

with responsible public opinion in the State. Without that reform I think there is some danger—I do not say it is an imminent danger—of this House losing the prestige it has fairly won, and the high place it deservedly holds in the public mind. I wish to refer to some remarks made by the seconder of this amendment. I am sure he made those remarks without understanding the position. I mean when he reflected upon the attendance of hon. members here. He has overlooked the fact that several members of this Chamber are away from Western Australia. It is well for their constituencies, and for the country, that members of this Chamber and of another place should, as far as they can, spend a portion of their recess in travelling. The hon. member was also probably not aware that other members are away through illness. I am sure you, Sir, will agree with me when I say that I question if there is any Parliament or branch of Parliament in Australia or elsewhere, where members attend to their duties more diligently than is the case in the Legislative Council. We have, in fact, splendid attendances. It is a rare thing indeed for any member to be absent without some good reason, and it would be misleading to the public and unjust to members themselves if it went forth, as suggested by the seconder of the amendment, that members of the Legislative Council took very little interest in their business, and that this was one reason for the suggestion to abolish the Chamber. I think it was the same hon. member who said that in coming here he felt he had reached a dead-end and did not expect to do any good. I can assure him that his initial endeavour, notwithstanding the intent on his part, will not do any harm. As to his general impression of the usefulness or otherwise of this Chamber, I confidently predict that it is one which experience will remove. I can safely assure him that as a member of the Legislative Council he will find ample opportunity for doing good, and I also feel confident he will make each of those opportunities his own. I oppose the amendment.

On motion by Hon. J. W. Hickey, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 18th August, 1920.

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

PETITION—RETURNED SOLDIERS' ASSOCIATION, GERALDTON BRANCH.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [4.38]: I have to present a petition from the Returned Soldiers' and Nurses' Association, Geraldton branch, dealing with the resumption of pastoral areas in the Murchison district. The petition contains 213 signatures and is in accordance with the Standing Orders. It is respectfully worded and ends with a prayer. The phraseology is in accordance with the Standing Orders, but a certain number of the forms that were sent out were not in accordance with the Standing Orders and have, therefore, not been included. I move—

That the petition be received and read.

Question put and passed; petition received and read.

On motion by Mr. Willcock, petition ordered to be printed, and made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

QUESTION—TRAMWAY EXTENSIONS.

Mr. ROBINSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has he given consideration to the question of extending the tramway system to the suburbs in the metropolitan area? 2, Has he made special inquiries on the subject? 3, Is he satisfied that there is urgent need for tramway extensions? 4, Has any report been formulated? 5, If so, is the report available to hon. members? 6, Do the Government intend to proceed with the extensions? 7, If so, when? 8, If not, why?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, 2, 3, and 4, Yes. 5, 6, 7, and 8, The question of providing tramway extensions is under consideration in conjunction with loan expenditure on public works generally.

QUESTION—WATER SERVICES, AGRICULTURAL AREAS.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the total revenue received by rates services and excess water

from the agricultural areas water supply for the years 1919 and 1920? 2, What was the total expenditure, including interest and sinking fund? 3, What was the total expenditure in interest and sinking fund in connection with and for water received from the Mundaring water scheme for the years 1919 and 1920? 4, What was the total capital expenditure in connection with the agricultural area water supply?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, 1919, £18,500; 1920, £17,450. 2, 1919, £10,013 on the mains, etc., in the Agricultural Areas. 1920, Figures not yet available. 3, 1919, £15,250, being share of expenditure necessary to deliver Mundaring water into the Agricultural Area mains. 1920, Figures not yet available. 4, 1919, £25,263, includes expenditure as named in reply to questions 2 and 3. 1920, Figures not yet available.

QUESTION—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT, AMENDMENT.

Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Works: Is it the intention of the Government to bring down this session a Bill to amend "The Municipal Corporations Act, 1906," to permit of municipalities having the option or rating on the unimproved land values system?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The matter is under consideration.

QUESTIONS (2)—RAVENSTHORPE SMELTER.

Treatment Charges.

Mr. HUDSON asked the Minister for Mines: 1, As advances have not been made against all ore available for treatment at the Ravensthorpe smelter in the next campaign, some producers having held on to their parcels owing to the uncertainty regarding the tariff, will he fix charges for treatment and realisation separately which will not be exceeded? 2, If so, will he state such charges in time to permit of ore being delivered at the smelter before the opening of the next campaign?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, It is neither practical nor desirable to have two methods of dealing with customers at the smelter, and I do not consider it advisable to make any change in the present system until the forthcoming campaign has been concluded. 2, Answered by No. 1.

Position of Employees.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What was the date of the closing of the last campaign of the Ravensthorpe smelter? 2, How many men, including the manager, have since been continuously employed thereat? 3, What are their positions and what salary or wages has each been receiving? 4, What is the total amount paid

in wages for the period since the last campaign closed and the present time?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, 31st December, 1918. 2, Three officers, the manager, accountant, and ore receiver and assayer have been employed continuously, and four other men more or less constantly, but not continuously. 3, Manager, £695 per annum (inclusive of district allowance), also charged with supervision of moneys expended under Mining Development Act; accountant, £348 per annum, also charged with supervision of moneys expended under Mining Development Act; assayer, etc., £400 per annum; four men at 12s. to 13s. 4d. per day, according to nature of work being done. 4, £3,397.

QUESTION—ESPERANCE-NORTHWARD RAILWAY.

Hon. P. COLLIER (for Hon. T. Walker) asked the Minister for Works: Is there any supply of rails on hand, or has any order been placed for the supply of rails for the construction of the Esperance-Northward Railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: There are 10 miles at Esperance, and a further quantity will be forwarded as soon as the delivery of sleepers is regarded as sufficient. Inquiries are still being made in connection with rails needed for this and other railways authorised.

QUESTION—BICYCLES, REGISTRATION.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: What provision is in "The Traffic Act, 1919," that provides for the registration of bicycles?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Section 5 (1): A vehicle license is required for any vehicle described in the Second Schedule of the Traffic Act, which includes among other vehicles, bicycles. These are registered, but without any fee.

QUESTION—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE, PROTECTED TRADERS.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Premier: What is the total amount of money owing to private traders by farmers under the Industries Assistance Board whereby such traders have some protection under "The Industries Assistance Act, 1915," and amendments thereto?

The PREMIER replied: Balance owing as at the 30th June last is £392,050.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from 12th August.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.45]: Before saying a few words.

on the Address-in-reply, I wish to congratulate the Premier on having before him the most peaceful and well behaved members that ever sat in this House. One cannot help thinking what a great change has taken place during the past 12 months. Of course, while we are here, we have to behave, for you, Sir, will see to that. But when we went into recess peace was thrown to the winds and discord reigned, at all events amongst certain members, particularly those on the Ministerial side of the House. We on this side can claim that during the war those who held the Government benches at the outbreak of war, those since sitting in Opposition, have done all they possibly could to assist the Government of the day in carrying on the affairs of the country. Never at any time in the history of the State have the Government of the day received greater assistance from the Opposition than have those who have held office since the fall of the Labour Government; we have endeavoured on every occasion to assist the Government of the day out of their difficulties. Yet at no time have the Government been able to assist themselves. If we survey the existing state of affairs and reflect upon the position of four or five years ago, we can come to only one conclusion, namely, that when there was a decrease in revenue it was accompanied by a deficit, and when the revenue increased the deficit still continued to grow. It made little difference to the Government of the day, for they still continued piling up a huge debt and made no endeavour to assist themselves out of the difficulty. Before criticising some of the actions of the Government extending over the last 12 months, I wish to say a few words in respect of what took place in Perth last week. I am very much surprised to find that the present Minister for Mines can continue to sit with colleagues who are not above attending a conference in the City and leading that conference to believe that certain things have existed in the past, when it is well known that such a statement is contrary to fact. There is no doubt that some of those who to-day are trying to lead the party known as the primary producers are not above putting before that body in conference statements not strictly in accord with the facts. Although at the general election of three years ago we were told to let the dead past bury its dead, yet occasions sometimes arise when past actions should be reviewed. No Government have done more, or indeed half as much, for the farmers of this State as did the Labour Government in office from 1911 to 1916. When a Minister of the Crown goes to that conference I refer to and claims credit for the whole of the work done in connection with reducing the price of land in this State, that Minister is leading the conference entirely astray. The member for Moore (Sir Henry Lefroy) knows well that, before, ever he took a seat in the Ministry, a Bill had been introduced—it was in-

troduced in 1915—for the purpose of reducing the price of land.

Hon. P. Collier: The same misstatement was made by the Minister last year.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When a Minister asked those people did they think the price of land would have been reduced and relief given through the Industries Assistance Board if their party had not been in office, he was endeavouring to lead those people entirely astray. Then we find another gentleman—no wonder some people are called rotters—who said "God help the farmer if the Labour party comes into office!"

Hon. P. Collier: He is a squib, a bounder!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When he tells the farmers that if the Labour party get into office it would be God help the farmers, he is endeavouring to lead those people astray.

Hon. P. Collier: He is too big for his job.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The greatest portion of the 13 millions sterling that was expended during the regime of the Labour Government was expended for the assistance of the farmer.

Mr. Thomson: And a very good asset it is.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Over three millions of that money went into railways, nearly two millions into the Agricultural Bank, and another million into the Industries Assistance Board. It was the Labour party that inaugurated the Industries Assistance Board, inaugurated it without the authority of Parliament. Not only that, but the Labour party inaugurated it before there was a representative of the Farmers and Settlers' Association in this House. Those gentlemen who go before those farmers and tell them God help them if the Labour party should get into office are the gentlemen who are charging the farmers 7 per cent. for the money which the Labour party borrowed to assist the farmers at 4 or 4½ per cent. I do not mind a little criticism, for I find it wholesome, but it is not always wise to bite the hands of those who rendered assistance when it was previously required. Had it not been for the Labour party, not only in 1914-15 but also in 1911, this country would have been bankrupt to-day—it has come pretty near to that since the Labour party went out of office. The Labour party invariably endeavoured to render assistance to the farming community and, as far as possible, get them out of their difficulties. Yet we are told to-day that we did nothing; we are abused as enemies of the country. With all due respect to the Minister for Mines, I must say that if I were in a Cabinet that condemned my past actions as Premier over a period of five years, I should tell my colleagues of the Cabinet to go to a warmer place than they are in to-day.

The Minister for Mines: What good would that be? They would not go.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I repeat that I have at least a duty to my colleagues here who were previously with me in Cabinet. If in March next the country places confidence

in those on this side of the House, the farmers and the general community will never suffer by the administration of our party. We shall deal fairly with all who have interests at stake; no matter whether it be farming, goldmining, commercial or other industries, each and every one will have consideration. The country would benefit a good deal more to-day if the same line of policy were carried out by the present Government. I regret that such statements as were made at the conference should have been made. They are not warranted, they are not true, and they should never have been uttered. Coming to the Governor's Speech, it is a difficult task to find anything of substance in it. In fact, the Government are not sure of themselves.

The Premier: They are quite sure.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I find that in paragraph 3 of the Speech His Excellency was pleased to tell us—

My advisers, however, because of the ability of the State to produce in abundance many of the things of which the world is most in need, feel that the prospects are encouraging and that vigour and enterprise and goodwill amongst the people are alone necessary to replace the material losses of war and inaugurate a period of expansion. According to that paragraph, vigour, enterprise, and goodwill are all that is required.

Mr. Thomson: Is not that correct?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: His Excellency states that his advisers have so advised him. But when we come to paragraph 4, dealing with finances, we find the following—

You will be further invited to consider proposals with a view to bringing the annual revenue and expenditure into closer accord.

They are not consistent, the one statement with the other. If the Treasurer was really of opinion that only vigour, enterprise, and goodwill were necessary, where is the occasion for considering proposals for bringing the annual revenue and expenditure into closer accord? Any consideration that could be given the question here would have to be in dealing with increased revenue or, in other words, additional taxation. The Premier has already assured his audience that we here are full of goodwill. I might add that if we were as full of vigour and enterprise also as we possibly could be, it would not assist the Treasurer in any way in regard to the finances. Let us for a few moments review the position. The Treasurer has informed us that the amount of increased taxation which he has received this year has been brought about by the increased prosperity of the State.

The Premier: Not all of it; I said the greater portion.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I will give you your own words, taken from your own particular

newspaper, the "West Australian." They are as follows—

The increased taxation has been due entirely to increased prosperity.

The Premier: But death dues are included in that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the Premier only gave the subject a few minutes consideration, he would realise that during the past 12 months, there has been a large increase in the cost of commodities. There has also been a fair increase in wages and salaries, not a very large one, and owing to the increase in wages and salaries many persons, though they have not been financial gainers in respect to these increases because the cost of living has increased far more than the wages, now have to pay taxation. Many a young person who in normal times would not have had to pay taxation, to-day has to do so, and that is due to the conditions I have just described. Consequently the Treasurer's figures have been increased, and there is no doubt the Treasurer has benefited considerably in consequence. Last year the Treasurer received by way of direct taxation £215,036 more than was received in the previous year. This is a very large increase. If we compare last year's figures with the amount received from direct taxation when the Labour Government were in office in 1915-16, there is an increase of £436,200. This year taxation is more than double what was received in 1915-16. In other words, the people of the State are to-day paying by way of direct taxation more than double what they were paying in 1915-16. Not only are they paying more than double, but the Government are getting further behind with the deficit. Though they have received this greatly increased amount from taxation, they have made no effort to reduce the expenditure or to use the increased taxation for the purpose of reducing the deficit. The Government have also received under the Surplus Revenue Act this year £12,500 more than was received in the previous year. This is indirect taxation through the Customs and, with the direct taxation, brings the total to £227,536 more than was received in the previous year.

The Premier: We paid over £400,000 more in wages and salaries this year.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that; I shall come to that presently. The general excuse made during the last year or two was that the deficit had been brought about owing to the increased amount which the State had to pay towards interest and sinking fund. "Look," they said, "at the large amount we have to pay by way of interest and sinking fund on the moneys which you as a Labour Government borrowed." The other night I heard the Premier mention 15 millions as the sum which was borrowed by the Labour Government. But the increased taxation since 1915-16 gave the Government £38,302 over the increased amount of interest and sinking fund which they had to find. In other words they received more by direct tax-

ation alone with which to pay the increased amount of interest and sinking fund than the increase in interest and sinking fund actually amounted to. This clearly has made very little difference to the interest and sinking fund charges because direct taxation has been imposed to make up those charges. The Premier referred to the buoyancy of the finances, and one would have thought that an endeavour would have been made to keep the expenditure somewhat in accord with the revenue. I need not repeat the figures in the Governor's Speech because they are available for every member to read for himself. Those figures show that the Government received increased revenue to the extent of £918,000 last year. But that increased revenue only encouraged the Government to incur a larger expenditure. If members look at last year's Estimates they will find that in almost every line there has been increased revenue, and there has also been an increase in the expenditure which more than counterbalances the increase of revenue. If my memory serves me aright, the increased expenditure amounts to £937,000, while the increased revenue totals £918,000. Last year I told the House that it was useless to pass increased taxation because, the more money we provided for the Government, the more they would spend without making any endeavour whatever to keep down the deficit.

Mr. Pickering: Do you mean the present Government only or any Government?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have not had the pleasure of being a member of a Government who were allowed to impose extra taxation. Only certain Governments are allowed to do that.

Hon. P. Collier: We were compelled to be economical.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: During one or two years after the outbreak of war, the finances of the State fell off. The revenue was not so buoyant as it is to-day, and our expenditure was also reduced to a certain extent. When we realise that the Government to-day have approximately £1,200,000 more in revenue than the Labour Government had in their last year of office, surely we are justified in contending that something could have been done to keep the deficit within its former ratio. Last year the revenue amounted to approximately £1,200,000 in excess of what was received in 1915-16; but nothing whatever has been done to curtail the deficit. There is one matter in the revenue expenditure returns, published in the "West Australian," of which perhaps the Premier or one of his Ministers might give an explanation before this debate closes. I find that departmental reimbursements, fees and other services show an increase over last year of £130,356. I have looked through some of our past Estimates, and I have been unable to find for several years anything approaching such an amount as has been received this year by way of departmental reimbursements. For years the amount has been in the vicinity of £200,000. This year

the Government have received £130,000 more than last year and recoup departmental charges, interest, etc., show an increase of £102,509. Putting the two together, the total amount is £232,865 more than was received last year.

Mr. Gardiner: Would not a good deal of the reimbursements represent the repayment of interest to the Agricultural Bank?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I cannot say, but for some years interest and sinking fund have been charged by the Agricultural Bank. On one occasion the recoups reached as high a figure as £65,000.

Mr. Gardiner: The probabilities are that bank interest accounts for some of it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, but the Premier, in dealing with this matter the other day, did not say how he accounted for it.

The Premier: I shall tell you.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The recoups in 1918-19 amounted to £48,209. This year the amount is £150,718. If members go back for several years they will find that the highest amount received in any one year was £65,000.

The Premier: It all depends on how much work you do.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It all depends on what percentage the Government take from loan moneys to pay the salaries of officers. It all depends on the charge made by the various departments for the work they do in connection with trading concerns, which are carried on with loan moneys. If the Premier charged seven, eight, or ten per cent., he would get a greater amount by way of recoups. If he can rake in £100,000 from that source alone, his revenue receipts will appear in a far better light than they otherwise would do. Perhaps the Premier or one of his Ministers can explain the reason for the large increase on this occasion. I wish to ask the Premier also why it is that, in speaking of trading concerns during the last few months particularly, he has always included with them business undertakings. What is the reason for it? I myself do not know the difference, with this exception, that the Government make a distinction on the Estimates. During the time of the Labour party, we had business undertakings and there were certain undertakings which were termed by the Act "trading concerns."

The Premier: Competitive businesses.

[The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Munsie) took the Chair.]

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When the Premier deals with the question and refers to trading concerns alone, he implies that the concerns referred to are those under the Trading Concerns Act, such as the Implementation works, State steamers, State ferries, State quarries, and State hotels. That is what the Premier tries to lead the public to believe. The position in regard to the trading concerns this year is that there is an

overdraft of £15,539. It is true that the Wyndham Freezing Works, which have now been added to the trading concerns, show an overdraft of £88,409. When we get the balance sheets of these concerns, they might show these concerns in an entirely different light from what appears to be the position to-day. Each of these concerns has some assets in the way of stock. In connection with the Wyndham Freezing Works, it would be interesting to know how many head of cattle were purchased at the beginning of the season. The Government might have purchased thousands of head of cattle to slaughter during the season now in progress, and might thus be able to account to a large extent for the £88,409 overdraft. When statements of this description are issued without any explanation, they have a tendency to mislead the people, who gather the impression that these trading concerns are showing very heavy losses, when as a matter of fact during the last couple of years, they have been paying money into the consolidated revenue of the State. There has been a good deal of discussion this session as to the increased railway charges imposed on the people of the State. In my opinion we shall have to pay still higher railway charges. In England railway charges have increased by about 80 per cent. as compared with pre-war rates. Last session we were told by way of interjection, which has been repeated here during this session, that the increase of railway wages granted by the Arbitration Court last year meant £240,000 or £250,000 per annum. It was pointed out then by members on this side of the House that those figures were impossible, that they could not be arrived at from the rates granted by the Arbitration Court's award. Thereupon we were told that we knew more than the Commissioner. But yesterday the "West Australian" published figures showing the position. I find from those figures that the estimates given by members on this side of the House last year were considerably over the amount which the increase in wages has cost the State. I was also struck with the leading article published in to-day's "West Australian," and I think it is a great pity that that article was not published during the sitting of the farmers and settlers' conference. It would have been information to that conference. For the quarter ended on the 30th June last, we learn there was a loss on the railways of £155,503. Of that amount £92,000 was represented by increases in wages. The position is that the department had to pay back wages right to the 1st August of last year. The full amount of the wages increase paid was £106,000. That was for a period of eleven months. Adding one-eleventh to that amount we learn that the total annual increase would be approximately £115,636. But we learn to-day that the increased charges have affected the traffic to the extent of £148,400. Of course I realise that other costs apart from wages have also increased. But we were told last

year that the increased railway charges were rendered necessary by the increase in wages granted by the Arbitration Court.

Mr. Harrison: Mention was also made of the increase in the cost of coal.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I could not have been in the State then. While I was in the State it was all the increase of wages. The total amount of the increase for twelve months, I say, would be £115,000. But for six months the total increase in railway returns has been £148,000. Multiplying that amount by two, we find that the Government have increased railway charges by approximately £296,000, in order to meet an increased expenditure of £115,000 for wages.

The Minister for Mines: That is not a fair statement.

The Colonial Secretary: Look at the wheat carriage during the last half of the year.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let me remind the Colonial Secretary that a great deal of the wheat carriage was paid before the commencement of the quarter.

The Colonial Secretary: Oh, no.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Oh, yes; because one has to pay for the short distance which the wheat is carried before it is stacked. Then the other portion of the railrage is paid in the latter part of the year. It makes very little difference so far as the State is concerned if the wheat is carried from say Kellerberrin to Spencer's Brook between December and June, or is taken to Spencer's Brook between June and December. In all probability the Government have made nothing less than £100,000 out of the wages deal.

The Minister for Mines: Oh, no.

Mr. Underwood: And what did they do with the money?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I suppose they spent it, and I hope they spent it legitimately. Perhaps they spent it legitimately, but wastefully. Undoubtedly the Government are obtaining a largely increased annual revenue from the Railway Department. There is a possibility, and indeed a very strong probability, that at an early date there will be a further rise in wages; and I want the Minister for Railways to realise that in that case there will be no necessity to put on another £100,000 in the shape of increased railway charges if the increase in wages does not exceed £100,000 per annum. The Minister has already increased railway charges sufficiently to allow him to grant wages increased by another £100,000 per annum.

The Minister for Mines: Oh, no.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Before leaving this question I want to point out that, comparing the financial position of 1915-16 with that of 1920, the present Government have had over a million increase in the annual revenue. I am not referring to loans, though the present Government are spending loan moneys as fast as any Government here have ever spent them.

The Premier: It is spent on soldier settlement.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No; on buying private people's land and putting them off it and putting others on it.

The Premier: You surely do not object to the expenditure on soldier settlement?

Mr. Pickering: Do not you think it is a right policy?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not good for the State.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I had not meant to deal with this matter, but in view of the interjections I will do so. I find that out of 3,033 soldiers settled up to the 31st July, 1920, there were 1,756 settled on purchased properties. That means that the Government have paid a farmer to go off his land and have put a soldier in his place.

The Premier: Not altogether.

Mr. Pickering: The Government may have put one farmer out and put five in.

Mr. Thomson: Some of the owners are very sorry that they sold their land.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The number settled on improved farms comprises 1,756 on properties purchased, 669 on own land, 106 on Agricultural Bank securities, and 332 on repurchased estates. The number settled on virgin Crown land is 170. Making due allowance for a proportion of the soldiers on repurchased estates the net result of the figures is that about 575 soldiers out of the 3,033, have been so settled as to bring about increase of settlement in Western Australia, and that increase has cost the country £1,250,000 already. I think it would be far better if some of the unused areas close to our railways were taken for the special purpose of soldier settlement. That would be far better for the soldiers, and for the country also. Comparing the position in 1915-16 with the position to-day, we find that there is now a revenue larger by approximately £1,200,000; and this Parliament and the Government are not acting fairly to the State in not trying to keep revenue and expenditure more closely in accord. We cannot go on piling up deficits of £500,000 or £600,000 year after year. When the present Minister for Mines was Treasurer of this State, he got nowhere near that amount; and we were told then that we ought to be in jail for our reckless finance. We were informed repeatedly that our proceedings were detrimental to the welfare of the country and that we ought to be brought before the court and tried. The present Treasurer has about a million and a quarter more revenue than the Treasurer of 1915-16 had, and the present Treasurer's deficit is double that of 1915-16. Moreover, as I have stated here before, at the end of 1915-16 the Labour Government had more in accounts outstanding than would have covered their deficit. In the face of those facts the present Government, though unable to keep the finances more even, say, "Everything in the garden

is lovely. We are all right. The London financiers are offering us money; they are trying to force it on us." But the Government have not yet told us what that offer meant. I spent a few weeks in England, and I left London with the impression that this State will not get much out of Great Britain unless we pay for it dearly.

The Premier: The terms were more than favourable.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: My impression is that if one wants a sovereign from English people one must give them 25s. in return.

Mr. Teesdale: The only State with any credit in London is Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not going to say that. The hon. member was in London when the last loan was floated. I admit it was floated on very favourable terms. But the Press attacked Western Australia in the same way as it attacked Queensland. The London financiers are probably in a position to say whether this State shall have money or shall not. Australians have not had fair play at the hands of the British Government since the termination of the war. Everything that they have purchased from Australia has been paid for at lower rates than they have paid for whatever they have procured from other parts of the world. I do not say that as coming from myself. We need only refer to the "British Australasian" and to the utterances of such men as Sir Thomas Mackenzie, the former High Commissioner for New Zealand. This gentleman was one of the best representatives Australasia ever had in London. He was always prepared to fight the battles of New Zealand and Australia. He never allowed anything that might be considered detrimental to our interests to pass without taking steps to repudiate what had been said. He fought hard for New Zealand and Australasian interests and he can well be said to have been regarded as the most important Australian who has occupied an official position in London for many years past. Sir Thos. Mackenzie told the British Government straight out that their actions would have to be altered. He pointed out that New Zealand was selling meat to the British Government at 4½d. per lb. and butter at 1s. 7d. per lb., while they were paying considerably higher prices for those commodities to other nations of the world. The action of the Ministry for Food was, "We have the ships, you have the goods; you can take our offer or leave it." That, too, was the position so far as Australia was concerned. Then again, it was the same in regard to wheat. The Ministry for Food in England had the ships and we had the goods and we had to accept what they offered us. Sir Thos. Mackenzie told them on one occasion that while they were selling butter at 1s. 7¼d., the Ministry for Food in England was paying for Danish butter no less than 3s. and over. I will quote some of the statements which were made

by Sir Thos. Mackenzie in London in regard to these matters. In one statement he said—

I do not wish to be charged with Jingoism by striking too often the Imperial note, but many will with me deplore an arrangement under which a British Dominion is expected to conclude a bargain in butter on greatly inferior terms to those offered to a foreign country.

Later on Sir Thomas Mackenzie said—

One of the bones of contention of the New Zealand producer was that the Ministry of Food has taken advantage of the cheap rate at which he sold his meat in order to pay much greater prices to foreign competitors and the British farmer.

I could quote many extracts from that gentleman's speech to show that he endeavoured to do his utmost for the far out Dominions and to see that they got a fair price for their produce. The result of the action of the Ministry for Food in England was that meat, butter, and other goods were stored and went bad. The companies interested spent considerable sums of money for the purpose of maintaining their good names with the markets of the old world, and their identity became lost. The British Government purchased from the Continental and American markets at higher prices. The meat which was sold to them by New Zealand for 4½d. per lb. was disposed of in London up to 2s.

Mr. Nairn: What did it cost to get the meat and butter there?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It cost 1d. per lb. to get butter there.

Mr. Nairn: During war time?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This has happened since the war.

Mr. Underwood: If you do not send meat there, where will you send it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have no objection to sending the meat there, but I do say that there should not be favoured people, or if anybody should be favoured it should be the people of the Dominions. We must have markets for our meat. Because a large number of our people volunteered to fight the battles of the Empire, it is not right that the relatives who have been left behind should be penalised by having to accept reduced prices for their products, while America and other countries are receiving higher prices. I have merely mentioned these matters to show that Australia and New Zealand are not likely to get anything for nothing. We will have to pay handsomely for everything we get.

Mr. Underwood: Where will you send the meat?

Hon. P. Collier: No one objects to sending it to England.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Pilbara wants to know where we will send our meat. I will quote another extract from Sir Thomas Mackenzie's speech which shows

that the desire of New Zealand is to send meat to England. This is what he says—

The desire of New Zealanders to give the benefit of low prices to the consuming public here was countered by the action of the food controller, who, for reasons best known to himself, pooled supplies and sold at a flat rate. Therefore the lower the price at which he could purchase New Zealand meat merely enabled him to pay a higher rate to the American and the British farmer, and the public did not get the direct benefit.

We want to sell our meat to the public of England and we want them to consume it.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. Pickering: That was under abnormal conditions.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member who has interjected was one of the first to raise his voice at the guaranteed price of 5s. per bushel for wheat. If we had been given a fair price for that commodity we should have had 7s. 6d. for it, the same which the British Government were willing to pay the American Government for that commodity. That is the kind of thing I strongly object to.

The Minister for Mines: You have not quoted the correct position. The British Government have not paid more for similar products from other nations. That is what you are implying.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am quoting what Sir Thomas Mackenzie stated. I did not intend to read the whole of his remarks, but for the information of the Minister I may read a little more. This deals with butter and is what Sir Thomas Mackenzie said.

The Minister for Mines: When was the statement made, and what period did it cover?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The statement was made in February—

The offer was a great deal below the world's parity prices. At that time the Ministry asserted that plentiful supplies could be obtained from other sources and the Home Government having control of shipping could adopt a "Take it or leave it attitude." The price paid New Zealand was 1s. 7½d. per lb. A long time ago they had to pay 2s. 6d. for Danish and in January last made a contract with the Danes at a price of 3s. per lb. and he noted that the Imperial Government had bought butter at 2s. 8d. per lb. in Canada. That was the position. The British Government had ships to control the situation just as they liked, and the cool storage works in Australia were packed and it was not possible to kill further. It was the same in New Zealand. The British Government having purchased elsewhere, the Australian produce remained here.

The Minister for Mines: You said that the British Government paid a higher price for the products of other nations.

Hon. T. Walker: They pooled the price, which enabled them to pay more.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I will read again, for the benefit of the Minister, the remarks of Sir Thomas Mackenzie. I have already quoted them as his and not mine. He said—

One of the bones of contention of the New Zealand producer was that the Ministry of Food has taken advantage of the cheap rate at which he sold his meat in order to pay much greater prices to foreign competitors and the British farmer.

Mr. Pickering: Have you seen any reply to that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, I have it here. I do not again want to read that which I have already told the House. The "British Australasian" stated that there was no reply to Sir Thomas Mackenzie. I mention this to show that, so far as England is concerned, I do not think Australia will get any advantage over other countries. The trend of feeling there to-day, it appears to me, is that they regard us as being too far away. They think we are an ignorant lot of people, but we are known because we have some good soldiers. For anything we want we shall have to pay through the nose.

Mr. Teesdale: Oh no! What would we have done with our wool and our wheat but for England? All this would have rotted on the wharves had it not been for England coming to our help.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That might have been so.

Mr. Munsie: Why did they not help us to the same extent as they helped Canada, and give us the same price?

Mr. Teesdale: Take the distance into consideration.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Hon. members cannot argue.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I will not attempt to pit my knowledge of the position against that put forward by the High Commissioner for New Zealand. Hon. members know of the invitation that was extended to the Agents General and the High Commissioner by the Port of London authorities, in connection with coal storage, on the 21st and 22nd February last, and know also of the strong comments that were made as to the treatment Australia and New Zealand had been getting in regard to their produce. It is true we got a good price for our wool, and I have seen since in the Press here that the wool growers of Australia did not expect that return. The wool growers of Australia obtained a fair price but the British Government were not content, and made several million pounds out of the deal, at the very time when the people of England were in want of clothes to wear.

Mr. Wilson: How many millions were paid?

Mr. Teesdale: They made 8 million pounds profit, and 4 million from Australia.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Australian wool grower was satisfied with that price.

Mr. Thomson: Oh, no.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: According to the reports, they were.

Mr. Thomson: No, they objected strongly to the price.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The large growers did not expect to get so much returned to them. The British Government made an increased profit, but the people of England had to pay the increased price.

The Minister for Mines interjected.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is this difference. In the one case when an additional price was charged half of it came back to the producer. In the other case the complaint has been that the money was used for the purpose of paying an increased price elsewhere.

Mr. Pickering: There must have been some reason for it.

Mr. Munsie: They held the ships, and could make us sell at whatever price they liked.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I can let the hon. member see the speech to which I have referred. I notice there is a complete change so far as the policy of immigration for Australia is concerned, owing to the arrangements that have been made in Melbourne for bringing immigrants to this country. I have seen the report of the conference which took place in Melbourne on 21st May when the Minister for Mines was present, and also the report of the conference on 30th July when neither the Premier nor the Minister for Mines was present. According to the reports the whole of the officers in connection with the Immigration Department in London have been taken over by the Commonwealth. So far as the State is concerned, as an immigration office, it ceases to exist. The only thing that remains for the future is a consultation with the High Commissioner and Agents General in regard to the passages that may be required for immigrants to come to Australia. I will read the latest report as given to the public. This shows that the joint immigration scheme decided upon provides that the Commonwealth Government shall procure immigrants asked for by the States, the Agents General acting in consultation with the High Commissioner for Australia. The responsibility of the State will begin when the immigrants arrive in Australia. There is no responsibility according to this so far as the States are concerned until the immigrant arrives here. The report goes on to say that a beginning is to be made with the scheme as soon as the Commonwealth Government have completed the administrative arrangements, including the taking over of the State offices and organisations already in existence. It is necessary for the Government to be careful in this matter of immigration. I believe that the Agent General's office belonging to this State, and as at present constituted, is fully alive to the position, but my opinion is that we are not going to get the immigrants in their thousands as anticipated.

The Minister for Mines: There will be a thousand of them up to November.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not say we shall not get that thousand, but I do say that number will be as many as we shall get for a long time to come. Wages in England to-day are about on a par with what they are in Australia.

Mr. Thomson: Living is cheaper out here.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is very little difference between living out here and living in England. I could live cheaper in Cornwall than I could in Fremantle.

Mr. Thomson: Perhaps you lived with relatives.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am speaking about the cost of the goods. A certain class of people will at all times migrate to other parts of the world, and we shall get some of those whether there is immigration going on or not. If, however, we do not watch very carefully we shall be drawing upon the dregs of the large towns of England. The best men of England will remain there. They will be kept there by the British people, if it is possible to do so. There are 200,000 tradesmen short in England to-day.

Mr. Thomson: We are short of them out here, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We shall never get these men here. We shall never get carpenters here to work for 16s. a day when they now receive 18s. in England. We shall never get farm labourers here at 25s. a week when they are getting £2 2s. a week in England.

The Colonial Secretary: That is £2 2s. with board.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I noticed the other day that the Ugly Men's Association had waited upon the road boards, and stated that they expected the farmers to pay 25s. a week for their labourers.

The Honorary Minister: That is only in connection with the training of men.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There will be a great difficulty in getting farmers at 25s. a week and their keep.

Mr. Thomson: There are not too many here.

Mr. Green: There was an advertisement in the paper the other day for a strong boy at 15s. a week to go on a farm.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In my opinion the employees are better off financially in England than they would be in Australia. Very rightly the British Government, owing to the great loss of manhood, particularly young manhood, during the last five years desire to keep their best men in England for the purpose of dealing with the industries of the country. I am sure, therefore, that we are not going to have any emigration from the British Isles.

The Minister for Mines: We do not object if England wants them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Then we shall have to look elsewhere for our immigration policy. The Minister for Mines: I would rather wait.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It will be necessary to wait a long while. I recently read

a statement by Sir Kingsley Wood, M.P., private secretary to the Minister for Health in England. He said that the demand in England so far as industries were concerned had never been as great as it is at present. Sixty thousand tradesmen in the building trade were killed and thousands of others were incapacitated and would never be able to follow their old employment. They are building workers' homes in England almost in every corporation and municipality. The London County Council have advertised for a loan of seven millions, five million pounds of which is to be used in the building of homes. Every corporation in England is compelled by the action of the Government to provide additional housing accommodation. Repeatedly one sees in the country districts large placards asking the people to invest in the loans of the corporations or municipalities for the building of houses. There are, however, no tradesmen to employ to build them. In this country there will be great difficulty in getting tradesmen from the British Isles to meet the loss we have sustained here. There is also a large demand for farmers throughout England. I have known cases where farm workers, who, a few years ago, were content to work for 12s. or 15s. a week, now want 9s. or 10s. a day. The minimum wage for a farm labourer is £2 2s. a week for eight hours a day.

The Colonial Secretary: And food?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They do not get their food. In that respect they are on the same basis as they were before, having their own house and garden, etc., to live on.

Mr. Foley: If they get £2 2s. a week are their conditions better than they would be if they worked out here?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. With £2 2s. a week for eight hours a day and a house and garden they are better off. And in addition to that, they get extra pay for overtime and 1s. 3d. per hour for Sundays. I hope the Government will be able to get population, for it is necessary that our empty spaces should be filled, not only for our own protection, but to meet our great and growing debt. It is only population which can do that. But I am very much afraid we are not going to get that population in the numbers predicted prior to the close of the war. There are in England a few men with money to invest, who no doubt will come out and take up land; but they will require labour as well as money, and just now I am dealing with the farm labourer, not with the capitalist. Without labour to work his land the capitalist will be helpless.

Mr. Duff: Are we well advertised at Home?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, Australia was never before so well known in England as she is to-day. Then we want not only farm labourers, but thousands of miners. We cannot get them. The miners at Home know Kalgoorlie. They can tell one all about Cue and Day Dawn, and when one says to them,

"You can get 18s. 4d. a day in Kalgoorlie," they say, "But we are not going to pay a £40 fare in order to earn 13s. 4d. a day." They can get £1 per day in America.

The Minister for Mines: The tin miners, yes.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I mention this to show the position amongst the workers. Workers will not come to Australia unless they come to improve their condition; they are not all fools in the Old Country. At all events I hope the Premier will be successful in his immigration policy, but I want to impress upon him that the men in the towns have been mostly brought up in secondary industries, and large numbers of them have families. We require some men with families, but having got them it will be necessary to make some provision for their boys and girls after leaving school. What we suffer from in Western Australia to-day is the lack of secondary industries. I do not think that under existing conditions we shall get many secondary industries on any large scale. There can be no doubt that those who voted for Federation threw away the status of this State in respect of secondary industries. Any person who comes out to Australia to start a large manufacturing industry goes to Eastern Australia, and Melbourne and Sydney reap the advantage. We have now a large market which no doubt will be an inducement to some enterprising men to open up factories in Australia. But Western Australia is on one side, and there is no hope for Western Australian secondary industries unless the Government themselves step in. If we cannot get private people to establish secondary industries, the Government ought to make an effort in that direction. In 1906 or 1907 the present Premier inserted in the Agricultural Bank Act a provision that the Agricultural Bank trustees should advance moneys for the purpose of purchasing agricultural machinery manufactured in Western Australia. At the time every hon. member thought the provision would be beneficial to Western Australia and that private enterprise would take advantage of it and open up implement works in this State. But what was done? An endeavour was made to evade the provision by manufacturing the machines in the Eastern States and sending the parts here to be assembled. It proved conclusively that there was no possibility of having implement works established in this State by private enterprise, not even under the special privileges provided in the Agricultural Bank Act. The same remarks will apply to other secondary industries in this State. Not all the boys of the State can be miners or farmers. We have boys in the City becoming loafers on the streets, forming gangs, for the reason that they have nothing else to do. In all probability many of them are already ruined for life. Why? Because there is scarcely a place in Western Australia where one can indenture a boy to learn a trade. For the advancement of the youth of this country it is necessary that

the Government should take steps towards building up secondary industries for the production of the requirements of the State, and even for export if necessary. The difference which for so long existed between the wages paid in the Old Country and those paid in Australia has now almost passed away. If anything, we are paying lower wages here than are being paid in the Old World. This means that in future Australia will be better able to compete in the world's markets. Too much stress cannot be laid upon the fact that those who think of making homes in a new country have to consider primarily the advantage of their families. Unless they can advantage their families by bringing them here, they will not be ready to migrate from the Home land. I hope the Premier will look into that suggestion for the establishment of secondary industries. He himself initiated the movement in 1907, although it is true no advantage was taken of his offer and, in consequence, the Government had to start implement works themselves. I was much interested in the speech of the member for Kimberley (Mr. Duraek). I have always been led to believe that in the North we had some of the best pastoral areas of the Commonwealth. Yet, according to the member for Kimberley, it is not so when we take into consideration the drought which prevails for a great portion of the year.

Mr. Underwood: There is no drought.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member said that from March or April to November or even December there was no rain.

Mr. Underwood: That is merely dry weather.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Well, it is next door to a drought.

Mr. Underwood: No, there is a difference.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member went on to say that if one came further south the dry period extended sometimes up to two years.

Mr. Underwood: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This is what the hon. member said—

We have rainless periods—

I withdraw that word "drought."

We have rainless periods from March or April to October or even November or December. If one comes south of the Kimberleys one finds periods of 18 months and even two years without rain. That was the statement made by the hon. member. If that is correct, some of us have been barking up the wrong tree. If those disastrous dry seasons occur, are we justified in sending people there to invest their capital in opening up the country.

Mr. Underwood: Absolutely!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I hope that is right.

The Minister for Mines: It may not be waterless merely because there happens to be no rain.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, because subterranean water may be available. The hon. member also pointed out what they have to contend with up there, as for instance the depredations of white ants and other pests from which the pioneers in other parts of Australia are relatively free. He said that in Northern Queensland they did not suffer from these pests to anything like the same degree as was experienced in the Kimberleys. Still comparing our North with Queensland, the hon. member pointed out that the soil of Northern Queensland was particularly rich, an advantage lacking in the Northern parts of our State. It shows clearly that some of us have been misinformed in regard to our own North. I trust that the hon. member is quite wrong. Also, I hope that his remarks were not induced by an item in the Governor's Speech relating to a foreshadowed Bill to amend the provisions of the Land Act regarding the pastoral leases. But I wish to go a little further. Recently a Parliamentary visit was made to the North. I have unsuccessfully endeavoured to find out how many members went. The leader of the Country party the other day told us that he was there. Apparently he was ashore for a few minutes. He tells an entirely different story from that told by the member for Kimberley.

Mr. Durack: He was speaking from the pastoral point of view, whereas I spoke in respect of agriculture.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Avon said he had been in Queensland, and he referred to two stations which he had visited, one in Queensland and one in our North. He declared that the soils of Western Australia lacked nothing whatever for pastoral purposes. So there are two gentlemen who have been to the North, one who has been there for years and the other for three minutes; the one says the soil up there is rich, the other declares that it is poor. Which are we to believe?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Before tea I was pointing out the differences of opinion in regard to the North-West portion of the State. We had the opinion of one gentleman who has been many years in the Kimberleys and also, I believe, in Queensland, and the opinion of another gentleman who has been in Queensland and, I think, in the North-West of this State, though he was there for only a little time. The one contradicts the other. Unless one has been there and seen for himself, it is difficult to decide what action should be taken to develop that country. The only thing I can suggest to overcome the difficulty is that the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) induce the Government to arrange for a Parliamentary party to visit the North.

The Premier: If you will all go, we shall send you next week.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I trust the member for Avon (Mr. Harrison) is right in the opinion he expressed. From information I have gleaned during occasional conversations with the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood), I am inclined to think that we have a great heritage in the northern part of the State, one that will be of great benefit to the State eventually, and when developed will be of immense benefit to Australia as a whole. Some references have been made regarding the sale of wheat to New South Wales. Like the leader of the Opposition, I believe a contract was entered into, and I hope that the Government will not waste much of the country's funds in trying to prove that there was no contract, because I believe they will go down. I have in my hand a copy of the "Farmers and Settlers' Bulletin," published in Adelaide. This number bears the date of the 2nd August, and it deals with this wheat deal from a different aspect from anything I have seen before.

The Premier: Naturally it does. The more New South Wales gets from us, the less New South Wales will want from South Australia.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: South Australia is supplying at 7s. 8d. per bushel, and the farmers there are also complaining of the deal.

Mr. Thomson: They were tied; we were not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I will read this article for the information of hon. members. It gives a very clear expression of the case and, if it is correct, the Government are bound to go down in any attempt to prove that there was no contract—

Representatives of the Farmers and Settlers' Association have recently had two interviews with the Wheat Harvest Board desiring to ascertain, among other things, the reason why New South Wales is being supplied with wheat by the other States in the Commonwealth pool at 7s. 8d. per bushel f.o.b. at shipping port. It has been ascertained that sales are not being made at the rate of 7s. 8d. at the present time, but that the wheat being supplied to feed New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania was purchased on behalf of the Governments of those States in January last at 7s. 8d. per bushel, which price was then, approximately, its value for sale overseas. The Australian Wheat Board, and particularly the four representatives of the farmers on that board desired, at that time, to see the major portion of the quantity available, and intimated to the Governments, while in conference, that they thought the wheat would be sold overseas, unless purchased by the respective Governments for the people of Australia.

Mr. Thomson: Who gave the board's representative authority to sell?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not know. If the hon. member employed an agent and that

agent acted for him, he would be bound to abide by the agent's decision.

Mr. Thomson: He had no authority to sell.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He had authority to deal with the wheat. The article continues—

The contract was therefore entered into, the Board agreeing to sell, and the Government agreeing to buy the quantity required in the several States until the next harvest is available. The quantity was stated as approximately 30,000,000 bushels. Hence it is incorrect to suppose that sales have been made by the Board at 7s. 8d. in recent months, when the overseas price had materially advanced. As a matter of fact, the wheat being sold to millers and others in any part of Australia, is being sold on behalf of the owners of that wheat, viz., the Governments who bought it in January last at its then value. Had overseas prices receded instead of advancing, the Government would still have had to pay the price agreed, viz., 7s. 8d. per bushel. Now that the position is thus made clear, shareholders of the pool will be able to understand the position, and will probably be satisfied that a fair and proper transaction was effected at that time.

Mr. Thomson: Who is the writer of that article?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The article appears under "Wheat Notes" in the Farmers and Settlers' "Bulletin" printed in Adelaide. It is a farmers' paper, putting the position before the farmers and settlers there.

Mr. Thomson: Their representatives admitted that they sold the wheat, but we say ours did not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This puts the case very clearly. It shows that if the price of wheat had gone down, the Government of New South Wales, under that arrangement would have been bound to pay the 7s. 8d. a bushel, and the same price appears to hold good now that the value has increased. The article shows clearly that the representatives of Western Australia were present, and must have concurred in this agreement made with the other States.

Mr. Thomson: But the growers' representative had no authority to sell.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In all probability the Government will go to heavy expense to bring this matter before the courts. Law costs run into a considerable amount of money, and I think the Government should look into the position before becoming parties to any lawsuit. This statement is definite, clear, and precise. I have not seen the position expressed more clearly in any paper. I agree with the leader of the Opposition that the contract was definitely fixed.

Mr. Thomson: If you had any doubt in your mind, would you fight it or not?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is no doubt on the case as presented by this paper.

Mr. Thomson: But you are taking the South Australian view.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, the representatives referred to must have included those from this State.

Mr. Thomson: The growers' representative had no power to sell.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Wheat Board consists of representatives of the Governments and of the growers, and the principal has to carry out a contract made by his agent or representative. I wish to compliment the Minister for Works on his purchase of the sawmills from the South-West Hewers' Society. In doing so, he undoubtedly did a good thing so far as the State is concerned. A company had applied for the transfer of these leases and the purchase of the mills, and I stated that the company was a bogus company. It was a company formed for the purpose of giving a large timber combine an opportunity to get an increased area. It was done in an underhand manner. I do not know where the Minister got his information, but he must be pretty cute to have found out about this company. The information evidently satisfied him that it was in the best interests of the State that larger areas should not be extended to the companies who for many years have held great timber areas in this State. The Government are to be congratulated on having purchased the mill under such conditions. The Minister, in replying to the leader of the Opposition, failed to realise the objection which had been raised to the purchase. The leader of the Opposition certainly agreed that the State should have this mill. His objection was that Parliament was not consulted before the purchase was made, more especially by a Government including the present Minister for Education. I will read an extract from one of his speeches.

Mr. Thomson: You are getting on to him for what you did every day when you were in office.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was quite right for the Government at that time to do so for they had never condemned other people for doing it. They are not condemning other people to-day for having made the purchase, but for having failed to practise the beliefs they urged when we were in office. To condemn one man for doing a thing and then to do it oneself, practically the next day, is over the odds. At the time the "Kangaroo" was purchased there was a good deal of controversy, not only in this House, but in another place. The purchase of the "Kangaroo" was only an extension of the shipping service, and was a case exactly on all fours with the purchase of the sawmills—an extension of trade. Consequently we can compare both deals. Mr. Colebatch, when speaking in the Council on 23rd November, 1915, endeavoured to prevent the purchase of this ship by moving an amendment to the Supplementary Loan Bill, "That in the item Steamships '£200,000' be struck out and '£5,000' be inserted in lieu thereof." This was for the vessel which was purchased at a cost of £140,000, which has earned in book profits £320,000 odd, and for

which the Government 12 months ago refused an offer of £280,000.

Mr. Thomson: You will be satisfied if the sawmills turn out as well.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They will turn out all right under the present management. The late Mr. Cullen had moved an amendment to reduce the amount of £200,000 to £140,000, and suggested that Mr. Colebatch should alter his amendment accordingly. Mr. Colebatch, according to "Hansard," page 2688, said—

"I am sorry I cannot accept the suggestion. If the Committee desires to stultify itself I cannot prevent it, but I will not be a party to it. Something similar to what has happened on this occasion took place in 1912, when this Chamber accepted the responsibility of amending the Address-in-reply on this same question, namely, the purchase by the Government without authorisation, of steamships. The amendment was—'That all the words after 'Sovereign' be struck out with a view to inserting 'and to protest against expenditure incurred by Your Excellency's Ministers without an Act of Appropriation, such procedure being derogatory to the principles of Parliament and subversive of the Constitution.' Is it to be suggested that we could carry an extreme resolution of that kind on one day, and two or three years afterwards, when the same thing comes up again, make no attempt to stop it?"

That is Mr. Colebatch, one of the members of the Ministry that extended the State Sawmills. Again, he stated—

Are we going to endorse the action of the Government in violating the Constitution?

That is Mr. Colebatch. We find that the violation of, shall I say, law and order committed by the Government of 1915 is imitated by the Government of 1920. In the one instance it is a violation of the Constitution; in the other instance it is a perfectly honest and straightforward and constitutional action. Two different sets of people do exactly the same thing: one should be in gaol, while the other should enjoy liberty.

The Minister for Works: Your friends started a State enterprise. I simply extended one.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No doubt we would have done exactly the same as the Minister for Works has done had we been in office. However, the position is as I have stated. The other day I found it necessary to put a few questions regarding the "Kangaroo" to the Minister controlling the State Steamship Service. The answers given to my questions were perfectly correct up to the fourth answer, and I am very sorry to say that those who supplied the answer to my fourth query misled the Minister, and through him the House. Whoever put up that answer has put up a wrong answer and has misled this Chamber. The question was

whether the Government had not decided to sell the "Kangaroo?" I say the Government did decide to sell the "Kangaroo," though they say they did not so decide. I have here a book of which the Minister for Works has already seen a copy. It is the report of the Agent General for Western Australia for the year ended the 30th June, 1919. That report contains these words—

With regard to the negotiations for the sale of the "Kangaroo," I learnt from the Ministry for Shipping that there was an opportunity of securing an exceptionally favourable offer for the ship from foreign buyers. I accordingly cabled the Government asking if the vessel were for sale, and on receiving a reply in the affirmative I immediately opened up negotiations with several prospective foreign buyers, with the result that after two months' work I obtained a firm offer of £280,000, which I at once cabled to the Government. The Government, however, decided, in view of the difficulty of replacing the ship, that it was advisable to decline the offer.

And yet I was informed that the Government had never decided to sell the "Kangaroo." I say whoever put up that answer led the Minister astray and led the House astray.

The Minister for Works: Whoever put up that answer declined the firm offer.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But I asked another question—

Did the expert shipping authority express surprise that the Government did not accept the offer, it being £100,000 in excess of that anticipated, owing to the condition of the engines and owing to the speed of the ship being only nine knots? I now quote again from the same report of the Agent General—

So far as shipping circles here were concerned, they were considerably surprised at the big price offered, one eminent English authority valuing her at £180,000 to British buyers, this valuation being determined to some extent by the fact that the "Kangaroo" was only a nine knot vessel, and her Diesel engines being of the earliest type, the later designs being considered more reliable and effective.

The Minister for Works: The "Kangaroo" had a lot of very favourable engagements, which had to be considered.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not think she had many at that time.

Mr. Thomson: Do you suggest that she should have been sold then?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, because the "Kangaroo" is not suitable for the small ports of the North-West. She was originally purchased for the meat industry, and one boat cannot do all the work of the North-West. The £280,000 offered for the "Kangaroo" would have nearly purchased two vessels.

Mr. Thomson: What was the original price of the "Kangaroo"?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: She cost an insurance company £140,000. The vessel has never cost this State a penny. This is the old tramp whose purchase the Minister for Education tried to have struck out of the Loan Estimates. It will be admitted that there is at least one good action to the credit of the Labour Government, the purchase of the "Kangaroo." The Labour Government have done 100 good actions, and 99 of them may be denied, but this particular good action cannot be denied. While in England I took the opportunity to make some inquiries regarding the management of hospitals for the insane there, and I am more convinced than ever that it would be a good thing for this State to adopt the system of management by boards. I visited an institution in Cornwall, about 20 miles from Plymouth, and discussed the management with the secretary. The information I obtained from him strengthened my faith in the board system of management, and several doctors with whom I have spoken on the subject since my return to Western Australia have expressed themselves as agreeing that the board system of management is better. I asked the secretary of the English institution, "Do you ever punish an inmate?" He replied, "What do you mean by punishing an inmate?" I said, "Suppose an inmate kicked the doctor or an attendant, would you put him on bread and water for a week?" The secretary replied, "Certainly not." We never punish any inmate of this place, because every patient here is regarded as insane and therefore not responsible for his actions. If one of us—no matter who it was, from the doctor downwards—had punished an inmate in that way, his place would have been vacant very soon after the board met." Another improvement there relates to the detention of patients. Every case of detention is considered by the board. If the relatives or friends of an inmate desire to get him out of the institution, they approach the board, and are asked to attend a meeting of the board. Then the board inquire as to whether the friends or relatives are in a position to look after the inmate if he is let out; and thereupon the matter is discussed by the board with the medical officer. If the board arrive at the conclusion that the friends or relatives are able to look after the patient he is handed over to them. Another improvement is that the English institutions allow their patients more liberty than we do here. I did not go through the institution I visited, because a large number of patients were coming out at the time. I saw several hundreds of patients, men and women, going out of the gates into the town and into the country, accompanied by only a very few attendants. In England it is recognised that the more liberty given to patients, the better for them. They say in England that the system of confining patients between four walls is utterly obsolete, entirely a thing of the past. The inspection in England is rather stricter than here. It was

stated last session that Commissioners in Lunacy are appointed by the British Government. The boards of management are appointed by the county councils, and then there are visiting committees appointed by the boards of management. The visiting committees report to the general board every three months. Everything that comes into or goes out of the asylum has to be authorised by the signature of the secretary or steward of the institution. The medical officer looks after the patients, and not after the management of the institution. Nothing can be ordered there without the signature of the secretary or steward, whose accounts are examined monthly by the board, in addition to being checked by the county auditor. The secretary of this institution said to me, "I do not know how an institution of this kind can be managed without a board such as we have here."

Mr. Brown: How often does the board meet?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The board meets monthly, but the visiting committee visits more frequently. The number of the inmates in this institution is approximately the same as the number at Claremont; but the cost per head was considerably less there, even at war time food prices. The board of management are very proud of their institution. They have repeatedly been complimented by the Commissioners in Lunacy on the manner in which the institution is maintained. They find that great benefit results from allowing the patients more freedom than is given to the patients at Claremont.

Mr. Pickering: Do you know the percentage of recoveries at that English institution?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have not the report here, and cannot say from memory. I am convinced that the board system of management would prove highly beneficial here. One thing that strongly impressed me in England was the fact that the friends and relatives of a patient who in the board's opinion is not fit to be discharged are perfectly satisfied that they have had a fair deal. The decision that the patient is not to be set at liberty is the decision of a board, and not of one man. Every case is considered by the board, and, as I have said, if the friends or relatives of a patient satisfy the board that they are in a position to look after him, he is discharged from the institution. I think that is important, and I hope the Minister when introducing the Bill will also provide for a board of management to have control in this State.

The Minister for Works: Inquiries in New South Wales show that they are carrying on a system very much the same as you suggest.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would like the Colonial Secretary to again reconsider the question of assisting the old aged pensioners so far as rations are concerned. It is all very well to say that this is a matter that the Commonwealth should deal with, but I want hon. members to realise that

had it not been for old age pensions we would have had to pay the full amount of the cost of upkeep, and it would be a matter of impossibility at the present time with the cost of living as high as it is to do everything that should be done for the old people.

The Colonial Secretary: What is their objection to going into a home?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Why should they go into a home? The hon. member would not like to go into a home if he could look after himself. These old people have their liberty and that is far better than confining them to a home. I hope the Minister will reconsider the position. I made an interjection the other night in connection with the appointment of the business manager who has been investigating the matter of charities, but I am inclined now to believe that the fault does not altogether lie in the direction of that officer. My opinion is that the person who should have the care of the indigent poor should be a man of mature age, one who has a certain amount of sympathy for those in distress. I repeat what I said last year, that one of the proudest periods of my life was while I was a member of the Government in Western Australia and when I was able to see that the poor women and children of this State were fed.

The Colonial Secretary: They are getting more now.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The increased amount they are getting is nothing in comparison to the increased cost of living. I admit the Minister is doing fairly well, but there is a possibility of some of his officers failing to realise that it is necessary to extend a certain amount of sympathy to some of these people. In a matter of this kind, whether they be controlled by Government or by private individuals, someone will always be found who will take advantage of the position which exists, but it is better that one individual should take advantage of the position than that a dozen should suffer. Consequently, it is important that the department should be administered with a certain amount of sympathy. I realise that cases are sometimes brought under the notice of the Minister, which, on the face of them would lead to the belief that assistance should not be granted. When these cases have been probed deeper, however, it will be found that they are genuine and worthy of help. I am a great believer in Mr. Watson, the officer in charge of the Charities Department, who has been trained to know what is required. He is a good officer. He may be too sympathetic, but it is necessary that all the cases to be investigated by the department should have the most careful consideration. I repeat, that I trust the Minister will again give some attention to the position in which the old age pensioners find themselves. I desire also to ask the Minister for Works whether it is possible, now that money has been

offered to the Government under fairly reasonable conditions, to again commence the work of sewerage in connection with some of our areas. Districts are extending, and in the interests of the health of the people it is necessary that further sewerage works should be carried out. The importance of providing increased accommodation in the Fremantle harbour should also receive the attention of the Minister for Works. Something is absolutely necessary there. The Premier stated the other day that a few years ago North Fremantle was only a village. No doubt that was true 30 years ago, but trade is continually increasing, and we shall have to provide for the larger class of vessel now being built in order to retain that trade. In the Eastern States they are dredging their harbours to a depth of 40 feet. The various harbour trusts have come to the conclusion that that depth is necessary and Melbourne and Sydney are taking steps in that direction, realising that unless they do so the larger steamships will pass their doors. It is also necessary that harbour accommodation should be provided in other parts of the State to assist the farming industry. The closer the farmers are brought to harbours, the cheaper will be the cost of transit. I remember the late Mr. Harper saying in this House that the more harbours we could get the better it would be for the settler. As a matter of fact, the harbours are of greater importance to the settler than railways.

Mr. Pickering: Better for the country, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. While millions of pounds worth of wheat are going out of the country the farmers are not contributing one penny towards harbour construction in Western Australia.

Mr. Thomson: They have paid a good deal for storage.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that, but they have not paid any outward charges. Those charges are imposed in some of the other States. It is necessary that something should be charged for the purpose of meeting interest and sinking fund in connection with harbour works.

The Colonial Secretary: You would not approve of an export duty on wheat?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Certainly; the farmers should pay their share. If the hon. member were engaged in mining, he would have to pay 1s. 8d. a ton. I can see the position now. The only way to get out of paying fair charges is to become a primary producer and the Government will do everything that is necessary. The farmers are now getting 7s. 8d. a bushel for their wheat, yet they are not contributing one penny except inward charges on goods, while the miners and others who export have to pay outward charges. There is a matter affecting the Minister for Works that I am going to disagree with. It is very rarely, however,

that I do. Some two years ago I disagreed with a request made by the member for Avon (Mr. Harrison) with regard to charges for water supply to the agricultural areas. I stated then that the country was supplying water at a heavy loss and that the Government had been put to considerable expense during the period of drought to see that the people in the wheat areas had water to keep them going.

Mr. Harrison: They were on a guarantee system.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Not only did the Government extend the goldfields water to those areas but they went to the expense of putting down bores and wells. In fact, the whole country was dotted with bores and wells. This, too, was done by a party that was supposed not to have had any sympathy with the farmers and settlers.

Mr. Thomson: Who said that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was said "God help the farmers when the Labour party get into office." Hon. members sitting on the cross benches now realise what the Labour party did for them at a time of urgent necessity and were present when the statement was made; yet they sat dumb; they never said a word.

Mr. Harrison: Any Government would have done the same.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They might have done so but the Labour Government did it. What is the position? Whilst the Minister knew that the water was being supplied to the Eastern districts at a loss to the State, he reduced the charge last year. I warn the Minister that if he does not watch himself he will have to reduce the charge again this year. Last year there was a loss on the supply in the country areas of between £8,000 and £9,000. It might be more this year.

The Minister for Works: We reduced the price with the idea of inducing a greater consumption.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, but the Minister gave them double the quantity of water for excess in addition to reducing the rate. I want hon. members to realise that when they see that there is a loss on the Coolgardie water scheme it does not mean a loss on the supply to the mines. It means that the loss has been incurred through supplying the country areas. The outlay involved in supplying the country districts with water was approximately £360,000, and of that, roughly, £130,000 was the cost of taking the water to the Eastern areas. Seeing what the position of the country is, and how well the farmers are doing, I do not think that the reduction can be said to have been justified. I never saw so many motor cars as I did on the occasion of my visit through the Eastern agricultural districts with the Premier last year. There is no doubt that the farmers can afford to pay for the water which is supplied to them. I notice also in the Governor's Speech there is a reference to bulk

handling. I do not know whether this matter has had much consideration. I note that a company is likely to take on the work and that the money is to be advanced by the Federal Treasurer. Are they going to do this direct?

Mr. Johnston: They are.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is what I want to know. If they are going to do it direct it means that we will have to hand over some of the principal sites in our various harbours to the Commonwealth and not to the company.

Mr. Johnston: No, they will have the security.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The security over the sites, and they will be able to take the sites over from the State. That will mean that the State will have to give away these important sites to the Commonwealth as security on behalf of this company.

The Minister for Works: How did you find all that out?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member has just told me that the Commonwealth are going to have this security, and that the company are going direct to the Commonwealth.

Mr. Johnston: That is correct.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I want to refer particularly to one action in connection with this company. I see a deputation, including Mr. W. D. Johnson and Mr. Bath, waited upon the Premier.

The Colonial Secretary: Are you opposed to bulk handling?

Mr. Underwood: Will bulk handling pay?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Will the Colonial Secretary demonstrate to me that bulk handling will pay, and that there will be no charge upon the State?

The Colonial Secretary: It must pay.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We cannot be too sure of that. I think the Colonial Secretary is jumping at a conclusion. This deputation waited on the Premier and asked that he should hand over some of the 1920 wheat to enable certain farmers to take up shares in this bulk handling scheme. I have never heard of such an impertinent request in all my life. In the Industries Assistance Act of 1915 provision was made whereby payments were to be made to private traders to whom farmers owed money. According to the reply from the Premier to-day, there is approximately £400,000 still owing to private traders. Fancy any body of men asking the Premier to hand over the value of a certain portion of the wheat for the purpose of enabling men to take shares in a company which is to be formed, and so to use money which really belongs to private traders. The Act to which I refer was an Act passed to safeguard the interests of the traders, and the full extent of the undertaking contained in that Act should be fulfilled. It is a ridiculous and impertinent thing to put this request before the Premier. I am pleased that the Premier said it would not be agreed to in some instances, but I do not think it should

be agreed to in any instance whilst traders are not given their just dues.

Mr. Johnston: Every wheat grower should take up shares in this bulk handling system.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not object to that if they will put up their own money. I would take shares in any company if the Government would guarantee the money, for it then would not matter if it paid or not, as it would not be my money.

Mr. Underwood: If the Premier went guarantor for whatever you did.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Quite so. Such a thing as was done by this deputation should not be countenanced at all.

Hon. T. Walker: It amounts to robbery.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Hardly robbery, but it should not be countenanced. Several traders to whom farmers owed money have already gone bankrupt. I was in a place once where a merchant had a bill brought in to him for about £100. On the back of this bill was written, "I am under the Moratorium." No doubt the man who wrote those words is one of the subscribers to the so-called co-operative society—that is to say, he is using another man's money. I hope the Government will take no notice of this matter so far as the bulk handling of wheat is concerned. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) wanted to know if bulk handling would pay. When I was in England I asked the Agent General some questions in regard to the bulk handling system. He said that in many parts of England no provision was made to receive wheat in bulk.

Mr. Harrison: The same thing may be said of other parts of Europe.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Agent General said they would not be able to ship wheat in bulk to certain ports, and the position would thus be that the wheat would have to be bagged after it arrived there. We know that there are various railway companies in England who will let out bags for this purpose. I am convinced, after sitting on the Royal Commission which dealt with the wheat question, that we shall not get so much for our wheat in bulk as we get for it in bags.

The Colonial Secretary: It is proved that you will get more.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That still has to be proved. Mr. Keys has stated definitely that bags are to a large extent paid for in connection with the sale of wheat.

Mr. Underwood: Why waste bags?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There will be many parts of this State where bags will have to be used. Whether there is a loss or not in this connection will be a matter for the company. In Canada there are several co-operative societies running the wheat scheme. The Government advance about 85 per cent., and the elevators are used six or seven times in the year. Here we are only going to use them once or twice.

Mr. Harrison: It is anticipated they will be used three times.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It all depends on what boats are coming here to take away the wheat. In Canada the elevators are used for everything, but here for some considerable time they will be only used for wheat. This will be a matter for further consideration when the Bill comes down. I consider it is wrong to give away money which belongs to private people for the purpose of enabling other persons to take shares in this company. I believe a doubt has been expressed regarding the statements I made before tea as to the price we received for our produce in the Old Country. It would be a splendid thing for Western Australia if some of our legislators could go to the Old Country and ascertain for themselves the conditions there. It would be beneficial to the State as a whole if they could do so in the same way that some of our Federal legislators have done. Some of these have gone to England in connection with the Parliamentary Committee, and have had an opportunity of seeing different parts of England and realising the position there in a way that members from Western Australia have not had an opportunity of doing. By going to England and looking through the Agent General's office and seeing the extent of the work that has to be carried on there, and realising the many duties attached to that office, members would have an entirely different opinion from that which they now hold. Many members have a wrong conception of the duties of the Agent General. The Agent General has now become principally a commercial agent. No doubt that office is very beneficial to this State, and I hope many years will elapse before it is abolished.

Mr. BROWN (Subiaco) [8.25]: I have listened attentively to the criticisms of the leader of the Opposition and with equal attention to the reply of the Premier, and I have also listened attentively to the remarks of the leader of the Country party. I agree with all these hon. members. I am sorry that the debate was not then concluded, for it seems to me that very little good comes of continuing debates of this nature.

Mr. Nairn: Why go on with it now?

Mr. BROWN: I intend to be brief, for if I did not say something I might be considered to have failed in my duty politically. In reviewing the Speech of last year and that of this year, we find the same three characteristics, namely those of hope, cheerfulness and optimism. It is a splendid spirit, but behind it all I feel that the real spirit is one of leaving things as they are. We are drifting on until we shall practically find we can drift no further. In the 1919 Speech delivered on the 31st July, we read these words—

Now that peace has been restored it is confidently anticipated that the resumption of normal conditions in our great revenue-earning departments, combined with the

general expansion of business consequent upon increased production, will lead to a general improvement in our financial position.

These words were uttered 12 months ago. Normal conditions have not yet been altered and our financial position, instead of being improved, is if anything, worse. This year's Speech contains the following—

You will be further invited to consider proposals with a view to bringing the annual revenue and expenditure into closer accord.

“Closer accord” is a very nice phrase indeed. I think these words should have been deleted, and in place of them we should have had substituted “something approaching insolvency.” In regard to the revenue of last year we find these words—

The revenue for the financial year just completed amounted to £4,944,850 and the expenditure to £5,596,865, leaving a deficiency on the 12 months' operations of £652,014, and increasing the accumulated deficit to £3,418,479.

This year the position is—

The revenue for the year ended 30th June, 1920, was £5,863,500 15s. 0d., as compared with £4,944,850 10s. 1d. for the previous financial year, showing an increase of £918,650 4s. 11d.

The expenditure for the same period was £6,531,725 as compared with £5,596,867 for the year ended 30th June 1919, or an increase of £934,860. That is a magnificent revenue from 330,000 people, and it is more than a magnificent expenditure when we spend that amount annually. In this year's Speech we have shillings and pence dealt out to us; why, I do not know. Last year we had the information in ordinary round figures. I presume there has been more time on hand with some of the officials compiling the figures, and no doubt the compiler was desirous of being very accurate. Yet I think it is a waste of time, and I trust that in future the shillings and pence will be omitted. The estimated revenue for 1919 was exceeded by £560,736, showing clearly that the officials who compiled those figures evidently took them from the preceding year's revenue returns, and, as they were practically ten per cent. more than was anticipated, it suggests that the officials were completely out in their calculations. The same remarks might be applied to the estimated expenditure, which was exceeded by £504,608. They found the expenditure was rapidly increasing, owing no doubt to various conditions, and so that there should be something approaching a reasonable balance they decided to increase railway freights and other charges to bring forward a revenue of anything from £250,000 to £300,000. Despite that increased revenue, our operations went back by £600,068. The Premier explained the other night that the expenditure was largely due to increased wages and increased cost of commodities purchased by the Government. No doubt it was an explanation en-

tirely satisfactory to the Government, but to me it is not very satisfactory. We are hopelessly drifting into a financial position in extricating ourselves from which we shall have some difficulty. We have staring us in the face increased Federal and State taxation, which will considerably interfere with the general welfare of the people, and if we cannot do something to reduce our expenditure it seems to me we shall be in a very awkward position at a very early date. We failed miserably last year to improve our position, even after eight successive years of effort. This year our expenditure is going to be materially increased. We have in the Railway Department 6,000 wages men and 1,000 salaried officers. They are now before the Arbitration Court with a demand for increased wages and improved conditions, and the Commissioner of Railways has promised that they shall be made retrospective to the 19th May. The money required for the meeting of these demands will be anything from £150,000 to £200,000. In addition we have the Public Service and the school teachers, 3,000 or more, demanding increased money, and no doubt they will get it to the extent of perhaps another £100,000 or £150,000. Then we have in the Public Works Department 3,000 men asking for an increase of 24s. per week, and although I do not think they will get it all, still no doubt they will get something, aggregating perhaps £100,000.

Mr. Green: In view of the high price of bread, they must have higher wages.

Mr. BROWN: I am quite agreeable that they should get higher wages. In addition to that, the cost of Government purchases will represent another £100,000 or £200,000, and the interest on our last year's deficit will require another £40,000. So, with all these figures, we find we shall have to obtain another £500,000 or £600,000 revenue this year. Against that, we are told by the Government that we shall be invited to consider proposals calculated to bring the expenditure and revenue into closer accord. The leader of the Opposition the other night drew attention to the reckless and frenzied finance of the Government. He did it with the object of piercing the inner consciousness of members of Parliament and the people generally. I echo the same sentiment, because I believe that too much publicity cannot be given to the subject. Private and national extravagance must cease if we are ever to do any good. Every person must investigate his banking account more closely and, when any withdrawals are made, consider how soon they are likely to be replaced. The Commonwealth and the States are going in for an extensive campaign of borrowing, and it seems to me that if the States and the Commonwealth can get all the money they require, very little money will be left for private investors, with the result that private investors wanting capital for developing primary and secondary industries will be hard pushed to obtain the money.

One thing that we must seriously look into is the fact that Australia is now closely approaching £1,000,000,000 of loan indebtedness, a sum that five million people will find a difficulty in paying interest and sinking fund upon. The worst feature of Australian finance is the fact that the Commonwealth Government saw fit to increase to six per cent. for ten years the rate of interest on our first and second peace loans, of approximately 50 million pounds. It means that for ten years there will be no hope of redemption or conversion. The Associated Banks were compelled immediately to follow the Commonwealth's lead, with the result that on deposits in those banks the interest has been raised one-half per cent., and to private borrowers on mortgage or overdraft one per cent. To me that seems a form of money manipulation representing a modified form of profiteering. A few months ago, according to the Federal authorities, profiteering had to stop. It was a very pious wish and it practically ended there. The raising of money values in the shape of interest on deposits simply means that we are going to have materially increased cost of living, because if we are advancing the value of money cent. by cent. it will soon be very difficult to finance the affairs of the State at all. It was said last year that the Commonwealth had authority to obtain compulsory loans. That argument was used towards the end, but finally the threat was not brought into operation, although the Commonwealth insisted upon the Associated Banks finding the last million or two of the money required. To me six per cent. for ten years is an outrageous proposition. Money lenders who have not the ability or the pluck to invest their money in other ways than on fixed deposit should not be permitted to obtain more than three or four per cent. If these high interest charges are continued, it will mean a continuance of the system under which a comparatively few people, whether individuals or corporations or trusts, are able to obtain everything required, and in consequence they are often extravagant, and indulge in costly excesses not beneficial either to themselves or to the State. The power the money-holding people of the world have to-day ought to be completely checked and materially reduced. The fact that they have such power simply means that they can indulge in all kinds of excesses. If it is going to continue, humanity generally will be far less happy than it is to-day, and the conditions of the bulk of the people of the world to-day are at a very low ebb indeed, far lower than they were in 1914. If we make money and use it harmfully, we soon produce a system under which violence prevails and the Brotherhood of Man is entirely forgotten. The policy outlined in the Governor's Speech last year was one of confidence and enterprise. The Government must be well pleased to reflect that it was duly accomplished. This year we have a policy of vigour, enterprise, expansion and goodwill, and I am

quite certain that again, as last year, everything points to its realisation. The Premier the other night said that the finances of the State for the past six months were very buoyant indeed. I am only sorry that he was not able to tell us that the expenditure for the same six months was safely anchored. I am sorry that no mention was made in the Speech of the Redistribution of Seats Bill. I should like to have seen that brought forward, with a reduction of members of both Houses, the abolition of State electorates, and the application of the principle of proportional representation, so that everyone in the community would have a fair chance of being represented. If we are to save the State from unification we shall have to alter our present system of government. Party politics is the great root trouble to-day. Every party is desirous of securing some separate party advantage, irrespective of what is beneficial to the country. To my mind the system has done more harm than words can convey. I believe in the principle of the initiative, referendum and recall, which has been in operation in Switzerland for many years and has given good results. If that system were introduced into Western Australia we would lessen our deficiency very materially and improve our legislation. An opportunity should be given to the electors at the forthcoming elections to express their opinions on three questions. First, are you in favour of party politics? Second, if party politics were abolished are you in favour of a single House of legislature? Third, are you in favour of a State Governor? If these questions were put direct to the electors, the people would be able to express their views on these matters. The expense would be trifling and the knowledge gained would be very valuable. Some reference should have been made in the Governor's Speech to the metropolitan water supply. During last summer we were on the borderline of famine. All we were promised after last year's experience was that more water would be obtained from other bores if it were found that other bores put down would supply more water. We have no assurance that this will be so. The Government should realise that, bad and all as the finances are, a start should be made to provide an adequate water supply for the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Works: We did make a start and were howled down.

Mr. BROWN: That only shows the weakness of this form of government. It is an admission that we should knock party politics on the head. The Minister says the Government made a start and were howled down. If that is not an admission of absolute weakness in connection with the system of government which we have to-day, I do not know what is. If we had no parties in this House and everyone realised the necessity for a proper water supply for the metropolitan area, the engineers would have

formulated a definite scheme, the howlers outside would not have been in evidence, and the waterworks would have been on the way towards completion. The residents in that portion of Perth west from Mount Eliza have been patiently waiting for an underground sewerage and deep drainage scheme. They have been waiting for it for 10 or 12 years and there is no sign of it being started yet. I do not know what the intentions of the Government are in regard to this work, but I am certain that, if it is not soon put in hand, the health of the residents will become so bad that this of itself will compel the Government to move. The Government have told us in the past that they cannot finance the scheme; yet the other day we were informed in this House that two million pounds had been offered to the Government by British investors at a reasonable rate of interest and our party Government had turned down the offer. Had I been in power, I would have grabbed it with two hands. Some of those British investors no doubt have a knowledge of Subiaco and know that it requires deep drainage and a sewerage system, and were offering this money to improve our conditions.

The Minister for Works: And had earmarked the money for it.

Mr. BROWN: I cannot understand why Subiaco should continue this uphill fight in connection with a dirty and obsolete system of sanitation while other more favourably situated districts on the eastern side of Perth have a sewerage system. The present Government and all succeeding Governments who continue to leave Subiaco without a sewerage system will be deserving of all the censure that the people in the metropolitan area can heap upon them, even if it goes to the point of charging them with criminal neglect.

The Minister for Works: Are you quite sure the Subiaco scheme is not started?

Mr. BROWN: If it has been started, it is in such a small way that one would require a microscope to discover it.

The Minister for Works: We have the site, anyhow.

Mr. BROWN: I am glad to hear that the Government have the site.

Mr. Underwood: It would require a good quality of microscope, too.

Mr. BROWN: Yes, I think so. It is about time this Parliament introduced some kind of a stop-waste policy. I am only going to speak of one direction in which waste is going on. Unfortunately, a majority of members seem to think that the ceremony connected with the opening of Parliament is one that ought to be maintained. I think it ought to be altered. At the opening of the fourth session of the tenth Parliament, there was no particular reason why we should have had a band and flags and troops and various other paraphernalia including knee-breeches, or why we should require to-

day a head covering similar to that which we so often see used on bald heads.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it the hon. member does not intend to be offensive.

Mr. BROWN: These customs, I think, are absolutely out-of-date. In connection with the opening of Parliament, we saw a certain amount of masculine finery in the shape of lace collars and cuffs and so forth, no doubt to give things a picturesque appearance.

Mr. Nairn: Why use soap?

Mr. BROWN: These are things of such age that we could very well do without them. I think that every custom has an object. Some members might think I am taking an objection similar to what would be taken by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones), but I have noticed during my life that, wherever a custom is preserved, there is an object in view. The object of the custom in connection with the opening of Parliament is to create a certain amount of class distinction.

Mr. Johnston: Locking the corridors, for instance.

Mr. BROWN: It is about time class distinction was eliminated from our system. Titular distinctions have ancient authority, but class and dress distinctions have not, and the time is ripe to get down to something like ordinary dress on these occasions. The ceremony of opening the present session required the attendance of His Excellency the Governor, the State Military Commandant, the Commissioner of Police, and a host of other important officials, with the object of impressing 400 or 500 visitors with the importance of Parliament and the importance of members of Parliament, whereas, in the scheme of Parliament, the members are more or less unimportant. A small detail which might lead to a bigger scheme whereby unnecessary expense, loss of time and labour might be saved was the omission of the artillery section of the display. It is only a small item, but I am thankful that even that was done away with.

The Minister for Works: It was done away with out of consideration for the soldiers suffering from shell-shock.

Mr. BROWN: Another economy might be effected in connection with the printing. I hope the Printing Committee will see whether some expense cannot be saved in the printing of the Notice Paper. The paper on which our Votes and Proceedings are printed is of very high quality, worth about £5 per cwt., I should think. In these times of financial difficulty, there is no necessity for having an inch wide margin on the side, and two-inch margins at the top and bottom. The watchwords for Parliament and the people should be economy and efficiency everywhere, wastefulness nowhere, and unlimited production. We have heard a good deal about produce, produce, but even if we have production and do not exercise economy and eliminate every particle of waste, we shall not succeed as we ought to do. Regarding the 16 paragraphs mentioned in the Govern-

or's Speech, I shall help the Government to give effect to them. More especially will I assist them in connection with those minor measures spoken of at the end of the Governor's Speech.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [8.56]: Like the previous speaker, I intend to be very brief, but I want to deal with some remarks made by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) when he belaboured members sitting on the cross-benches for their ingratitude to the Labour Government. He dealt particularly with the Land Bill, and pointed out that they were ungrateful for what the Labour Government had done. He said that 18 millions of money had been spent by the Labour Government, and that the producer and farmer were biting the hand that fed them. I cannot for the life of me understand why the member for North-East Fremantle should make such a statement. It is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. Green: He never said anything of the kind.

Mr. THOMSON: If the hon. member will turn up "Hansard" and read the speech, he will find that the hon. member definitely made the statement that we were biting the hand that fed us.

Mr. Green: No; he was referring to what the Honorary Minister said.

Mr. THOMSON: I made a note of what the hon. member said because I felt it my duty to reply to his statement.

Mr. Green: He was referring to what the Honorary Minister said at the farmers' conference.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. THOMSON: Nothing of the sort. I say the member for North-East Fremantle definitely made the statement that the farmers in the country districts were biting the hand that fed them.

Mr. Green: No!

Mr. THOMSON: That statement is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. Wilson: Your's is.

Mr. THOMSON: It is incorrect because the farming community have to pay for anything they have had just the same as any other individual in the State.

Mr. Johnston: Over and over again.

Mr. Jones: They never do.

Mr. THOMSON: If the hon. member for Fremantle pays his debts as honourably as those who were assisted by the Government, he will have nothing to complain of, and his creditors will have reason to be proud of him as well.

Mr. Jones: I do not get so spoon-fed.

Mr. Lutey: Some of those private store-keepers would like to have it all.

Mr. THOMSON: The members of the Country party fought for justice for those who are living under extremely unfortunate conditions. I give the then Government every credit for the assistance rendered to

the farming community at that particular stage, but it did not matter what Government were in power; any Government would have done as much, if not more than was done to assist the farming community.

Hon. T. Walker: That is the gratitude we get.

Mr. Jones: You are biting the hand that fed you.

Mr. THOMSON: I would not like to bite the hon. member's hand; I should get poisoned.

Mr. Jones: I might die, too.

Mr. THOMSON: I wish to point out how just my contention is. We hear a great deal about the Industries Assistance Board, but we have to realise that, in the wheat areas, there were large numbers of men who, through unfortunate seasons, were reduced to a very parlous position, and the Government of the day, with the intention of assisting those men, but also to protect the assets of the State, came to their rescue, and to-day we have a most prosperous community. Many of those men have paid the whole of their debts and now have substantial bank balances. There is no getting away from that fact. But there is another side of the picture. There are other men who have not been so fortunate, and I want hon. members who assert that the country is ungrateful—

Hon. T. Walker: Not the country.

Mr. THOMSON: I want hon. members who assert that the residents of the country districts are ungrateful to realise that the Government of the day convinced many people that it was to their interest to settle upon the land, that affluence was awaiting them there. A large proportion of these people were unfortunately placed on what has been proved by the Government officials not to be good land, to be land incapable of growing a crop.

Mr. Jones: Were those people sent out by the present Premier before the Labour party came into power?

Mr. THOMSON: They were sent out in accordance with his policy. Unfortunately the present Premier, or the party then in power, with the very best intentions sent those men out to what was said to be first class land but proved to be very far from first class. That was proved at the expense of the country and also of the settlers. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) has referred to the request made by some of those men to be enabled to take up shares in the bulk handling scheme. That request has not been approved by the Minister. I contend that men who are in such a position should not expect to get the money to take up shares for which they have not otherwise means to subscribe.

Mr. Johnston: Do you expect the others to do it for their benefit?

Mr. THOMSON: That is their business. The Government of this State will have to make up their minds what to do as regards settlers who cannot possibly make a success of their holdings and to whom large amounts

have been advanced for sustenance. What is happening to-day is that such men are throwing up the sponge saying, "We cannot possibly carry on." Then another settler comes along and takes up the farm, and the Government write off practically the whole of the I.A.B. liabilities, so that the new man goes in with a clean sheet. I contend that the men who have struggled for years on those farms should receive the benefit of such writing off. The Government will have to go into the merits of every case and write off a certain amount. While there is approximately £400,000 owing to outside creditors, I honestly believe that the majority of those outside creditors would accept 5s. in the pound and give the settlers a clear receipt. I am convinced that it would be a good thing to do so. Next I wish to refer to the remarks of the member for North-East Fremantle on the wheat question. He said that he was convinced Western Australia was bound down and committed to supply wheat at 7s. 8d. per bushel. He said that he had read this in a South Australian paper and that the statement was backed up by the South Australian representative on the Wheat Board. South Australia the hon. member says is kicking against this. But I contend the farmers' representatives have no power to sell wheat. That power, I understand, rests in the hands of the Minister. The Minister in control of the wheat scheme makes the statement, in which he is backed up by the Attorney General, that this State is not committed. Therefore it is the bounden duty of everyone in Western Australia to see that this State gets justice. It is our duty to support the Minister in securing that million pounds for the farmers of this State. Under normal conditions, before the war, if an agent purchased a farmer's wheat ahead, for forward delivery, and if the price increased, there were no complaints as regards the quality of that farmer's wheat. The agent gladly took all his wheat under those conditions. But woe betide the farmer who sold for forward delivery if the price afterwards went down! Then it was astonishing to observe the number of faults discovered by the agent in the wheat delivered, and the deductions made on account of those faults. Despite the statements of the member for North-East Fremantle, I sincerely trust that the Honorary Minister for Agriculture will prove right and that this State will reap the benefit of the million pounds that is at stake. I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle that money should not be spent without authority. There are times when one would much sooner be on the Opposition benches than behind the Government. When large sums of public money are being dealt with, Parliament should as a matter of principle be consulted. It seems to me that there is a good argument for reduction of the membership of this House in the fact that for eight months we have been in recess and the government has been carried on by Cabinet. During the recess the Government naturally have to incur

unauthorised expenditure. It is rather amusing to hear members on the Opposition benches belabouring the present Government for doing the very things which members opposite say this side accuses them of. However, I agree that Parliament should be consulted as regards expenditure of large sums of public money. Unfortunately, we are called together here as members of Parliament to control the purse. But what is the position? The country was committed to £140,000 for the purchase of a steamer. I opposed that purchase on principle, and I am opposed to all such unauthorised expenditure. I was pleased to hear the member for North-East Fremantle deal with the subject of immigration. He said that he does not believe we are going to get much immigration. I realise that there is a serious shortage of man power. The hon. member said further that he thought it was necessary for the Government of this State to back up secondary industries. In this connection let me point out the attitude of his leader when speaking on the Address-in-reply. The hon. gentleman commented on paragraph 3 of the Governor's Speech referring to "vigour, enterprise, and goodwill." I consider the expressions put into the mouth of the Governor are very good. Certainly the prospects of the State are encouraging, and, given industrial peace, I honestly believe that enterprise will vigorously apply itself to production. But the main point is that we want goodwill. Let me refer to the remarks of the leader of the Opposition on the Arbitration Court. He said that the Governor's Speech promised no industrial legislation and that he regretted that fact. Then he proceeded to describe the Arbitration Court as obsolete. To a certain extent that statement is correct. But who has made the Arbitration Court obsolete? Has it been the employers or has it been the employees? The decisions of the Arbitration Court are binding on the employers but certainly not binding on the employees. The leader of the Opposition went on to say that the employees had been crying out for seven years for amendment of the Arbitration Act to bring it into line with altered conditions. He said that to talk about round-table conference was mere platitude and piffle. He stated that there was no use talking about bringing the employer and the employee together in order to create a better feeling between them, and that the only way to create a better feeling in the minds of the thousands of men and women who worked for a comparatively small wage was to create a better feeling in their stomachs. Further, with regard to the creation of a better feeling, the hon. gentleman said that the interests of the employer and the employee were directly opposed. I contend that the interests of the employer and those of the employee have no right to be opposed. The leader of the Opposition proceeded to say that on the one hand we had the employer attending, naturally, to his own interest and welfare in the same way as everyone else in the State, and that practically the employer's sole object was to make

the highest profit that it was possible for him to make; and that he could secure that highest profit only by obtaining the labour of the employee at the lowest wage that the worker could possibly be induced to accept. He stated also that there was not an employer in this or in any other country that he knew of, except possibly an odd one here and there, one in a thousand, who would pay a higher wage than he was compelled to pay either by Arbitration Court awards or by the law of supply and demand.

Mr. Jones: That is good stuff, scientific.

Mr. THOMSON: Is it scientific? It is scientifically wrong. One cause of the present industrial unrest is that the leader of the Opposition, occupying the position he does, gives voice to sentiments of that kind. It is perfectly possible for the employer and the employee to meet at a round-table conference and discuss grievances there under far more favourable conditions than those obtaining in the Arbitration Court. After all, the Arbitration Court is binding only on the employer. The employer can be fined. The union secretaries take good care that the conditions of each award are carried into effect. But the employer cannot make a man work for him, no matter how he tries. There is no law in this world that can compel any man to work for an employer.

Mr. Jones: Did you ever hear of the law of hunger compelling a man to work?

Member: Not to work.

Mr. THOMSON: I thank the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) for his interjection, "Not to work."

Mr. Lambert: In reply to the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) I say that I made no such interjection. I ask the member for Katanning to withdraw his remark.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Coolgardie has asked for a withdrawal.

Mr. THOMSON: What statement does the member for Coolgardie want me to withdraw?

Mr. Lambert: The hon. member said that my interjection was that we could not make men work. I ask that it be withdrawn without qualification.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Since the hon. member asks for a withdrawal, the statement must be withdrawn.

Mr. THOMSON: I will withdraw. I do not know who made the interjection over there, but some hon. member did, and now none will father it. If this country is to progress, it is essential that everyone should do his share. I believe I work as hard as any member opposite.

Hon. P. Collier: That church you built fell down.

Mr. THOMSON: These cheap sneering interjections do not carry much weight. Nothing that I ever built has fallen down.

Mr. Green: No, it only cracked.

Mr. THOMSON: Like the hon. member. If those on the Opposition benches, who are the leaders of the Labour movement, would seek to bring employee and employer together, instead of declaring that the positions of employee and employer are as far

apart as the Poles, it would be better for the community.

Mr. Lambert: If we were not doing that every day there would be a revolution in this country, and you know it.

Mr. THOMSON: I have been both employee and employer. I know both sides of the question. I say the statement made by the hon. member who interjected is absolutely incorrect, as is also the statement made by the leader of the Opposition. The majority of the employers are desirous of giving their employees a fair crack of the whip.

Mr. Green: Then why did you become an employer?

Mr. THOMSON: I used the brains which God gave me to improve my position.

Mr. Jones: Yes, I think I should rather be a boss, too.

Mr. THOMSON: The member for North-East Fremantle said it was the duty of the Government to support secondary industries. If the hon. member is sincere in that, and if other hon. members are sincere in the same desire, they should work to that end, instead of creating class hatred.

Mr. Jones: Class hatred cannot be created; it is already in existence.

Mr. Lutey: The Trades Hall has settled 30 out of 38 disputes during the last 12 months.

Mr. THOMSON: I am delighted to hear it. If they would carry that propaganda further afield, instead of putting up the leader of the Opposition to make the speech he did, that hon. member would have far more influence than he has to-day.

Mr. Lambert: We will go to Katanning with that propaganda. Apparently they are very tolerant down there.

Mr. THOMSON: I am pleased to see indicated in the Speech the intention of introducing a Bill giving power to establish harbour boards. The member for North-East Fremantle said that the farmers using the wharves never contributed anything to the upkeep of those wharves. I give that statement a denial. I have not found that wheat is able to travel through our ports free of charge. It has to pay its just dues. The party I represent has a policy of decentralisation, and as my electorate is interested in the port of Albany, and as for years we have been endeavouring to get control of that port by means of a harbour board, the introduction of that Bill will give my electors considerable satisfaction. With the member for Subiaco, I regret that the Government have not seen fit to introduce a Redistribution of Seats Bill. We can do with considerably fewer members than we have in this House and, taking into consideration the enormous amount of money the Government have handled, I think it is time they gave evidence of economy. The Government came into power in 1917 with the avowed intention of effecting economies, but it seems to me that sufficient attention has not been concentrated upon this subject. In the Railways and Tramways Department in the metropolitan area we have over 6,000 employees. In the

Public Service and Water Supply we have another 4,000. Then, taking the Harbours and Rivers Department, the implement works and the like, it would surprise the people to realise how many are directly dependent on the Government for their sustenance. All those persons are being carried on the backs of those living in country districts. I am not going to say that those men are not earning their money, but I do think that the number of direct Government employees is very much greater than it ought to be. It behoves the Government to closely scrutinise the figures and see whether it is not possible by administrative capacity to turn those men into producers, instead of allowing them to live on the backs of those who are already producing.

Mr. Willcock: What is the use of your produce if it is not carted to market?

Mr. THOMSON: If we were dependent on Western Australia to consume our produce it would be God help us! We are looking to the overseas market.

Mr. Jones: Including butter and bacon?

Mr. THOMSON: The day will come for that. There was a time in the history of Victoria when she was in exactly the same position as Western Australia is to-day. The day will assuredly come when we shall be exporting butter and bacon. All that we want is population. There is no other State in the Commonwealth which offers greater possibilities than those of Western Australia. All that we require is population.

Mr. Lutey: We cannot supply the present population with butter.

Mr. THOMSON: I admit that, but the industry has been launched. The position is that there are more comfortable ways of earning a living than by dairying, and in consequence the people are not taking on dairying, or rather not many of them have done so. I believe the day is not far distant when flying will be the popular mode of travelling throughout the world. It behoves the Government to realise that while they are cutting up large tracts of land in the North-West they require to reserve landing places for the flying machines of the future. If, before the war, anybody had suggested the possibility of flying across the Atlantic, he would have been ridiculed. Yet we have already had two aeroplanes fly from England to Australia, and it behoves the Government to be alive to the future possibilities of opening up the country by aerial traffic.

Mr. Jones: They are doing it. They would not allow Brearley to land on the Esplanade.

Mr. THOMSON: I hope the Government will seriously scrutinise their expenditure and cut down as far as possible. We are spending far too much money. We may flourish for a period on borrowed money, but not for long. As increased taxation has been suggested, it should be remembered that we cannot tax the country into prosperity. I know of no other place on earth which offers to population greater advantages than are held out by Australia.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [9.28]: It is not my intention to say much in reference to finance. We hear hon. members declaring that finance is government and government is finance, and that the financial position of the State is absolutely unsatisfactory. Some seem to derive a lot of satisfaction from the ability of the Premier to forecast a deficit. It does not bring me much satisfaction. The fact that we are going back by two-thirds of a million per annum cannot too strongly be stressed. It may not be a great amount in itself, but the fact remains that the deficit is considerably increasing our expenditure every year. The interest we have to pay on the deficit at present is about a quarter of a million annually. If we did not have to pay interest on the deficit, it could easily be wiped out. The policy of the Government as to righting the finances seems to be the good old policy of drift, of letting things remain as they are. They seem to rely on the fact that the prices of wheat are likely to remain good, and that we shall have as good a harvest this year as we had last. If the Government had the two or three bad seasons the Labour Government had when they were in office, we should be back to the extent of two millions a year deficit instead of two-thirds of a million. During the time the Labour Government were in office we had for the most part exceptionally bad seasons, and yet we were able to show a better result than the present Government with really good seasons and high prices. Further, the money which the Labour Government were able to borrow, over which they were accused of extravagance because they lent it to the farmers, the present Government are now getting back to such an extent that it is unnecessary for them to borrow. We are told the Government have refused to borrow money which was virtually thrown at them. It would be just as well if the Premier would say definitely exactly at what rates we could borrow money to-day. We could say whether we, as a House, considered it in the best interests of the country that we should borrow this money and utilise it. We hear that the Legislative Assembly has not much control over the affairs of the country and the expenditure of public money, but we now have an opportunity of deciding whether it would be in the interests of the State to accept this loan or leave it where it is. The policy of the Government is to hold out promises for the future, and say that everything will be right in the sweet by-and-by. We paint glowing pictures of the future, and having done that we sit down and wait, and if the future does not come out as we thought it would, we still do nothing. These glowing pictures are not much good for breakfast. We want something more solid. It is time we got down to the bread and butter fact that we must do something towards righting the finances. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Brown) touched to-night upon a subject I raised last year, that is in con-

nection with loan moneys. I said at that time the Federal Government were profiteering in money, that they reserved the right to compel the people to pay money into loans, and yet charged them 50 per cent. more interest than they had done in pre-war days. The average rate of loan interest was then about four per cent., and now it is six per cent., showing an increase of 50 per cent. in the interest charged. I think the Treasurer at the time said it did not make any difference to the over-draft rates which banks were charging, but I endeavoured to show that the shortage of money and the lack of industry were due to dear money, and that the Commonwealth had connived at it by raising the rate of interest. Now we have it stated from the other side of the House that the associated banks have raised the rate for over-drafts by one per cent., which bears out what I said. The Queensland Labour Government have been accused of extravagance in their enterprises, but they recently started some new ones, which are not properly in full swing, and have been able to finish up the year with a surplus of £26,000. In the Speech we see forecasted increased taxation. Any Government that introduces increased taxation will be comparatively unpopular.

Mr. Pickering: They are very plucky, don't you think?

Mr. WILLCOCK. Seeing that most members of this Chamber have stated that they are in perfect agreement with an unimproved land tax, I think, if the Government brought down a measure to provide for that, they could count on plenty of support from this side of the Chamber as well as from the other side. We only need an increase in the rates paid by persons who own unimproved land to give effect to that policy. So far, land which is unproductive is not sufficiently taxed, and the time has arrived when a bigger impost should be placed upon the owners of such land.

Mr. Johnston: We want economy and not further taxation.

Mr. WILLCOCK: We want development, and such a policy that people who own land which is not utilised are made either to improve it or pay a sufficient tax towards keeping the country going as will make them improve it. The present land tax is 1d. in the pound on unimproved land. If the land is improved to the amount of the capital value of the land a rebate of 50 per cent. is allowed. I think we could alter altogether the incidence of taxation. We recognise a differentiation of rates so far as income tax is concerned, and our income tax varies from 2d. in the pound to 2s. 6d. We should do something in connection with the different stages of improvements on land. We could make a different rate according to the value of the improvements made. We should start off at bedrock, and if a man had land of a capital value of £100 and had improvements to double that amount, the rate should re-

main as it is. If he had land which was only improved to the extent of the capital value of the land, he should pay 1d. in the pound, and there should be an increase of ½d. in the pound for every 25 per cent. of which the land was short in the way of improvements. If, therefore, a man had only improved his land up to 50 per cent. of its capital value, he would pay 2d., and if he had no improvements at all he would pay 3d. in the pound. The man who owns land and does not make it reproductive should have the land taken away from him. He is not doing a service to the country in holding land in that way.

The Minister for Works: It could be resumed from him.

Mr. WILLCOCK: A man holding land like that holds it for speculative purposes, and is doing no good for the State. The sooner we get rid of the speculative element in land the better. There are many blocks held in Perth which have been held for 40 years, but not a penny has been spent on them. The Government should make these people pay more for the privilege of holding land. What right have the Government to protect a man who buys a block of land in the heart of the City and lets it remain idle, whilst other people have to go far out into the suburbs to buy land on which to settle? It is the same thing all over the country. We know that a railway running through land adds greatly to its capital value, and yet in many cases railways run through land on which no improvements at all have been made.

Mr. Pickering: Try the unimproved land tax.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If a man endeavours to improve his land, then for every 25 per cent. of the improvements he makes he should get a rebate of ½d. in the pound on his tax. If the Government intend to impose taxation which will press more heavily upon the working classes, they will meet with vigorous opposition from this side of the House.

Mr. Pickering: What about the farmer; does he not belong to the working classes?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Anything that adversely affects the farmer we will set our faces against, as we have done in the past. We have always shown our sympathy for the farmer. Any farmer who takes up land and improves it would not, under provisions such as I have mentioned, be affected. It does not take a farmer very long, on the present unimproved value of land, to improve it to the fullest possible extent.

Mr. Pickering: You ought to try the South-West.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I know of many better places in which to spend money than the South-West.

The Minister for Works: Someone must possess enough pluck to go there.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The unimproved value of land in the South-West amounts to very little.

Mr. Pickering: You have to improve your land wherever you are.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If a man makes sufficient improvements to the capital value of his land, he will dodge the tax altogether. That is only fair.

Mr. Pickering: That is not an easy matter to do when it costs £40 an acre to do it in the South-West.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If that is so, the land is worth nothing until it is improved. At all events, it is not worth more than £1 per acre.

Mr. Johnston: What about railway rates?

Mr. WILLCOCK: We have the extravagant estimate made by the Commissioner of Railways that it would cost a quarter of a million to meet the increased rates of wages in the railways. To cover this he raised the railway freights, etc., to what the member for North-East Fremantle proved to be about £300,000 a year. If the Government had said they were thinking of raising railway freights to cover increases for all their employees it would be nearer the mark, for the increase to the Government employees in Western Australia would mean an expenditure of nearly £300,000 a year. The railway charges have actually been increased to the extent of £300,000 a year to cover not only the increase in wages to railway employees, but the increases to the whole of the public service. Mention has been made of the projected amendment to the Mining Act. I do not know whether the Government intend to introduce amendments to the Mines Regulation Act, which will make provision as to the number of hours that men should be employed. It is high time that the hours of employment in the mining industry for men engaged underground were fixed by statute. It should be a penal offence for any man to be employed underground for more than 44 hours a week, and a penal offence for any man to endanger his health and life by working longer hours than that underground.

The Minister for Works: In order to earn sufficient money, men have worked many longer hours than that.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It should be a penal offence for any man to do that and so endanger his health. If he cannot make sufficient to live upon in 44 hours a week, then the industry cannot afford to have men working in it at all.

The Minister for Works: Why 44 hours a week?

Mr. WILLCOCK: It has been proved that men who have worked 48 hours a week have contracted miners' phthisis and many other such diseases. It has also been proved that those men who have worked shorter hours have not run so much risk of contagion and infection. Therefore, in the interests of the employees in the industry they should, by statute, be made to work shorter hours underground than they are doing at the present time. Up our way, men are out on strike in the hope of enforcing something in this direc-

tion. The mining companies have agreed to the reduction of the number of working hours to 44, but they offer a corresponding reduction in the wages of the men. The matter is being discussed by the Arbitration Court. All over the country the court has made an order that underground work shall not exceed 44 hours and without a reduction of weekly wages. Something has been said in connection with bulk handling of wheat. I hope that whatever provision is made, that provision will extend to all the ports of the State. The present proposal is that all the money should be spent at Fremantle, but there are other ports at which bulk handling facilities should be established, so that the wheat from the districts surrounding those ports should find its way to the natural outlets. I am in accord with the protest made by the Chamber of Commerce in connection with the farmers under the Industries Assistance Board not being allowed to put money into the bulk handling scheme. I have raised this question in the House on half a dozen occasions when the Industries Assistance Board has been under discussion and have pointed out to the Government that they made a satisfactory deal in connection with machinery as far as the big business people were concerned. Those people who stuck to the farmers during the period the agricultural community were struggling should now be considered and given an opportunity to get on their feet. Arrangements should be made whereby they might be enabled to get some money. They are losing the whole of their capital at the present time. At Geraldton three of these people, who were in business in a big way, went insolvent just because they stuck to the farmers. If they had been able to take their chance as ordinary business men, the position would have been different.

Mr. Thomson: They would not have got anything.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Well, the farming industry would have gone down completely but for those people. If the proposal we put forward were agreed to, that £200,000 be offered to those people, it would be accepted and money which had been wrongfully withheld would thus be paid.

Mr. Thomson: If you offered them £100,000 they would jump at it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Although the Government have taken credit for what they have done, it cannot be denied that private capital has been of great assistance in establishing the farming industry in Western Australia. The people who unfortunately for them showed their generosity by giving credit are those, who without deserving it, suffered most. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) referred to the question of immigration. Everyone recognises that we cannot make much progress unless we have a bigger population. Without greater numbers in our State, we have no possible chance

of reducing our per capita loan indebtedness, which is higher than it should be in any State. Our assets undoubtedly are good, and notwithstanding the fact that we are supposed to have had money thrown at us from the other side of the world, our indebtedness is over £100 per head. With that in view I do not see that we can receive very much consideration from the other end of the world. People look askance at matters of this kind notwithstanding the assurance we have had that during the past week the London financiers have been tumbling over each other to advance us money. The Commonwealth's credit should be better than that of any State, and it is a peculiar thing that the Federal Government found that they could not go on the English market to raise money at any thing like a fair rate of interest.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. Green: There is something funny about that; we cannot get particulars.

Mr. WILLCOCK: We have it on the word of the Prime Minister that he could not get money at six per cent. and on that account he was going to raise a loan in Australia even if he had to resort to compulsion. It has been stated that London capitalists endeavour to have a say in the policy of this country, and that the reason why the Prime Minister was refused money is that the Federal Government are embarking on a ship building policy. I agree with the members for East Fremantle and Katanning that we shall have to give more attention to secondary industries if we desire to get people to come to Western Australia. We cannot settle them all on the land. Land settlement may be all right, but it is a costly process, out of which we get very little immediate return. Moreover it takes some years before a man on the land is of any use to the State. I noticed in the cables the other day that inquiries were being made with reference to the establishment of woollen mills here. It is due to the Government to give us some idea of what is taking place in this regard, whether they are prepared to assist financially any person who is willing to establish woollen mills and to what extent. Two million pounds worth of wool is being exported from Western Australia, and we should endeavour to do something with it in our own State. The establishment of factories in Western Australia would provide employment not only for our own people, but for immigrants who might be induced to come here, as well as for young people who are growing up at the present time. We are educating people on all sorts of technical subjects, we take them through the primary and secondary schools and then through the University, and we are not able afterwards to assist them to make use of the knowledge they have acquired. The result is that those technically educated people must leave the State to find employment elsewhere.

Mr. Pickering: Do you think that technical education is taken far enough?

Mr. WILLCOCK: It is not of much use to them in this State. What is their outlook after they have qualified? Why should we educate people as we are doing when there is no direction in which they can apply their talent at a later date?

Mr. Thomson: There is plenty in the building trade.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I am talking about scientific education. So far as the building trade is concerned a good deal of instruction is given, but employers are unsympathetic towards the employment of apprentices.

Mr. Thomson: The position is that there is no continuity of work.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The fact remains that the people whom we are educating are compelled to leave the State. We should do our utmost to establish secondary industries in Western Australia, and particularly woollen mills a great deal of machinery, in-wool leaves the State which could be turned to account, and millions of bushels of wheat are exported. There is no need to export that great quantity of wheat. I admit that in connection with the establishment of woollen mills a great deal of machinery, involving the expenditure of considerable capital, would have to be installed. That cannot be done too easily or quickly, but there is no reason at all for the export of wheat. This should be gristed within our own State and exported as flour. We would then have the offal to use in connection with dairying and poultry and pig raising. At the present time we cannot get sufficient offal at a fair price and yet we continue to export wheat instead of flour. It is no use saying that we cannot do these things; we must do them and in that way provide employment for the people. If a big area of land were thrown open tomorrow we would find that many people were prepared to take it up. But that would not be such a great asset inasmuch as land settlement is costly and there is no immediate return from it. The capacity of the flour mill at Geraldton has been increased by over 100 per cent. during the past 12 months.

The Honorary Minister: You cannot have a good price for wheat and low prices for bran and pollard.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Quite so, but if we gristed all our wheat into flour we would get a good price for the flour, and the offal would be available. In selling wheat, we only get value for the average flour content and not for the offal. If we are going to make headway with our secondary industries, we must have plentiful supplies of mill offal. It is the duty of the Government not to allow any of this wheat to leave the country in the form of wheat. In fact, I think we could get a better price for it in the form of flour.

The Honorary Minister: Do you suggest an export duty?

Mr. WILLCOCK: The State has nothing to do with the imposition of duties, but I

would support an export duty on anything which could be manufactured into the finished article here. We had considerable argument with the Federal Government last year when they went further than imposing an export duty; they put an absolute embargo on the export of any product of the lead mining industry.

Mr. Thomson: That was because they were afraid of it going to Germany.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That was after the conclusion of the war. There was no embargo on lead while the war was on but, after the war was over, the Federal Government imposed an embargo, and it took six solid months of agitation to get the embargo removed.

Mr. Lambert: An embargo in favour of their capitalistic supporters. It is the biggest scandal ever perpetrated.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! You are not in the Federal Parliament now.

Mr. Lambert: A pity we are not.

Mr. Jones: If we were, we would be drawing £1,000 a year.

Mr. WILLCOCK: As the member for Coolgardie cannot make the remarks he desires, I will say for him that it is the biggest scandal that was ever perpetrated on the country. The Federal Government went further in regard to the lead mining industry than they went in regard to either wool or flour. I do not want to see a tax imposed upon any industry. I do not say that the State Government should ask for the imposition of an export tax on any article, but when we have a product which is grown here and can be manufactured into the finished state, thus providing employment, supporting a big population, and providing supplies for secondary industries, we should carry out the manufacture and thus benefit the State. I do not say we should import goods merely for the sake of manufacturing them and establishing secondary industries but, in the case of primary products, we should manufacture them into the finished goods and export them as such.

The Honorary Minister: The whole of the woollen mills in Australia do not make one-tenth of the cloth used.

Mr. WILLCOCK: No, that is a crying shame.

Mr. Lambert: The same can be said tenfold of many other things.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Coolgardie will have an opportunity to speak later on.

Mr. WILLCOCK: There are many matters which one might debate, but there will be opportunities later on to deal with them.

Mr. Lambert: And an election also.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes. If the Government desire to gain support at the forthcoming elections, they should take up the question of the secondary industries. No matter what Government introduces and fosters these industries, there will be no

carping criticism from me. I am glad that the Premier, in his statement, mentioned the public works which he is endeavouring to carry out at Geraldton. It is unfortunate that every time I speak on the Address-in-reply or on the Estimates, I find it incumbent to mention necessary public works in the district I represent. I have the same old complaint in regard to the water supply, and I still get the same old reply that a water supply will be given to us in the sweet by-and-by. Seven or eight months ago I thought the whole matter was settled. I had a definite assurance from the Minister for Works that the scheme would be gone on with, but that promise was absolutely broken.

Hon. P. Collier: Did the Minister for Works break a promise?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes, deliberately, and I told him so. He has been told by resolution of a public meeting held at Geraldton what the people there think of him in that connection. I hope we have now passed the worst stage and that the experiments being carried out to provide a water supply will lead to the establishment of this much needed work, for which we have been agitating for the last 20 years. All our industry and progress is bound up in the provision of an adequate water supply and proper harbour facilities. The Government do not seem to have a proper conception of the importance of the Geraldton district. Financial people, in deciding the relative importance of the various towns, have placed Geraldton as the most important town in the State outside the metropolitan area and Kalgoorlie. This has been done in connection with the raising of war loans and peace loans. The amount allocated to Geraldton is £30,000, while none of the other towns, except the metropolitan area and Kalgoorlie, have had more than £20,000 allotted to them.

Mr. Thomson: You must have plenty of cash up there.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes, due to the fact that the Government have not encouraged the people to put it into industry. I hope to introduce a Bill this session for the establishment of freezing works at Geraldton. The people have shown their faith in the district by putting their money into these works. I hope some definite pronouncement will be made by the Government in regard to the harbour. It is of no use the Government saying that they intend to spend so much money on a harbour if they do not know how it is to be spent. A definite policy should be adopted at once and, when the money is available, the Government should be in a position to go straight on with the work. I hope the Government will take a broad-minded view of the position and treat this outpost as it should be treated, and realise what has been told them time after time that, on the prosperity of the back country, the prosperity of the city depends. If they do this, they will enable

people to make those outer districts prosperous and, in doing so, will bring prosperity to the whole of the State.

On motion by Mr. Money debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 19th August, 1920.

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

MESSAGE—ASSENT TO SUPPLY BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, assenting to Supply Bill (No. 1) £2,059,000.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motions by Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles, leave of absence for 12 consecutive sittings of the House granted to the Hon. R. J. Lynn (West) on the ground of urgent private business, and leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to the Hon. J. J. Holmes (North) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Amendment—Single Chamber.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the Address-in-reply and the following amendment moved by the Hon. A. H. Pantou:—“That the following words be added to the Address—‘And we respectfully suggest to Your Excellency that the time has now arrived when the Government of the State can best be carried on by a single Chamber elected on an adult franchise.’”

Hon. J. W. HICKEY (Central) [4.35]: In supporting the amendment I take advantage of the opportunity to offer a word of welcome to the new members, all of whom

have made their maiden speeches and I think are to be congratulated on them. Despite the criticism which has come from the opponents of this amendment, its supporters put it forward with every sincerity and heartily commend it to the consideration of the House. Any reform must, of course, bear hardly on someone; and certainly any reform must meet with a certain amount of opposition, as our experience in this Chamber has shown. I listened attentively to the speeches of opponents of the amendment because I thought I might gather from them material for making a speech myself. I almost regret that you, Mr. President, are not on the floor of the House. Knowing the views you take of this Chamber, and the very conservative guard you place on the position of the House, I am satisfied that you, Sir, would put up a bit of a fight. So far as I have observed, opponents of the amendment resort mostly to ridicule and to the casting of aspersions on the sincerity of the supporters of the amendment. Indeed, almost a direct charge of insincerity has been levelled at the mover, Mr. Pantou, and particularly at the seconder, Mr. Moore. Sir Edward Wittenoom stated that Mr. Moore was guilty of temerity in seconding an amendment of this description after being only 24 hours in the House. However, Mr. Moore and Mr. Pantou are capable of looking after their own interests and of defending themselves. After all, the brains of the country are not always in Parliament. Men who have taken a life-long interest in their country—particularly men connected with the Labour movement, who take a peculiarly keen interest in the people and as a consequence are conversant with public life almost from their infancy—have studied political economy and know something about the political views of the community. Sir Edward Wittenoom's criticism, therefore, was altogether wide of the mark. Perhaps Mr. Moore has made quite as long a study of political economy as has Sir Edward Wittenoom. It is somewhat of a coincidence that the mover and the seconder of the amendment should during the last few years have had a wide experience, an experience not possessed even by Sir Edward Wittenoom, their most severe critic. They have had opportunities of studying the circumstances of other lands. During the last few years they have had opportunities that have not been given to many members of this House. Whilst doing their best for Australia's sake in other lands, they have seized the opportunity to study the changes operating in those countries. They retained their observing faculties while abroad, and have given this House the benefit of their experience. I shall support the amendment, which proposes a reform that is long overdue. I particularly welcome the amendment because it has been moved and seconded by two returned soldiers who consider that the conditions which they left here when they went to the Front should be altered. I sincerely