited amount of money available, and we believe it is better to employ a considerable number of men on part time than to employ a small proportion on full time. An important fact is that when the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) was speaking last night, he was not aware how many weeks these men were working. I will supply the information, and also make some comparisons with other States:—

RELIEF WORKS.				
<i>New Zealand, New South Wales, and Western Australia.</i>				
No. of Children.	Period worked by men on Basic Wage.			(n) At 10s. per day.
	New Zealand (n).	New South Wales.	Western Australia.	
6 or more	3 weeks out of 5	5 weeks out of 6	5 weeks out of 6	
5	2½ " " "	5 " " "	5 " " "	
4	2½ " " "	5 " " "	5 " " "	
3	2 " " "	5 " " "	4 slightly under 6	
2	3½ days weekly	5 " " "	2 weeks out of 3	
Single men	2 days weekly at 7/6d. = 15/-	...	2 days per week = 25/2d.	

In Queensland the employment scheme provides for the expenditure of £180,000 during the next three months. The particulars were outlined by the Minister for Labour

and industry recently. He is supposed to pay award rates for intermittent relief work and single men get rations, and one day's work in alternate weeks. In that way relief is afforded to 1,480 men. When I was in South Australia recently, I discussed the subject of unemployment with the Minister in charge, and I found that the only men the Government in that State had employed on ordinary work numbered 600. They were engaged on sewerage work in the metropolitan area, and were working half-time. Other men to the number of 425 were sheltered in the Adelaide exhibition building, and were causing trouble. Because of that the Minister decided to close the camp and shifted it to the hills. The information I have given will show that Western Australia has done better for its unemployed than has any other State. The Leader of the Opposition offered some criticism last night about the work that is taking place at Harvey. There were employed at Harvey at one time 2,500 men. Those men were working two days a week, and were receiving 25s. 2d. Without that job probably they would have been in Blackboy camp to-day. Which was the better for them? It was not possible to employ men on two days work a week, as we are doing there, without putting them in a big gang, because we have to make special arrangements for them to get their stores at reasonable prices. And if we put men out on the roads, a few here and a few there, it is impossible to keep control of them. When the Leader of the Opposition stated the cost of shifting sand by the drag line elevator at Harvey, his figures were not correct. To date the shifting of sand by hand has cost 3s. 2d. per yard, whereas the cost by dragline elevator is 1s. 4d. per yard.

Hon. P. Collier: It is your figures that are not correct. Your satellite gave you those figures. I know something about those costs.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There have been 2,500 men down there.

Hon. P. Collier: Nobody has criticised them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They have been there for some months and there has been no trouble whatever. It is remarkable that so large a gang of men with so little to do should have been as decent as they have been. Although when they went there those men were mostly in ill-health and under-nourished, to-day they are well and much more contented than they were pre-

viously. It has been a fine thing for the men themselves and perfectly satisfactory to the State. Of course, under normal conditions we would never have put those men on to wheel the sand out by barrow. But then things are not normal.

Hon. M. F. Troy: What was the promise you made at the elections? Work for all!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Leader of the Opposition mentioned also piece-work. There waited on the Premier recently a deputation comprising the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. McCallum, Mr. Kenneally, Mr. Millington, Mr. W. D. Johnson, Mr. Raphael, and the secretary of the Northam branch of the A.L.P. I have received many deputations concerning the prices of piece work, and in every case the statements made as to what the men were earning have been incorrect. In this instance the Premier sent the file to me and I had a report prepared. I have received that report to-day. I propose to read from it, giving the names of the men concerned. The deputation said that one, Flint, earned from Monday afternoon to Saturday at noon 25s. I learn that actually in 3½ days that man earned 37s. 6d. The deputation said that one, Giblett, had earned from Monday to Friday night 25s. Actually in 3½ days he earned 41s. 3d. The deputation said that one, Forward, earned from Monday to Saturday at noon 50s. Actually in 3½ days he earned 59s. 5d. The deputation said that one, Thompson, from Monday to Saturday at noon earned 50s. I find that he earned the 50s. in 3½ days. The deputation said that one, Lyons, from Tuesday afternoon to Friday night earned 30s. It is shown in this report that in 2 days 5 hours, Lyons earned 30s. and also put in one day at day work, receiving 13s. for it. This employee's hours when on piece work were from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., with two hours off for lunch. This is the sort of thing deputations put up to Ministers, and this deputation, as I have shown, consisted of important members of the Opposition. I had another deputation on piece work introduced by the member for Mt. Hawthorn (Mr. Millington).

Mr. Millington: This is a new system of replying to a deputation. You give the deputation no information, but you come along and give it out to the House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That deputation said the men were not earning the

basic wage. An investigation was made and information taken from the wages sheet disclosed that the average daily earnings were as follows:—18 men, 15s. 3d.; 56 men, 12s. 6d.; 60 men, 12s. 5d.; 70 men, 13s. 8d.; or a through average of 13s. 5d. per day, as compared with the day work rate of 11s. 10½d. That is the actual position. I want the House to understand that this Government did not introduce piece work. It has always been in operation in the Public Works Department. Here is a case inquired into by my predecessor. I have taken this from the file, an extract from a report dated 7th April, 1927. It was a question of earnings, and from 42 cases examined seven men were earning an average of £1 per day. Personally I agree with the piece work system, for we do get value under it, and we pay a reasonable price. Certain men, of course, cannot earn the basic wage, but the majority of those on piece work are earning considerably more, and I have never heard any objection to it from the men themselves. I am proud of the way in which the sustenance men are working on the drainage and irrigation scheme. It is surprising to find at what low cost we are doing it, lower than ever before in the history of Western Australia.

Miss Holman: Shame!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The men are all giving the Government a fair deal, realising that at a time like this they should do their best.

Hon. A. McCallum: That is a contradiction of the figures you gave for the Harvey—when you say the work has been cheaply done.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for South Fremantle charged me with spending money without authorisation. I interjected "What about roads work?" He did not know anything about it. He said he had taken £2,000 out of capital. Actually the sum he took was £5,793 10s. 4d., and £4,000 from traffic fees. The Auditor General refused to pass the payment. It was illegal. The result is the money has had to be found from other funds.

Hon. A. McCallum: We shall see what the Auditor General will do about your Causeway expenditure.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not blame the ex-Minister, but I say he should come along to Parliament and ask to have

his action validated. As to the Causeway, somebody mentioned that some road board had carried a resolution. Mr. Hegney was on a deputation to me when I explained the position.

Mr. Hegney: I was not on the deputation. I was there only on sufferance.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: You were in my room.

Mr. Hegney: I was not invited, and I had no say.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The deputation did not carry any resolution. I have never said so in the Press. What happened was that at the annual conference of the Road Boards Association I forecast legislation to amend the Main Roads Act.

Hon. P. Collier: Did you say you suggested that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I forecast that at the conference. The Leader of the Opposition also mentioned the State highway, the Canning Road. The Canning Road cost £16,172 per mile.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not mention it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The full length of eight miles cost £129,376, sufficient money to build a south side railway from Midland Junction to Fremantle. Yet they have criticised me for something done at Yanchep. I say the Yanchep road is justified, for there is there no railway.

Hon. P. Collier: Justified from the point of view of the landowners out there.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The cry is for good roads, yet immediately we respond we are criticised. Last night the Leader of the Opposition said that by imposing the condition of sustenance labour on contractors, we were increasing the cost by 25 per cent. That is not so. Actually we have reduced the cost, although I do not think it is by reason of that condition. I have here a list of 13 tenders for schools, eleven of which are below the departmental estimate. I have also a list of various contracts for the reconditioning of water pipes, cast-iron pipes, earthenware pipes and others, and in every case the contract is lower than in the past. The contract price for cast-iron pipes in November was £16, whereas to-day it is £13 12s. 6d. Some of the others are not down quite so much as that, but certainly the imposing of the sustenance condition has not increased the cost.

Mr. Kennelly: The departmental estimates would take into consideration the increased cost under the new system.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, these tenders were submitted before there was any sustenance condition. The result of the comparison shows that in each case the price quoted to-day is lower than that quoted 12 months ago, before the sustenance condition was enforced.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have before me a copy of the Main Roads Act, and it contains no provision for the appropriation of any of the traffic fees or any of the Federal aid road grants for the Causeway. The control of the Minister is assured by the provision that the Commissioner may not expend more than £1,000 without approval. In spending money on the Causeway I admit that we are straining the provisions of the Act somewhat. Still, there is provision to cover expenditure in that the Act permits us to maintain the roadway and the decking, and money is provided out of the traffic fees for that purpose. Members are entitled to information as to the cost of the work so far. The estimate for the erection of a new Causeway and for the reclamation of the river—one is bound up with the other in that the reclamation work must continue because the river-course must be altered—is £575,000, of which £220,000 is for the Causeway and the remainder for the reclamation work. In times like the present no Government could possibly countenance such extraordinary expenditure, but we have already spent £108,340 on reclamation and dredging at the Causeway. This is made up of £72,320 for the purchase of new plant and £35,370 spent on dredging and reclamation.

Mr. Kenneally: How much of that sum have the present Government spent?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: A sum of £650 represents part cost of the Burswood canal bridge, bringing the total capital expenditure to the 30th June, 1932, to £108,340. The annual capital charges on plant, that is, interest at 5 per cent. on the capital cost of £72,320, is £3,616. It is a great pity that the money was not spent for the more useful purpose of widening the Causeway, which would have been of some advantage. The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) criticised me over the reorganisation of the Works Department, and said the department was like a morgue. I have given figures showing the number of employees

and indicating that there are more employees to-day than previously, but a lot of them are on part-time work. For the married men, the part-time work amounts to nearly three out of every four weeks. It is a fact that owing to our having to pick up sustenance men, which the department must do in order to assist the Treasury, the administration costs are higher. Men work only so many days a week in order to make the money go as far as possible, and in addition we have provided contracts with storekeepers and have done various other things that the department were not called upon to do in the past. We have had to take men unaccustomed to the particular class of work, and the cost of supervision is considerably higher than in normal times. The explanation is that the Treasurer has definitely laid down that any work we do must represent at least 80 per cent. for wages. In years past we have done a considerable amount of work on which the expenditure has largely represented the cost of material. Regarding the reorganisation to which the member for South Fremantle so sneeringly referred, I wish to give some figures to illustrate what has happened during the last two years, as follows:—

	1930.	1932.
Public Works Department—		
Salaries	£111,158	£62,260
Incidentals	£17,862	£7,757
No. of officers	353	248
Main Roads Board—		
Salaries	£43,024	£12,073
No. of officers	96	30
Metropolitan Water Supply Department—		
Administration costs ...	£37,935	£23,250
Operating expenses ...	£78,460	£49,500
No. of officers	145	122
Labour Department—		
Salaries	£6,908	£3,280
No. of officers	24	13

In the two years the costs of the department have been reduced from £296,256 to £158,120, a saving of £138,136, equal to 46 per cent. The number of permanent officers has been reduced from 610 to 413, a reduction of 205. The member for South Fremantle said the department was like a morgue. It may be, but he should understand that there are more departments housed in the Works Department buildings than formerly, and the Government are not paying rent for other office accommodation. The officers of the department are giving good service. They have had unpleasant duties to perform in the shape of reducing the staff, having had to dispense with men who had been in the department for many years.

Hon. P. Collier: Nevertheless, they stuck to a few of their friends.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: May be. The department may resemble a morgue, but the officers have a big job, are working full time and are not walking about the building. I think that completes my case.

HON. A. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [7.39]: I wish to deal with the feeble and anaemic statement made by the Attorney General, who singled me out for special attention. Up to the time he interjected, I had not mentioned him. I wish to express my astonishment at such an effort coming from the Attorney General. One would have expected that when the Attorney General was selected by the Cabinet to be the leading speaker in to-night's discussion, he would have had a case to present in answer to the arguments advanced from this side of the House last night. I do not think that even his best friend on the Government side would contend that he made out any case whatever. I think he became disgusted with himself, for he left the Chamber immediately he had finished. He drew a little simile, and if it was designed to depict his view of the existing position in Australia, I think it fitted in very well with the actions of the Government to date. Doubtless the Attorney General intended it to apply to the actions of the Government during the last 2½ years. First of all he said that in order to judge between the Premier and myself as to who possessed the greater amount of human sympathy for the masses, members should consider who said the hard things and the unpleasant things in this Chamber. The one who spoke the honeyed words was to be adjudged the one possessing the greatest amount of human sympathy and having the interests of the community more at heart. I am not prepared to judge people by what they say. The community cannot live on honeyed words. They can only live on deeds—things done. If the Government and Parliament drift along without doing things, hard words will have to be spoken in the interests of the people, regardless of who is offended or of whose feelings might be hurt. Men, women and children cannot be fed and clothed and housed with honeyed words. Deeds are required and a policy must be set out. Let us consider the few brief sentences delivered by the Attorney General. He said it was mooted at the conference he attended with

the Premier that they agreed to a reduction of overseas interest being obtained. It was mooted! But what has been done? What is the good of mooting? I asked the Premier last night whether any definite policy had been decided upon by the Premiers' Conference, but the Premier was unable to say that any definite decision had been reached. It is of no use mooting things. Actions count, not words. We have had the simile of six men in a boat with six cups of water. If one of them has two drinks, someone else has to go thirsty. The only solution of the problem as it existed in that boat, according to the Attorney General, is that they must pray to the Almighty to send them a shower of rain. If the Attorney General's solution is to apply to the national outlook, then all we can do is to pray to the Almighty to send us a shower of sovereigns. Is that his only solution? The simile does not fit in with the position of this continent. There is no shortage of food, water, raiment or shelter. Nature has provided an abundance of everything that mankind can want.

Mr. Brown: And no money with which to buy it.

Hon. P. Collier: Why?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: That is a problem. Are we to pray to the Almighty for a shower of sovereigns? The warehouses are bulging with all that mankind needs. On the other hand there is stored in two countries 75 per cent. of the gold of the world. The currencies of the different civilised countries are based on their gold reserves. No one will argue that there is a shortage of food or anything that man requires. The world has everything in abundance. We are not suffering from fire, plagues, droughts or pestilences. Nature has been very kind to the world. We are not like the six men in a boat. There is no limit to our supplies, for we have everything we need. All that mankind wants, however, is being stored up. There is power to transfer it to those who want it stored up. It is to a solution of that problem that Governments should direct their attention. The only solution we have had advanced on behalf of the Government is that they must pray to the Almighty. I listened for some idea of a policy from the Government. We want decision and action. We do not want merely lip service and soft phrases. The Minister for Works said I was wrong when I stated last night that the alteration in the control of the supervision of

works under the roads agreement was brought out during the regime of our Government. I want to put members right as to what was in our minds. The argument arose because two members of the Commonwealth Government were put on the unemployment board, and had to approve of all works before they were put in hand. It is contended that this arose out of the original agreement. I pointed out that at the time we were administering the Main Roads Act, the Commonwealth Government had stationed in Perth an engineer who was supervising our works. He had to give his approval after I had given mine on behalf of Cabinet, and before the matter went to the Federal Minister. That engineer, however, was recalled, and there was no officer stationed in this State to supervise the work during the Minister's time. The alteration was made before we left office.

The Minister for Works: You still had to get Federal approval for all expenditure.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, but the point raised was with regard to the Federal nominee who was directing and controlling our works. The alteration was made before the Minister took office. The next point made by him was that the work on the Causeway had not yet been started. I have here a photograph of the men actually at work.

The Minister for Works: On the footbridge.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: In to-night's paper we find that the total expenditure involved is £23,000. The improvements to the Causeway under the Government's relief works programme will absorb 80 men for upwards of nine months. The unemployment board commenced picking up men about a fortnight ago.

The Minister for Lands: They have not been working a fortnight.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: They have been at work for some days.

The Minister for Lands: About three.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Minister said they had not yet started work.

The Minister for Works: They have started on the footbridge, which is away from the Causeway.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: That is splitting straws. It is the same work. The Minister says that the estimate for a new Causeway

is £220,000. I think it was the Premier who said that the expenditure of the £23,000 would more than meet one year's interest on the cost of the new Causeway.

The Premier: On the total expenditure of £525,000.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am discussing the £220,000 the Minister said would be the cost of the new Causeway. I would point out that the half a million pounds took in all the reclamation from opposite the Supreme Court buildings to the Maylands jetty. This included the building of a wall, the making of a two-chain drive, the planting of the grounds with grass and trees for the entire distance I have referred to.

The Minister for Works: Some of the work had to be done in connection with the Causeway.

Mr. Kenneally: And your Government stopped it immediately.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: A 20 years' programme was set out. The City Council undertook their share of the obligation, so that it was not all State expenditure.

The Minister for Works: Some £1,500 a year.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Premier says he is borrowing money at 4 per cent. The £23,000 will meet the interest at 4 per cent. on more than half a million pounds, not on the £220,000.

The Premier: It is £575,000.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: No one has contended that the work originally provided for over a period of 20 years has to be carried out as an essential part of the construction of the Causeway, in which £23,000 for a patch-work undertaking will be absorbed.

The Premier: One hundred thousand pounds has been spent already.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It is proposed to spend £23,000 on a decrepit and dilapidated structure. I am told by experts that it is possible, by putting a jack upon them, to force down the piles. The same engineers who are now advising the Minister told me five years ago that 10 years was the limit of the life of the structure.

Hon. P. Collier: They have had a different job since then.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Government are spending £23,000 without the authority of Parliament. If it is not waste of money I should like to know what is. If the re-

port of the engineers is correct, the money will be at the bottom of the Swan River within a few years. This does not leave much of the Minister's case. I accused him of tying up £24,000 from last year. Deputation after deputation waited upon him requesting that work should be provided, but he refused to provide it and said he had no money. He left men, women and children to go hungry and without clothes because he said he had no money. In the course of his reply he said that when he took over he found a balance on road expenditure of over £100,000.

The Minister for Works: There were 4,000 unemployed and no work for them.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Why is not the Minister honest? It is the practice of all Governments that, once the general elections are over, they cease to lay down any policy or to incur any fresh expenditure. The Leader of the Opposition and I sent a telegram to the Commonwealth Government asking for £100,000 for road work. This was sent weeks before the elections, because we could not raise our 15s. in the pound on the loan market. We asked for the money so that we could get on with the work rather than wait until we had found our part of the money. That £100,000 came to hand about three days after the elections. As honourable men, who had met their fate at the hands of the people, we would not enter into any new expenditure or lay down any policy, so we left that money for the new Government. The Minister to-night compares that action with his hoarding-up of money which he is directed by law to spend in the manner set out. When men and women approached him for work he failed to give it to them. He had the money but he kept it shut up. This is the trick he resorted to in order to make out a case to the House.

Hon. M. F. Troy: And he calls that clever.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: There is nothing clever about it. He called it honourable. In the main the rates he quoted of sustenance paid throughout Australia were correct. He omitted, however, to say that in New South Wales every child under the child endowment scheme draws 4s. a week in addition to the sustenance. The allowance to children under the scheme of this Government ceases at the age of 14, whereas in New South Wales a child means a person over

12 months and under 21 years of age. In that State the allowance is paid to children up to the age of 21. This puts an entirely different aspect on the figures given by the Minister. He also referred to piece work. I had many complaints that the men were not earning enough. I called for returns, and sometimes found that the men's figures were incorrect, and occasionally found mistakes made in the department. It is not fair that the Minister should mention names in the House, and quote figures that were given to him at a deputation when the man who gave them is not in a position to reply to him on the floor of the House. I do not know whether the figures are right or wrong. I know that the man in question came from Northam. He had his documents with him, and presented his figures, and from his documents I should say his figures were correct. It is possible he has an explanation that would show the reason for the difference between his figures and those of the Minister.

The Premier: Reporters were present at that deputation.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The figures were not published in the Press. No reply was made to the deputation, but the Minister brings the matter up here and gives publicity to the man's name. This man may be able to put quite a different complexion upon the figures. If the statements made to us are true, a different complexion is placed on the subject. However, I do not know which version is correct. One version has been given publicity here, and the other has not. The people who went to the Minister have been practically called liars. The Leader of the Opposition and I have been, in effect, accused of putting up a false case. There should have been a right of explanation by the people concerned before the matter was raised in Parliament. I do not think such a procedure as the present has been adopted previously. Evidently the Minister for Works has a different code of honour from that of other people. The Minister's claim that he has found work for many thousands is all balderdash. He has men working for sustenance, which cannot be classed as employment. The figures showing the number of men employed by the Public Works Department when we were in office indicate that men were employed on full time and at Arbitration Court rates, and no comparison can be made between those figures and the men working out

their sustenance. I gave the figures last night of one of the Government schemes for which 1,100 men were to be engaged, and these show that the utmost that the men employed can earn is £7 per month; and yet the Minister says the men are employed! And the Minister's figures are higher than ours. The hon. gentleman is entitled to all the satisfaction that the position affords him. It affords none to this side, and none to the men thus employed.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.4]: The debate on this Supply Bill assumed a special interest after the Leader of the Opposition had asked certain questions of the Premier and other Ministers. Throughout we have had difficulty in glean- ing information to which we are entitled. It has been a case of the pursuit of know- ledge under difficulties. But we are still justified in asking to be informed exactly what has taken place. I refer particularly to the amount of money made available by the Loan Council, and to the objection we have raised to Commonwealth supervision of expenditure, particularly as regards the amount raised by loan. The question is not one for the Government only.

The Premier: The position is like that under the roads agreement which you made.

Mr. MILLINGTON: This matter is more complicated and more recent. When the proposed Federal legislation regarding this expenditure was indicated by the Prime Minister, did he intimate to the Premiers that he proposed to set up a board to control the expenditure?

The Premier: As regards his own expenditure, yes; his £145,000.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Was the Premier aware that the Prime Minister proposed to enact legislation authorising him to set up a board of control?

The Premier: As regards his own money, yes.

Mr. MILLINGTON: But not as regards the loan?

The Premier: Of course not. The hon. member is aware that I do not know in advance about Bills to be presented to the Federal Parliament.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Not only the Government, but this House, should make a clear and definite protest. A similar view will, I think, be taken by every other State Parlia-

ment. It is a question of protecting the rights of the Government, of this House, and of the State. If there was no such intima- tion by the Prime Minister, the position would look even worse. If it was not the Prime Minister's desire that this encroach- ment should take place, I rather suspect that the Commonwealth Bank Board are respon- sible for it. The Commonwealth Bank Board have set themselves up as a super Government over the Federal Government and the State Governments. It means that no longer is Mr. Lyons Prime Minister of Australia. It means that Sir Robert Gibson controls finances authorised by the Loan Council. The time has come when we should clearly state our views on the subject. If the Premier thinks it useless to protest, I remind him that the experts had prepared for the last Premiers' Conference another dose of the economy plan, but that because of opinions expressed here and outside this House, and because of similar expressions of opinion in the other States, the Premiers resisted that further dose of the economy plan. The alteration in the personnel of the Premiers' Conference also had an effect on the Federal Government and the Loan Coun- cil. The result was that the States secured considerably better terms than the Prime Minister had been disposed to concede. The more public opinion becomes manifest, the greater is the influence not only on State Governments but on the Federal Govern- ment, and also on the boards of experts which have been set up by the Federal Govern- ment and which have been ascertained to be not infallible. Those boards must now take their share of public criticism. In the instance I allude to, their proposals were not accepted. It was decided by the Conference of Premiers, not including too many Labour Premiers, that the Australian people could not bear the imposition of further economies as proposed by the experts. How far are the Federal Government, and the various boards constituted for the purpose of advis- ing them, to dictate the policy of Australia? The question of vital interest to be discussed under this Bill is how the money is to be ex- pended and what plan shall be adopted in the allocation of the funds. It may be said that there is not much utility in words, but the only course open to us is to voice our opinions. As responsible public men we must put up proposals which we would be

prepared to carry out if we were in control. I recognise the Government's responsibilities, and shall not propose any wildcat scheme. Whither are we trending with all our plans and schemes which are being put up here and elsewhere? Since the time of the Premiers' economy plan, other plans have sprung up. There has been a litter of pup plans. Everybody has a plan. The business of the Opposition is to point out the trend of events. Let me start from the basis fixed by the Arbitration Court, a body which operates under a measure passed by a previous Government and amended by the present Government. The Arbitration Court have determined that the basic wage for a man, wife and two children shall be £3 12s. per week in the metropolitan area. Within the last few days I have received notice that the Arbitration Court have considered the question of the basic wage in conjunction with the amending legislation, and have determined not to alter the wage, which is to remain at £3 12s. The decision is a reply to those who contend that the cost of living is coming down, that it is apparent the necessities of life are becoming cheaper. Whatever may be the views of those who advance that contention, here we have the court, with all needful machinery for determining these things, declaring that the basic wage for a man, wife and two children is £3 12s. under the process of fixation laid down by this Parliament. And that basic wage does not, I believe, provide for any luxuries. Although there has been a distinct drop from the time when the basic wage was fixed at £4 7s. to the time when it was reduced to £3 12s., much of the heritage of high prices remains. We all regret that this is so. One can point to necessary commodities which have decreased in price; but certain charges remain, and unfortunately they have not been reduced in accordance with the percentage of fall in the basic wage. When the basic wage was £4 7s., men on it committed themselves to expenditure which they then had a prospect of meeting. I refer to the purchase of homes. Of this there would be hundreds of cases. To a great extent that liability has not decreased. Most assuredly it has not decreased proportionately with the fall in wages. Therefore they found themselves, with £3 12s. a week, confronted with high expenditure that could not be avoided in respect of commitments entered into when wages were higher. Al-

though the Arbitration Court cannot make allowances for that phase, because it has to be admitted there has been a drop in rents, the fact remains that the commitments have to be met out of the decreased wage available. Thus the position is worse for the men than would appear on the surface. The Premier will realise it is unfortunate that in addition to ordinary expenditure, further expense has to be shouldered as the result of these depressing times. Practically every man who is fully employed has to accept additional responsibilities in respect of relatives whom he has to assist. There cannot be any doubt in that respect, otherwise how have many of the unemployed been able to exist? They could not live on the dole they have received. I do not blame the Government for that position, but merely state the fact. It will be agreed that the basic wage represents bare existence. But it has to be said that the Arbitration Court's basic wage has been arrived at on a scientific basis. For that reason, I will build my argument on the court's determination. Thus we find that whereas the Arbitration Court say that a family comprising four persons shall be entitled to a basic wage of £3 12s. or 18s. per unit, the Premier in his Plan, which some people seem to consider adequate, provides for sustenance plus £1 per week. This is how it works out: A man, his wife and two children are entitled to 28s. sustenance plus £1, if the man is working under the scheme. That is equivalent to 48s. Therefore, under the Premiers' Plan four people have to exist on 48s., which is 12s. per unit as against 18s. per unit prescribed by the Arbitration Court. This means that the Government have arbitrarily, in spite of evidence adduced before the Arbitration Court, cut down the amount stated by the court to be necessary to keep body and soul together in a family of four persons.

Mr. Kenneally: If, in addition, there are children over 14 years of age, they have to live on that amount too.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes, but I am not dealing with exceptional instances or particularly hard cases. My figures are strictly accurate and represent a correct comparison between the amount adopted by the Arbitration Court and that determined by the Government. Let the Government realise the position, and then they must see that the figures they have advertised regarding men employed are, to say the least of it, entirely

misleading. The Premier will not suggest that there would be any surplus provided by the basic wage to-day. I am dealing with the position on the basis of those on the basic wage. With the example set by the Government—this is where the responsibility of the Government comes in—other employers have been influenced and the Press of the State likewise. So far, I have dealt with the plan of the Arbitration Court and, if I may term it so without being offensive, the Mitchell Plan, which brings the basic wage down to 48s.

The Premier: Yours was 28s.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Premier cannot say that what I state is incorrect. It is due to the House, to the Premier and his colleagues to point out just where we are drifting on the downward road that leads to decreased standards, which we in Australia have been endeavouring to avoid. This desire for plans has had further results. Now we have a member of the Legislative Council, who is a representative of the employers, coming forward with an additional plan. I refer to Mr. J. J. Holmes. His suggestion was that where three men were employed on the basic wage, the wage should be split into four. If that were done, the standard he sets up would be found to be slightly higher than that fixed by the Government. It works out at 54s. a week, which is the basic wage under the Holmes plan, as published in the "West Australian." We know that the "West Australian" is the greatest publicity medium in the State. It exercises undeniable influence on public opinion and, of all the papers in Western Australia, it is supposed to be representative of right thinking. The Premier will see what an effect his example has had, first on Mr. Holmes and now on the "West Australian." I shall quote not from an article contributed by someone else, but from a sub-leader published in the "West Australian," following upon their comments upon the manner in which the Government had been dealing with unemployment and the reduced sustenance payments. The "West Australian" came out boldly—those connected with the paper are not elected persons and therefore express their views boldly—with the following:—

... if certain works were gazetted as relief works and men engaged on them were employed continuously at a rate of perhaps £3 per week, the lot of the men so employed would be far better.

There is the "West Australian" plan.

Mr. Marshall: If the paper paid some of their reporters £3 a week, they would be over-paying them.

Mr. MILLINGTON: These are all distinct schemes.

Mr. Marshall: They could pay that to some of their writers anyhow.

Mr. MILLINGTON: We must take notice of the position when we find there is so much determination on the part of the Government, representative men and representative papers in Western Australia along the lines I have indicated. Then there is the Chamber of Commerce, a responsible body exercising considerable influence. The Chamber also has a plan, and has widely and definitely announced that the only way by which industry can recover in Western Australia is for the State basic wage to be reduced by 11s. a week to an amount of £3 1s. per week.

The Premier: That is the Federal rate.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I have mentioned five plans. If some disreputable person had performed an atrocious act or given utterance to some abominable statements, no notice would have been taken by the general community except as something to be avoided or disregarded. When we find responsible organisations, men and journals advocating such proposals as I have indicated, the tendency becomes the fashion, and the Government must accept the responsibility for having led the way. They were at the top of the tree respecting economies in wages. It is time the Government took a pull and gave further consideration to proposals that have had such disastrous results, especially on the outside community. If anyone were to ask, when travelling around the country areas, what was the basic wage in Western Australia, he would come to the conclusion that it was 48s. and that the Government had set themselves up as a wages board to arrive at that determination.

Mr. Keeneally: And men are expected to keep two homes going on that wage.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I have not referred to that phase, but have contented myself with touching upon the various proposals that seek to make the wages section of the community bear the burden of these depressed times. I am prepared to admit that members of the Government have a measure of regret for the position. No doubt their excuse is that they have not the necessary funds to enable them to give any more and

that their hands are tied. They will probably say that the position is inevitable and that they are not responsible for it. But is the attitude of the Government to-day going to assist us in any degree regarding the amount available? When the Premier attends the next meeting of the Loan Council, will he not be confronted with the wide publicity prompted by himself and his Government regarding the position in Western Australia? He will have to convince the Federal Government, the Loan Council, the Commonwealth Bank Board, and other influential factors in the financial world that the amount available for Western Australia is inadequate. Yet the Premier and his Government have advertised that the position is so bright that 9,000 men can be employed and then 12,000 men. The authorities in the Eastern States will have read the official statements by the Premier, by Ministers and responsible authorities, and the boasting that has been indulged in will lead people to believe that everything is satisfactory in Western Australia. That is not the way to prepare for an additional demand on those who control the finances. As a matter of fact, if the Government are honest in their belief that it is insufficient and inadequate, they are defeating themselves by these tactics. This policy of using the unemployed for publicity purposes, perhaps for political purposes, will defeat, not only Western Australia, but other States in attempting to get what is necessary to make adequate provision for the unemployed. To that extent the Government are to blame. At the last Premiers' Conference there was a decided change in tactics on account of the altered personnel. There was Forgan Smith from Queensland, who was a strong man with opinions of his own and who, of course, was closely in touch with the people of Queensland. I was in Queensland during the elections when Forgan Smith refused to make any promise, except that he would do his best. But he went to the conference to get better conditions for the unemployed. We do not know what takes place behind the closed doors, but undoubtedly he had an influence in getting better terms than were previously granted. The same can be said for Mr. Stevens, who was credited with being a strong man and with making demands greater than the Prime Minister was prepared to agree to. There was also a new Premier from Victoria.

The Minister for Railways: You will be inciting our unemployed to go to Queensland.

Mr. MILLINGTON: If you do much more advertising here you will have all the Queensland unemployed coming to Western Australia to share the work with those 12,000 men, and we shall have to cable Mr. Angwin to prevent migrants coming to Western Australia for work. This publicity is more than misleading; it is defeating Western Australia, making it impossible for the State to get what we are entitled to in respect of finance to make provision for unemployment. Certainly it is not assisting the other State Premiers. I do not think you will find Mr. Forgan Smith advertising that everything is all right in Queensland. When he says a given number of men are employed, he will be careful to say they are employed only part-time and on sustenance conditions—if that be so. We should be equally careful here. Why does a responsible Minister tell the House that those men are working three weeks out of four? It does not do us any good to tell us that. Take the single men, perhaps a couple of thousand of them, getting 25s. 2d. per week. What is the use of telling the public that those men are working three weeks out of four? I say it would be as well to institute an inquiry and find out exactly what the position is. The House is entitled to know, for we have some responsibilities, just as the Government have. We have to take our share of the worry in endeavouring to assist those in dire distress and difficulty. There is nothing to be gained by misrepresenting the position. I have purposely refrained from indulging in carping criticism, because I know the difficulties confronting the Government. But the Government cannot help the people of Western Australia to solve the problem while they persist in continually making misrepresentations. It is about time that stopped. The people should be informed that those men are employed on sustenance rates temporarily, and that there is a prospect of an additional 3,000 men being so employed. But I suggest that no member of the Government would take the responsibility of saying that he is satisfied. So it should not be given out that the Government are satisfied, thus encouraging other people, notably the Press, to advocate that this should be the standard for West-

ern Australia. Therein is the real danger of the attack upon our standard of living. I am not asking the Government to do impossibilities. Having now had opportunity to assess the number of men that can be employed under these conditions, and knowing that such terms of employment and rates of payment can only be temporary, the Government should let that be known. The people generally recognise that this cannot go on, that better terms will have to be given by those who hold control of the finances of the country. If the case were not properly stated, if the Premiers did not go into conference with a view to getting more than was offered, those in control of the funds would not grant any additional relief. The Premiers have to accept what they are given. To that extent they are like the unemployed looking for work. It is said that they did accept what they were given. Yes, because they had to accept it. Our Premier accepted the diminished amount made available, simply because he had to accept it, had to accept the terms imposed by the Commonwealth Government, much against their own idea, in regard to the supervision exercised over the funds that had been made available. But I have yet to learn that the Commonwealth Government are a super-Government. The States, if they will stand up to their job, are still sovereign States. The Commonwealth assure us at all times that they are not responsible for unemployment, that is a State liability. If our State Government set out to get additional taxation they will find every field well exploited by the Federal Government which now boast that they have squared the ledger. After having exhausted all fields of taxation they patronise the State and hand back to us as a dole sufficient to keep us quiet. The time has arrived when they will have to be told that if the States are to be responsible for providing for unemployment, they will have to be given the wherewithal to do it. Why should this Government pretend to be satisfied with what they have got? The Commonwealth Bank will want to know how this Government have the nerve to ask them for additional funds. The bank will say, "You are all right, you have turned the corner in Western Australia," and the bank will add that the re-employment of 12,000 men will have an effect on private industry. That might be so if the declarations were true, but of course they are not true. Even

if these 12,000 men are employed part-time, that does not give them the purchasing power they would have if employed full time. Then there is the comparison between those working within reasonable distance of their homes, and those sent away from their home district. I still think that those who are sent out to a distance and so have to keep two homes should be granted special consideration. It is a matter of Government policy and we can only plead with the Government. We have done that. We have not gone along to the Minister by deputation as mere busybodies; we have gone there after consulting with the unemployed, not the rowdy section of the unemployed, but the men who desire quietly to discuss their position with Ministers. Those men who actually have to put up with the position imposed tell us that when they go into the country they cannot possibly live on less than 15s. per week. There was an idea that this extra £1 per week would in a measure make it possible for those living in homes to come to some arrangement with the landlord. But after the 15s. has been deducted to keep the man away from his home, there is not very much balance left. Sooner or later the Government will have to face the problem of devising some scheme for the alleviation of those who cannot pay their rent.

The Minister for Railways: You are not stating that fairly. You are stating it as though the man were away for the whole period.

Mr. MILLINGTON: You will have an opportunity to defend this, if you think it defensible. If there be any silver lining, it certainly calls for imagination, and I am disposed to credit the Minister with that faculty. However, it is my business, not to defend the position, but merely to examine it, and so far I have not departed from the truth. My idea is that there should be an examination of the position. Let us face the problem, which is a problem both for the Government and for the House. I do not wish to antagonise the Government. We could say lots of hard things as a means of castigating the Government. For my part, I am disposed to reason with the Government. I realise their difficulties, but I disagree with the manner in which they are acting. The gravest danger lies in the manner in which the Government have accepted the dole meted out to them by the Federal

authorities and the financial backers of Governments in Australia. If the Government adopt a smug complacent attitude that everything is all right, the next time they go to the Loan Council or to the Commonwealth, and in turn to the Commonwealth Bank Board they will be confronted with their own statements as an argument not only against a renewal of the assistance but in support of a reduction. Our fate will be to descend still lower in the scale. That is where the Government have made a mistake and are to blame, and that is where reform is necessary and imperative. What is to be done? The money available could be utilised under a different scheme, but the real remedy is to provide for additional funds. The manner in which the Government are administering the fund, and the plan they have adopted will not help us to secure alleviation for this State and for other States. Let me point out where we are trending. There is being built up in the public mind an idea that the rate prescribed by the Arbitration Court under the law of the land is something additional to what is required to sustain life at a reasonable standard. It is not the maximum: it is the minimum that the court prescribes, and I defy anyone—Government, Chamber of Commerce, the "West Australian" newspaper or any other self-constituted authority—to show that a lesser rate is sufficient. Yet the public mind is being imbued with the idea—in a manner that looks almost like a conspiracy—that a lower rate than that prescribed by the court is sufficient to maintain the minimum standard. If I had desired to make out a special case, I could have shown that the rate prescribed by the court is insufficient for a large family. That has always been recognised. The rates prescribed by the court have never been sufficient to maintain a home in Perth if a man had to go to work in the country. Yet the men are expected to accept work in the country on the reduced scale offered by the Government. The Government come down one-third and prescribe that rate not only for the man for whom work is provided in the vicinity of his home, but for the man who has to go into the country. When I appear before the Premier I try to be reasonable. When I waited on him I said, "If you are going to compel a man to keep his wife and family in Perth and pay a percentage of the rent—he cannot pay all,

though he might pay enough to keep the landlord quiet for a time—and compel him to take work in the country at the risk of his sustenance being cut off, you should make it possible for the man to go." That is not asking too much. It is not possible for men, in the circumstances I have indicated, to conform to the Government policy. Therefore the Government, instead of regarding what is said from this side of the House as an attack upon or a desire to belittle them, should accept it as constructive criticism designed to assist them to solve a problem which is vexing the whole of our people. If we are to work out our salvation, we must face the problem. Any assistance we can afford the Government to formulate better conditions will be given by us and by the general public, who are now fully seized with the magnitude of the disaster that has overtaken them. I hope the Government will consider what has been said. As to contract work, I am sorry the Minister for Works is not in his place, because he was decidedly unfair. He has set up a precedent that is to be deplored. The Leader of the Opposition introduced a deputation to the Premier. In all good faith we took with us men actually engaged in contract work, and one of them stated the amount he was earning. He was not unaccustomed to hard work. He also mentioned the amounts his mates were earning, and I am satisfied that he told the truth. The Premier called for a report regarding the amount those men could earn, and the report was presented. The Minister, of course, cannot know whether the report was correct or not. I suppose it was presented by some inspector in the country. It appeared to give the information required by the Minister. A practice appears to be growing up that instead of replying to a deputation, the Government if they can make political capital out of the matter, give the reply on the floor of the House. A few years ago I had occasion to write to the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council, and the reply was given through the "Kalgoorlie Miner." I had something to say to the council about that. It shows execrable taste. It is hard to find a word strong enough to describe a Minister who has not the decency to forward a reply to a deputation on a specific question introduced by the Leader of the Opposition.

That appears to be part of the new plan, a new diplomacy. We did not go to the Premier for political purposes, and I am not going to use the unemployed for political purposes. Unemployment is too serious a matter for that. The Government do not stand for sweating, and if some men are being sweated, we are entitled to take them to the Government. The man in question came from Northam to meet the Premier. It was a matter for investigation if justice was to be done. It is possible to sweat the unemployed, because they have to take whatever is offered them. Consequently the Government should see that such men are protected against sweating conditions. We took to the Premier a man who could do a day's work. I do not know how a man, unaccustomed to hard work, would fare under contract rates. The man who stated his case knew his job and was a well-seasoned worker. If he could not make wages working normal hours, there is something wrong with the rates, and the Government, instead of getting an inspector to bolster up a case, should make close investigation to ensure that officials, in their desire to get work done cheaply, do not sweat men who cannot protect themselves. Those men are disorganised and unorganised. What we desire is that they be dealt with fairly. It is our business to inform the Government, preferably by first-hand information, of any complaint, and we expect to receive civility and decent treatment from the Government. I am satisfied that the young fellow, in presenting his own case, spoke the truth. That is borne out by the Minister's report. I am satisfied, too, that he endeavoured to tell the truth regarding his mates. It is no encouragement to such a man if subsequently he is accused of having misrepresented the position and endeavoured to mislead the Premier. The man knew perfectly well that a report would be made and in my opinion he spoke the truth. I am slightly suspicious of some of the statements and I shall not be satisfied until further investigations are made regarding the pernicious contract system. Whatever may be said of contracts to men who elect to take jobs at a certain price they constitute a disastrous system if used in times of stress to sweat people who cannot resist imposition. I endeavour to be fair, and I hope the Government will endeavour

to be fair and will not think so much of making capital out of the unemployed as of endeavouring to grapple with the problem. I am pleased that two of the six Ministers are still prepared to listen to reason. I hope the other four will also consider what has been said.

The Minister for Railways: It is a matter of opinion whether what you say is reason.

Mr. Marshall: And it is due to a matter of opinion that you are in your present position.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Minister will not need to get a report to ascertain whether what I have said is true. I am prepared to stand by what I have said. If the Government will make a determined effort to better the conditions in the way I have suggested, they will receive our assistance. If not, they will get all that is coming to them.

The Minister for Railways: We generally get that.

MR. KENNEALLY (East Perth) [9.0]: As the Bill provides for the raising of certain money we are naturally interested in the direction in which it shall be spent. The Minister for Works said that during the nine years of his Parliamentary life he had never known a Supply Bill to be hung up in this way. He declared it was usually taken as a formal measure and allowed to pass. Be it said to the credit of preceding Governments, this is the first administration that has endeavoured to expend loan money to compel people to accept conditions that are below those laid down by our Industrial Arbitration Court. When we find the Government using loan money for such a purpose we are justified in inquiring how they intend to spend it, before we casually pass the Bill which will enable them to raise it. We were informed that the Commonwealth Government had taken to themselves the right to say how the money that was going to be raised would be spent. We were told that £250,000 was going to be raised, and that half would be raised by the Commonwealth and the other half by the State. The Commonwealth Government were to have two representatives to supervise the expenditure of their £145,000, but it was understood that the other £145,000 would be under the control of the State Government. We have since been informed by the Premier, in answer to an interjection, that the Federal Government would also have the right to

veto the expenditure of the portion raised by the State Government. The State Labour Party was in communication with the Premier at the time the Commonwealth authorities appointed two representatives to act on the unemployment board. We had a reasonable request to make. Seeing that representatives of other sections were being added to the board we asked that a representative of the workers should also be appointed. The reply we received from the Premier was that these two men were to be chosen by the Commonwealth Government to supervise the expenditure of the money that was to be given by the Commonwealth. We claimed the right to have a representative on the board to supervise the expenditure of the other £145,000, but we were refused that right. Is it fair that a representative of the Employers' Federation should be added to the board and representation by the workers denied? If that is to be the attitude of the Government, when the opportunity occurs for others to administer the affairs of the country, I can promise they will get a little of their own back.

The Minister for Railways: It will be the public who will suffer. We have not appointed any member of the Employers' Federation on the board.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The president of the Employers' Federation confers with the board, and has to agree to the expenditure, while the workers are allowed no say in the matter. The Minister cannot deny that the president of the Employers' Federation has to be consulted before any money is spent.

The Minister for Railways: Who is the president? I understood Mr. Hedges was.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The Minister knows who the president is and who the past president was. Is there to be no equity about the position? If the employers are allowed to have representation on the board, the same privilege should be extended to the workers.

The Minister for Railways: We did not appoint anyone to the board outside the public service.

Mr. KENNEALLY: All the money covered by the Supply Bill will be subject to the approval of the Employers' Federation before it is spent.

The Minister for Railways: That is not right.

Mr. KENNEALLY: If that is not right the Minister should have a word to say to

the Premier, for it means that in his answer to the Leader of the Opposition last night the Premier misled that hon. gentleman. When he wrote to us, the Premier informed us that the two gentlemen were appointed only to look after the expenditure of the £145,000 provided by the Commonwealth. We now learn that was not a true statement of the position, but that they have the same right over the whole of the £290,000. The State Government seem to be using this money to do what the Employers' Federation have been attempting to bring about for many years. That organisation has pointed out from time to time that a big gulf exists between the Federal and the State basic wage. The Premier interjected to-night that the Federal basic wage was down to £3 1s. The maximum payment provided under the Government relief scheme is £3 a week. It may only be a coincidence, but it looks as if the wishes of the Employers' Federation are associated with the actions of the Government. When we waited upon the Minister for Mines in regard to unemployment, he admitted that the man who was having the worst time was the one who had only a wife to care for and was receiving 14s. a week. It is practically impossible for such a man to make that small sum suffice for two people. We are told that when a man draws an additional £1 a week and is sent away from home he has an opportunity to build up a fund. When a man is on sustenance he receives barely enough food to keep him alive. When he is called upon to work he is obliged to spend something on clothing, boots, etc., and upon the maintenance of another home. In most cases that expenditure more than absorbs the difference between the two payments. If the sum fixed by the Government of £1 above the sustenance rate is the correct amount for a man who remains in the metropolitan area and need keep up only one home, the Government cannot claim that it is sufficient for the man who has to go away and maintain two homes. If a man has to leave his home and finds it impossible to return each night, some consideration must be given to the additional expenditure he is obliged to incur by reason of having to leave his home. We are told that this cannot be done. The Government cannot blame people who refuse to accept work that will not give them something at least equal to the sustenance rates.

The Minister for Railways referred to the cost of living at Harvey. He said that arrangements had been made for goods to be supplied at reduced rates to the people in concentration there. That is possible at Harvey, but it is not possible in other places where no concentration can be effected. In such places the 15s. will not cover the additional expenditure a man must incur. The Government are sending men to Mt. Barker and thence to a place 60 miles out. They are told they will receive 25s. 2d. per week, in the case of single men, and will work two days a week. They stay there until the next two days' work comes round, and after a fortnight they go on to piece-work. I understand the piece-work rate for clearing is £3 an acre. I am informed on good authority that they should be getting from £7 to £10 an acre in order to earn at the rate of 25s. 2d. for two days' work. The men were not used to clearing, and inquired what would happen to them if they could not earn the equivalent to 25s. 2d. per week. They were told that that was their own concern. They wanted to know how they could get back the 60 miles to Mt. Barker, but they were again told that was their own concern. If such is the case the Government are looking for trouble. If the Government pursue the course of sending gangs of men out 60 miles from a siding to do work with which they are not familiar, and if those men, through lack of knowledge, cannot make the required amount and are then simply to be cut adrift, it is shortly going to be the concern of others besides the unemployed. The price offered for the work is nothing less than scandalous. The Minister for Works to-night gave figures: I will not follow his lead as regards mentioning names. We went on a deputation to the Premier, and the first reply we got was when the Minister for Works to-night gave this Chamber the names and amounts which had been submitted by us to the Premier. Such an attitude opens up a new era in Parliamentary procedure. We have four men who have been employed on the work at Grass Valley. Those men had worked for years as navvies, and knew the nature of this job. The most that any of those men, working all possible hours, could earn was 50s. In one case the earnings were under 23s. The reason for the difference was that in the cutting where the men had to deal with

the pipes, there was rock in the formation. The engineer would come along and put his pick in here and there and then say, "It is worth so much." What was underneath did not matter; it all had to be taken out at the same rate. Practical men in this Chamber know that one cannot possibly gauge the proper rate of pay by simply picking the ground on top. Yet that is what was done in this case. In spite of the questionable information produced by the Minister for Works, I am prepared to take the word of the men on the deputation, who went out on the job and saw the work performed. I would accept their word just as soon as the word of the officers who produced the report quoted by the Minister. On the deputation there was one man who has been at that work most of his life. I am prepared to believe that the men on that deputation were desirous of stating the truth just as much as the Minister was when submitting that report to the House.

The Minister for Works: That man was secretary of a union, was he not?

Mr. KENNEALLY: He was not. The Minister is wrong, as he usually is.

Hon. P. Collier: Is there anything wrong about being secretary of a union?

The Minister for Works: Not at all.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The man is one of a class concerning whom the Minister knows very little. He is a worker.

The Minister for Railways: What are the engineers, foremen, and gangers?

Mr. KENNEALLY: As regards the man who goes along with a pick, digging it in here and there in a lackadaisical manner, and then says, "I will give so much a yard for excavating that," I care not whether the Minister for Unemployment calls him an engineer or a ganger; I say he is not doing the right thing in country of the nature of that Grass Valley area. One cannot tell what is underneath by just looking at the surface. We have asked the Government to get back to the system of full-time employment. Are we to say that in this country we shall never get back to full-time employment? The Government's replies on this point are simply indicative of the fact that in the minds of certain Ministers there is the idea that it will be impossible to get back to full-time work in Western Australia. This party applied to the Government to start a few men on full-time work. For so doing we have been criticised not only by the Premier but by the Press of this State. I ask,

shall we ever get anywhere with the present system of paying £1 over sustenance? If it is agreed that Western Australia will not work out its salvation by that means, what is the alternative? Men going to work on the £1 plus sustenance have nothing whatever for replenishing their stocks; and some of them have been out of work for two, three, and even four years. In many instances their chattels have disappeared, and clothing is down to such an extent that they have only what they stand up in. In fact, some men have had to get assistance from relief committees before being able to go to the work offered. If we do not adopt a system that will allow those men, when they are working, sufficient to effect some replenishment of their depleted stocks, we shall be gradually creating a position when men will have to refuse work because they have not enough food and clothing. Therefore we must revert to the question of restoring the basic wage. Our request to the Government was to start at least a number of men on full time. The Government's reply took the form of the question, "Will you have them on full time to the detriment of others?" We replied, "No." We would, however, put some men back on full time for a period of two or three months. Let the men rotate on full time; but when they do go off the job, let them go back on sustenance. Do not keep them off sustenance until they have cut out their earnings calculated at sustenance rates plus £1. Thus some of the men will be afforded an opportunity to replenish something of what they have lost during the long periods of unemployment. It is possible to go into the homes of the people—in my own electorate of East Perth, for example—and see nothing in the house itself except a few boxes and blankets. In many cases there are not even blankets, but simply bags. The demoralising economic conditions have reduced many people to such a state that they have not a penny to bless themselves with; they are simply getting a bit of food from the Government. If the men are told to go to a job in the country, they have nothing to go with; and it costs them more than £1 to try to earn the bit of sustenance.

Mr. Wansbrough: And there is no credit.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The Government are certainly not catering for the interests of the people concerned if they do not provide a wage of above £1 even in the metropolitan area. If the Government say, "What is now being paid in the metropolitan area is the

utmost that can be paid," I contend that an unemployed man who is sent away from home to work should get the extra £1 plus the amount it costs him to go to the country. That is only reasonable. Another question to which the Government should give immediate attention is that of making the work which this Bill proposes to authorise available to people other than those actually on sustenance. The Government policy is that no man who is not in receipt of sustenance will be considered for Government employment. Is there anything more degrading than to tell the people that until they have publicly proclaimed their destitution, until they have accepted the Government dole, they will not be considered for employment? Can a self-reliant race be established under such conditions? I know of many cases of men who had a few pounds laid by, who had been careful, who did not squander the money they were able to earn, but who, owing to long periods of unemployment, now find themselves, notwithstanding economical management, down to the last of the few pounds they previously had behind them. Through the long periods of unemployment those men endeavoured to secure consideration in respect of work which the Government had available. The reply given to them was that the work available had to be utilised for the employment of people in receipt of sustenance. The Government's conception that they can save money in that way is altogether fallacious. The Government's idea, according to Government officials, is that the money should be utilised in order to take people off sustenance, so that the expenditure on sustenance will be lessened. What actually takes place, however, is that men who otherwise would not go on sustenance at all, are hastened on to sustenance. Naturally the tendency must be for a man, even though not desirous of going on sustenance, to accept the dole purely in order to be considered for work that is offering. So far from saving money by this policy, the Government are actually increasing their expenditure on relief by compelling men and women who otherwise would not go on sustenance at all, to accept it in order to become eligible for whatever work may be offering. Thus the position in the long run becomes more expensive to the Government. There is another aspect to be considered by the Chamber in regard to the expenditure of this money. We know that the forms

of Government tender for work to be performed say to the employers of this country, "We, the Government, are only giving part-time to our employees. We, as a Government, are only paying sustenance rates plus £1. If you, as an employer, want any of our work in connection with the expenditure of this money, you will have to employ men on the same conditions." That is a most extraordinary clause to appear in a Government contract form. I can visualise a contract being let for, say, the manufacture of pipes. That work requires skilled men. Unfortunately not much work in the way of pipe manufacturing has been offering for some time. The result is that many of the pipe manufacturers in Western Australia have had to put off numbers of skilled men. Now it is proposed to let contracts to at least some of those employers. In the expenditure for sewerage and other works, money has to be spent on pipes. The firm tenders for the work and although they have put off many skilled men they would desire to re-employ, that opportunity does not present itself. The Government at that stage step in and tell the firm that if they want to employ men under the scheme, the men so employed must be on sustenance before they can be taken on. The Government tell the firm that if they want to get a contract under the scheme, not only have the firm to take men from the sustenance depot, but they must sign a contract that they will employ the men under sustenance conditions on part-time work. That attitude is in perfect keeping with that displayed by the Government regarding the Premiers' Plan. To give effect to the Premiers' Plan they introduced emergency legislation in a form not adopted by any other State in the Commonwealth. They set out that the conditions of employment had to apply to private employment as well. In other States, the Governments determined that the conditions would apply to Government employees only, but in Western Australia the influence of the Employers' Federation and of some others the Government are so keen upon placing in positions, was brought to bear, and the Attorney General gained his point in that respect.

Mr. Marshall: He was the only man who made the point at the Premiers' Conference that the conditions should be applied to private employment as well.

Mr. KENNEALLY: That is so, and he was able to give effect to his contention in

the emergency legislation presented to this Parliament. Furthermore, the Government have made it compulsory that employers who may desire to work their men full time, will not be permitted to do so. It is time the Government adopted a different attitude. So far they have made a very direct attack upon wages and conditions.

Mr. Marshall: They are leading the way for private enterprise.

Mr. KENNEALLY: And, in addition, are making it impossible for employers who may desire to do a reasonable thing. I can visualise the attitude of the employee at the pipe works who, when he was put off, was told by the employer that he was a good worker and that, when the position improved, he would be re-engaged. When that man found that he was not sent for, we can imagine his feelings. He was not sent for—not because the employer did not want his services, but because the Government would not permit him to avail himself of them. In their contract, the Government included a clause compelling the employer to take men from the sustenance depot. I hope the Government will give attention to that phase and effect an alteration. Not only with the general administration of the scheme by the Government is fault to be found. Any move made by an individual to better conditions, even to a small degree, results in the Government stepping in with an intimation that it shall not be done. Representations were made to the Scullin Government, with the result that an additional amount was made available for expenditure in the States to provide some employees with a little extra work last Christmas, so that domestic stocks could be replenished to some extent. As a result of the expenditure of some of that money, tradesmen were employed in various cities of the Commonwealth in painting and other types of work. In Perth men were employed upon painting and renovating Federal properties, including the aerodrome. What was the result? The men concerned secured about a fortnight's work and as soon as they finished it, the State Government intimated that as they had earned so much in a fortnight, they would have to refrain from drawing sustenance until the amount so earned had been cut out at sustenance rates. Do members sitting on the Government side of the House approve of such a policy? It is not by means of such a policy that the State will progress. If the Gov-

ernment think they will receive support throughout the State for such actions they will be disillusioned. It may be a few months before the opposition of the people can be made effective, but it will be made clear to the Government when the opportunity offers. Then again, the Government should be aware of the fact that when thousands of people are thrown out of their ordinary occupations during times such as the present, they will not all be able to avail themselves of every type of job offering. On numerous occasions the fact has been brought before my notice that men who have been accustomed to clerical work all their lives have not been in a position to fit themselves for, say, pick and shovel work. I know of many such men who have been only too anxious to take any work offering, but who found that they were not fitted for navvying work. That phase should receive consideration. If a man is willing to work and employment such as he is accustomed to is not available, and if he endeavours to undertake other work but finds he cannot continue at it, the Government should say to him, "You are a trier; you have endeavoured to do the work that was available, but you cannot do it; we will see that you are not penalised." That is not what is done. On the other hand, the Government have introduced the piecework system to speed up such men as much as possible. Men used to navvying all their lives have worked side by side with men who have been clerks or office men, and I put it to the Government that the navvy, in such circumstances, should not be the man used as pacemaker for the men not able to perform the work because of their lack of training. Yet that is what the Government have been doing. When navvying work has been undertaken, the navvy has set the pace and the clerical worker who finds he cannot keep up is told that if he cannot do so, he must get off the job. That is not a fair way of dealing with such men. Invariably they are designated by the Government as "slackers." What member of the Ministry or what Government supporter could succeed at pick and shovel work under such conditions? I could not do so myself. I ask the Government to look at the position in that light. I offer the opinion that the Attorney General would not make a good job of it.

[*Mr. Angelo took the Chair.*]

The Attorney General: It would take a few weeks to make my hands hard.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Then I claim the support of the Attorney General for my contention. Notwithstanding that the Minister for Works informed us to-night that the Government were getting value for the money they spent under the piecework system, I claim that if there was anything in his former statement that the men generally realise that the country is up against it and that the Government are doing their best in the circumstances, he should trust the men to do their best, without introducing the piecework system. That system is causing much heartburning amongst the workers on Government undertakings, particularly among those unused to that heavy class of work. The Government can accomplish all they desire by a system of day work under proper supervision. The Government should effect an alteration in that direction. I am much concerned about the attitude of the Government regarding the piecework system. We have had difficulties in the Arbitration Court concerning piecework and we have had to fight encroachments by the Employers' Federation in certain directions. Now it remains for the Government, outside the operations of the Arbitration Court altogether, to impose the piecework system in avenues of employment that previously had not been affected to that extent. In effect, the Government say that the present situation is an excellent opportunity to impose the piecework system because people are in want and cannot refuse to accept a job. In those circumstances, they impose conditions upon them. A turning point comes in respect of such an attitude, and I would urge the Government to mend their ways before that point is reached. There is another aspect requiring the attention of the Government, touching what we are going to do with the money to be raised under the Bill. We should discuss this question, and if necessary give a direction to the Government. The Government claim that they are observing the Arbitration Court awards. Nothing of the sort! The Government have introduced a system whereby certain provisions made available under awards of this country are being entirely ignored. Let me quote a case. The award under which the Government are working makes provision for the payment of 5s. 3d. per week extra for camp allowance. That allowance is provided be-

cause those who have to perform the work are put to certain additional expenditure in regard to the camps. The same award makes provision for the payment of extra rates where men are working in water of a certain depth. Obviously those extra amounts are made available by the court because the men are put to additional expenditure when working in water. For instance, they have to provide additional boots, while extra expenses necessitate the camp allowance. But the Government do not observe that award. What they say is "There is 5s. 3d. camp allowance provided for in the award, and an additional sum for extra boots and clothes that you would wear on account of the water. But instead of giving that amount extra, we will allow you to work a lesser number of hours in order to cut it out." Just fancy that! Let me illustrate the position the men are in on account of this decision by the Government. If Jones is working on dry land and the boots and clothes he wears will last him, say, six weeks, and if Smith is working on wet land and his boots and clothes will last him only three weeks, it is not much of a consolation to Smith to be told that he will be permitted to work a lesser number of hours and only earn the same money as Jones, and that then out of that money he will have to provide the extra boots and clothes himself. That is not a fair attitude for the Government to adopt. The same applies to the camp allowance. If an ordinary employer wished to cut out either of these allowances, he would not be permitted to do so. I say the Government, which is so strong a supporter of law and order, should not be the first to break down on such a proposition simply with a view to saving a few shillings on a large army of men who are in such a position that they cannot refuse to accept the altered condition of things. The Government have to stand up to their responsibility in these matters. We have found it necessary to criticise the actions taken at the direction of the Government by the Government officials. I wish to make it clear that any criticism I have to offer here this evening is not in any way levelled at any of the officers who have to carry out the directions of the Government, but is levelled rather at the policy the Government have proclaimed. Those officers of the department with whom I have been brought into contact, consistent

with the limitations placed upon their activities by those in authority over them, have given a very reasonable deal to me and to the representations I have made. So, as I say, any remarks of mine in regard to these cases are aimed at the responsibility of the Government in giving directions, rather than at the liability of the employees who have to carry out those directions. The Minister for Works to-night claimed that there are 16,000 men employed in the Public Works Department. In reply to interjections he did not go very far as to what he meant by their being employed. He said that some of the 16,000 were on full time. Let us analyse the Minister's statement. Never before have I heard such a statement as that made by the Minister to-night. If he thinks sensible people are going to take the "guff" he gave the House, he is very much mistaken. He has got over 3,000 men employed, as he says, at 25s. 2d. per week, out of which they have to keep and clothe and feed themselves. Are we justified in saying those men are employed? The difficulty with this Government is that once they get a man started at 25s. 2d. per week they say the problem is solved in respect of him, that he has been found a job. In the same way, as soon as they get a man started on sustenance plus £1, they say there is no need to give any more attention to him, that he is provided with employment. Let us go further, and deal with the Minister's statement that he has some men on full time. What takes place? The instructions issued to his officers are that if a man is employed on full time, even if he is paid the money instead of its going into the kitty—we will assume that a few of them are paid the money when they earn it—what takes place is that he gets the money while actually employed, say for two months on full time, and when he goes back to the officers administering the sustenance department under the direction of the Government, they say to him, "Look, Jones, in that two months you have earned £12 or £14. Before you went to that work you were getting sustenance at the rate of 14s. While at that work you would be entitled to 14s. plus a pound. You cannot come back on to sustenance until the whole of the money you have earned is cut out at that rate." Is that employment? Why, you would have to supply people with powerful opera glasses before they could find the full-time employment provided by the Gov-

ernment. There are but a few on so-called full-time employment, and as soon as they get out of that employment, if they apply for sustenance they are told that the amount earned at that employment is to carry them over the period that would have been covered had they been on sustenance. Yet the Minister says that 16,000 men are employed. He does not say that thousands of them are getting only sustenance, and that others are getting sustenance plus £1, and that very many of them have to go out into the country and so keep two homes. There is another aspect which will cost the Government nothing, and which therefore they may be disposed to consider. I want to ask them that when they are providing work for men—I don't care how much publicity they get for putting men at work, but I ask them to publish the fact that they have put men at work, rather than that they are going to do so. This is why I make the request: In the newspapers during the last few months there have been appearing from time to time notifications that 300 men or 500 men or 1,000 men, anything up to 16,000 men, will be picked up for employment. When these notices appear, as they do from time to time, the Government are not doing justice to the workers. I can see what takes place even in my own electorate, and since I travel a good deal around the State I have opportunity to see what takes place in other districts. What happens is this: There are many married couples who have lived together peacefully the best part of their lives. They have never had an argument before, but they are arguing to-day, and the Government are responsible for it. The Attorney General laughs, but I will show him how it comes about, and I hope that if I succeed he will do what he can to avoid a repetition. The wife in her home sees from time to time statements in the paper by responsible Ministers that 3,000 men are to be picked up, that various numbers of men are to be given work. Her husband does not get one of those jobs. In passing, that is not to be wondered at, for we know that most of them are only fictitious. However, her husband does not get one of those jobs, and there comes into the mind of that wife a doubt as to what the matter can be with her man, why he cannot get one of so many jobs. I say to the Attorney General that he is welcome

to all the publicity he requires for putting men into work, if only he will put them into work before he announces it. But let him not keep the thoughts of the people fixed on imaginary jobs, and so harass the wives of those men who are not successful in getting one of those jobs, until there arises in their breasts a doubt as to whether their husbands are triers. No matter how lightly the Attorney General may treat this question, it is of very serious moment in many homes.

The Attorney General: You impress me so much that I almost feel like resigning.

Mr. KENNEALLY: If the Attorney General wanted to confer a benefit on this country he would follow that inclination. He would not confer much of a benefit unless he took his colleagues with him, because, from our point of view, he is not the worst of the Ministers in the present Government. I do not know that that is saying much for him.

The Attorney General: I do not want your praise.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I do not care what publicity the Government get so long as the jobs are provided. It should not be asking too much to request them not to announce that so many jobs will be available when they know they will not be. Let them publish the figures of men who are actually put into work if they desire credit of that kind, but they should be content with that. It is not much of an advertisement for the Government that the employment returns, as the Minister admits, include men working on part-time. Even taking his figures of unemployment, the present Government have been responsible for this State losing its position as that with the second lowest ratio of unemployment and becoming second highest.

Mr. Raphael: And they have not finished yet.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Many of the people for whom the Government claim credit for having provided employment are merely working for the sustenance they receive. If that is the total accomplishment of the Government, the sooner the Attorney General gets his colleagues to resign with him, the better it will be for the country. Greater attention should be given to the young people, who need employment. A tragedy of the present crisis is the young man or woman who has just left school. The Government not only say that they have no

employment to offer the young people, but that because they have reached the age of 14 years, their parents must forego the sustenance previously granted in respect of them. I know of a family consisting of three children under 14 and four or five children over 14. As soon as a child reaches the age of 14, the sustenance paid for it automatically ceases, although the child is out of employment. Occasionally sustenance may be granted for one of the children over 14, but that is the limit. Do the Government approve of a system that requires a person of 14 years to live on air? A man once claimed that he had developed a system whereby he could keep a horse very cheaply. His idea was gradually to reduce the quantity of food given the horse. When questioned later regarding the experiment, the man claimed that it had been successful, but there was one drawback, namely, that as soon as the horse had become accustomed to the minimum quantity of food, it died. Do the Government intend that the people of this State should accustom themselves to living on less and less food? If so it will not be long before some of them die. I ask the Government to consider the position of a family of three children under 14. The parents would receive 35s. a week. If there were also five children over 14, they would have to be included so that there would be 10 persons living on 35s. a week. We have not yet reached the stage when a person can live on 3s. 6d. per week. A boy or girl, on reaching the age of 14, requires more food than previously. Instead of reducing the amount of sustenance when a child reaches the age of 14, the Government might well consider increasing it. Our duty is to feed the people, and the Government should realise that people do not cease to require nourishment on reaching the age of 14. A family of 10 certainly cannot live on 35s. a week. If the people are not fed, trouble will ensue, for they will reach the verge of starvation.

Mr. Raphael: They are big fools if they do.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The man who is responsible for the upkeep of a family should not be asked to share sustenance with those who are in the family, but who are not receiving any sustenance because they are over the age of 14. I could point to houses in East Perth where many children under 14 have to share their food with others who are

over 14. That sort of thing cannot continue for long without great trouble being caused to the country. The Minister for Works claimed he had been able to reduce costs to a lower level than ever before. This indicates that he is getting the workers where he wants to get them. Apparently the policy of the Government is being given effect to through the unemployment board. In connection with pipe works, at one time the Minister suggested that lack of efficiency on the part of the men could be set down at three per cent., but he now says it is greater than that. If skilled workers are replaced by unskilled workers, there must be an extra charge upon the industry. The Minister claims that tenders submitted by the contractors are considerably below the departmental estimates. We may be sure that the department has allowed a reasonable amount for lack of efficiency on the part of workers unused to the industry. The Government may claim they are saving a certain amount of sustenance by using sustenance men on this work, but in other ways the present system must turn out to be far more costly than if skilled workers were engaged full time. The Government will not get work done cheaply under such conditions. It is difficult to follow the reason for the present system. We are attempting to save money by a method that will ultimately ruin the State. The problem cannot readily be solved. I admit that any Government must have difficulties to face in these times, but we shall never face them successfully under the present policy. I cannot understand the logic of people who say that if those who are at present in employment are made to work additional hours, other work will be found for those who are not in employment. The world will never employ the whole of its population full time if the present working hours are adhered to. The inventive genius of man with respect to machinery makes it possible for production to overtake consumption. A few men with machines can now do the work which used to occupy the time of 400 or 500 men. The increase of productivity by means of machines plus men is such that we shall never employ under present conditions the world's population. Our storehouses are full of food throughout the world, yet people are starving. Even if it were possible to re-employ all the people in the world a similar crisis would soon recur. Machinery would re-stock the storehouses and people would

be put out of employment once more. The time is coming when attention must be given, not to the question of a specified number of hours of work per week, but to the specified work that must be performed to produce the goods that are required for the use of the people, and not for the profits that can be made out of the people. If we give attention to that aspect, then undoubtedly there will not be prescribed a week of 48 hours, or anything like that number of hours, in order to supply the world's requirements. You may have a little lawn to attend to. Previously the cutting of the grass, with clippers or a scythe, took you eight hours; but with the improved lawn mowers of the present day it takes you only two hours, and the work is done better than before. If I were to tell you, Sir, that though with the improved machinery you could cut the lawn in two hours, you must still take eight hours to do it, or at any rate remain on the lawn for eight hours instead of two, you would consider me to be on the direct road to Claremont. To-day the system of work is machinery with human effort. In effect, we are telling mankind that the inventor is not a benefactor but a malefactor. Nowadays as regards any new invention we ask, "Is it going to put Smith or Brown or Jones out of work?" The reason is that we have endeavoured to tack on to a machine system certain considerations which had force prior to the invention of machinery, but are of no force now. The Government are continuing that mistake. This trouble of unemployment has to be faced in a different manner; and until that is done, justice will not be rendered to the people whom we represent.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.26 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 18th August, 1932.

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. J. J. Holmes and the Lunacy Act.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: With the permission of the House I should like to make a personal explanation. When Mr. Moore was speaking yesterday, he referred to legislation passed by this Chamber and held some of the measures up to ridicule. As a compliment to Mr. Moore, who has been absent from this House for the last six years, I interjected that we had also amended the Lunacy Act. I did not intend to cast any reflection upon Mr. Moore; I merely followed up his comments on this Chamber respecting legislation passed by us, and which he ridiculed. I understand that Mr. Moore has regarded my remarks as personal. They were intended in exactly the opposite direction. Because of his absence, it was necessary to amend the Lunacy Act! Apart from his political views, which I agreed with in my younger days, but from which I departed in my maturer years, there is no man in this House I respect more than Mr. Moore.

Hon. T. MOORE: I thank Mr. Holmes for his remarks.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from the previous sitting.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 4.35 to 9.55 p.m.