

months there would be a deficit of £400,000. There was no explanation as to why; but it seems very alarming indeed, and unless there be some very considerable drop in the revenue it is difficult to explain. However, the Treasurer seems to me to be endeavouring to do his duty; and, in place of members of this House sneering at "petty economies," if they have any sense of their responsibility they ought to be ready to assist anybody who is prepared at present to accept the odium of trying to put the affairs of the country straight. Before I sit down I would like also to refer to the deaths of the two hon. members who have passed away since the last session of Parliament. Both those hon. members were known to me for a great many years. Mr. Jenkins I knew in the very early days of Coolgardie, when he was mayor of that town; and I knew Mr. Cullen long before he was a member of this Parliament, when he first came to Western Australia. Though I sometimes differed with those hon. members politically, yet I always held them in very high esteem indeed; and I believe that feeling of esteem was shared by all hon. members. I wish also to congratulate the two hon. members who have joined us. I feel that Mr. Boan answers the description I have given of a man who ought to be a member of Parliament, quite irrespective of the party to which he belongs. Mr. Boan has built up a very large business in this City, a business that is a credit to him; and I believe he can be of great assistance to us in Parliament. I wish also to congratulate Mr. Stewart, and I feel that he, too, is an acquisition to the House, judging by the very interesting and able speech he delivered last evening. Further, I wish to congratulate the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Baxter on being members of the reconstructed Government, and I wish them every success in their labours.

On motion by Hon. V. Hamersley, *debate adjourned.*

*House adjourned at 6.9 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 25th July, 1917.*

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

### QUESTION—WATER METERS, MANUFACTURE.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Water Supply: 1, Whether it is true that the Government are negotiating or have actually let a contract for the manufacture of water meters outside the State? 2, If so, will he explain the matter to the House and make all papers available for perusal?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLY replied: 1, Yes. 2, Tenders open to Australia were called in March last for 1,000 meters of disc type. The tenders of Western Australian makers were nearly 25 per cent. higher than the tender of a Perth merchant for meters manufactured in Sydney, which tender was eventually accepted. While the Government are desirous and prepared to encourage local manufacture for Western Australian requirements, it is considered such a difference in price prevents preference. It is suggested to the hon. member that he should seek by motion an indication from the House of the extent to which Parliament is prepared to direct the Government to accord preference to Western Australian made goods.

### QUESTION—RAILWAY ROLLING STOCK CONTRACT.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Premier: Whether he will make available for members' perusal all papers connected with the £48,000 rolling stock contract, which it

is alleged was privately given to a firm at Rocky Bay, Fremantle?

The PREMIER replied: As the papers in connection with this contract are in constant use by the Railway Department, it would be most inconvenient to lay them on the table of the House. A précis of the matter is submitted for the information of the House, and I shall be glad to afford the hon. member an opportunity of perusing the files if he desires further information.

#### QUESTION — SEWERAGE SYSTEM AND CITY COUNCIL PREMISES.

Mr. SMITH asked the Minister for Water Supply: 1, What is being done to compel the City Council to have the premises of their tenants sewered? 2, Why are they allowed to evade the health laws in this respect, while private people are compelled to instal the deep drainage?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLY replied: 1, The City Council was written to in March last, supplying a list of unconnected premises controlled by the council, and asking when such premises would be connected with the sewers, or demolished. A reply was received, dated 7th May, stating that the question of sewerage of council properties would be discussed at no distant date. 2, The department has no compulsory powers, except the power to carry out work in default of the landholder doing so. In that case it is compulsory on the department to grant deferred terms of six years for repayment. This it would be inadvisable to do in the case of a local authority.

#### QUESTION — WATER SUPPLY, CARETAKER'S QUARTERS, KING'S PARK.

Mr. ALLEN asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the total amount of expenditure on the caretaker's quarters and grounds erected in connection with the water supply in King's Park? 2, Was this expenditure provided for on the Estimates? 3, If so, will he supply particulars where the item can be found?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, The residence was constructed by the

Public Works Department (*vide* annual report, 1911-12, page 37), in January, 1911, prior to the establishment of the present Water Supply Department, from debenture funds provided by the then Metropolitan Water Supply Department, at a cost of £1,544. 2, No, as under the 1909 Metropolitan Water Act estimates for expenditure from debenture funds were not presented to Parliament. 3, See 2. The conditions under which the ground is obtained from the King's Park Board provides that the Water authority shall keep the grounds in an ornamental condition. The grass planting is also necessary to prevent erosion of the banks and pollution of the reservoirs by sand and rubbish. The annual cost of upkeep is drawn from the item on the Estimates for operating expenses of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage undertaking. The King's Park Board stipulated that the building to be erected should be in keeping with the ornamental requirements of the park, and objected to the original design of the department as not meeting these requirements.

#### QUESTION—MINES INSPECTOR AND A FALSE CHARGE.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Attorney General: Whether he intends to supply to Mr. Hector Crocker, Workmen's Inspector of Mines at Kalgoorlie, the name of the person who recently laid a false charge against him of being a member of the I.W.W.?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: It is not considered desirable in the public interest to communicate the name of the person who communicated to the department the fact that it was rumoured that Mr. Crocker was a member of the I.W.W.

#### QUESTION — ESPERANCE NORTHWARDS RAILWAY.

Mr. GREEN asked the Minister for Works: As the Royal Commission on the Esperance Railway has furnished a report favourable to that district, when do the Government intend to resume the construction of the Esperance Northwards Railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The matter is receiving full consideration, and it is expected that the action necessary will be decided upon shortly.

#### QUESTION—WATER METER RENTS.

Mr. GREEN asked the Minister for Water Supply: 1, Will he abolish the water meter rents on the household services in the Eastern Goldfields, and thus place the Goldfields public on the same footing as the people of the Metropolitan area? 2, Is he aware that this special exaction is a continued source of vexation and annoyance to the Goldfields public? 3, Whilst the question as a whole is being taken into consideration, will he grant immediate relief in the direction of removing the charge from householders who are the wives or mothers of soldiers at the Front, or widows of men who have fallen in the Allies cause?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: In reply to Nos. 1, 2, and 3, I have to say the question of water supply to the Goldfields in all its respects is under investigation. Due consideration will be given to the matter contained in the hon. member's questions before a decision is arrived at.

#### QUESTION—GENERAL ELECTIONS, AND SOLDIERS' VOTES.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government to endeavour to make arrangements to permit soldiers on active service to vote at the forthcoming State elections?

The PREMIER replied: The question of endeavouring to make arrangements to permit soldiers on Active Service to vote at the forthcoming State election has been given very thorough consideration, and the Electoral Department has been in close communication with the other States. It has been found practically impossible to carry out the suggestion—(a) owing to the absence of such a Statute as exists in the Commonwealth, and (b) owing to the short time available for the elections.

#### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Premier: Précis of papers connected with the £48,000 rolling stock contract given to a private firm.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### *Second Day.*

Debate resumed from the 19th July.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.43]: Like other members I regret that we are again meeting Parliament with the war still continuing. I only trust and hope that the time is not far distant when it will be brought to a termination in favour of the Empire and its Allies. I notice that in the Governor's Speech presented to us the other day, His Excellency was pleased to inform us that since the last meeting of Parliament efforts have been made and, to a certain degree, successfully, in the direction of the formation of a National party. A new Government has been formed under the name of a National Government. The thought has struck me as to what "National" means. Can any person or any party claim the exclusive right to the name, particularly in a portion of the British Empire? Does it not apply to all persons, no matter what party they belong to, or to what section they belong, to all persons who are anxious and willing at all times that the country in which they reside shall prosper and be progressive? That being so, almost all the people, so far as Western Australia is concerned, every man, woman, and child of the population of the State, can accredit to themselves the title or nationalist. We have, therefore, to consider, when the Government wish to attach to themselves this phrase, that they are a body of men much superior to others, who are inclined more than others to advance the welfare of the country in which they reside, and we have to consider to a large extent whether such actions as theirs are merely a play on the sentiments of the people or whether they are brought about because they consider in the interests of themselves that the time is opportune. I read very carefully the Premier's speech at Moora, and think it is necessary for hon. members, in considering the speech of His Excellency the Governor, also to take into consideration that speech. I never read a more wishy-washy utterance from any Premier in Western Australia since the State came into existence. A large proportion of the speech was taken up in order to point out that his party had been successful in

forming a National Government. He said the people desired it. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the people were fooled in May last, but I am doubtful whether the Premier is again going to fool them in October. Once bitten, twice shy. The debate last night showed conclusively that the people had been bitten in May, and that they will keep clear of the teeth in future.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I think they were swallowed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier said first that they had formed a platform. Perhaps before I go into that I might take into consideration what is reported to have taken place previously. There was brought into existence a National Federation. That Federation called a meeting to which several members of Parliament were invited. On that occasion there was no time for members of the Australian Labour Federation. They said that members of the Federation could keep outside, that the people did not want them, and that they were disloyal. We find, when the meeting was held, that there were Parliamentarians there who took control of it. They said that the people at the meeting were not qualified to draw up a platform for the party, and that it was necessary to leave it in the hands of members of Parliament. If all reports are true—I am not going to vouch for the truth of them myself—hard words were spoken, not only in the room but also outside, and blows nearly exchanged.

The Minister for Works: Where?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In St. George's-terrace. Eventually a meeting was called by the late Premier, Hon. Frank Wilson, at Parliament House.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What meeting are you referring to at which blows were exchanged?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not vouch for the veracity of that, but I have heard that such was the case.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Who told you?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Sussex, when Premier, called a meeting.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You were not in the fight; it is alleged that you ran away.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I was there the whole time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Anyhow, up to that time the member for Sussex was very successful. He called a meeting, as I have said, and invited the members of the Australian Labour Federation. I object to the term Official Labour Party, for it is only a Press term.

The Minister for Works: Do you not belong to the Labour party?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We represent our constituents who sent us here. We have as much freedom of speech and action as other members of the Legislative Assembly. I can prove that. A meeting was called to which members of this side of the House were invited. Were we invited to take into consideration what would be in the best interests of Western Australia in the future, independently of who held office? Were we invited for the purpose of seeing what action would be best in order to put our finances into the best condition, and for the purpose of considering whether the member for Sussex should be Premier or the member for Moore? Nothing of the kind. We were told definitely and distinctly that if we were not in favour of a National Government we were not wanted. They said to us, "Are you in favour of the formation of a National Government, and if so will you be present at such and such a meeting?" I think the people of the country should know that because there has been a general impression that we refused to attend the meeting to take into consideration the best advancement of the State of Western Australia. Nothing of the kind. We on this side of the House have attached ourselves under a certain Constitution, and that constitution we intend to stick to. We intend to be loyal to the actions that we promised to carry out under that Constitution. A letter was sent by the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) to the late Premier, which I have only once seen published in the *West Australian*, but have seen no comments about it up to the present. In speaking to the editor of a journal in this State on one occasion concerning this letter, he said that it was a very good letter and

showed a true National spirit, and was a letter which the country should support. I said, "It is very strange that I have never seen it published in your journal." He said, "It is never too late to mend," but it has never been published yet. Perhaps it is advisable that we should have that letter placed in *Hansard*, and for that reason it is my intention to read it. The letter, which was dated 24th May, 1917, and was referred to by the late Premier in an interview given to the *West Australian*, states—

I have to advise you that the Labour party have decided, after due consideration, not to take part in the formation of the Government as proposed in your letter of the 16th inst. Whilst having arrived at this decision I desire to assure you that we are prepared at all times to co-operate with and assist any Government on matters of truly national concern. Our undivided support will be given to measures calculated to enable the State to assist in the repatriation of our soldiers, the care of and adequate provision for their dependents, and effective protection of the interests of the citizens in regard to problems arising out of the war, the termination of which, successful to the Empire and the Allies, we hope will not be long delayed.

My reason for reading that letter is not only to have it in *Hansard*, but to show the difference between the actions of members on this side of the House and the actions of members on the other side and some on this side. We have said definitely, distinctly, and clearly that it made no difference to us who was Premier, or who filled the Ministerial chairs, so long as they brought in measures in the best interest of Western Australia during this time of war, and that we would follow out that policy which we followed out at the time we occupied the Treasury bench, and would bring in no measures whatever of a controversial nature other than were necessary to carry on the affairs of the country during these troublous times. The letter showed that we did not care who had control so long as they worked in the best interests of the country. Did the other side take the same action or follow in the same footsteps? Did those who claim to be Nationalists and call us dis-

loyal act similarly? No. One of the first things they did was to decide who was to be Premier, and take into consideration the gentlemen who would be most popular. Brains did not count in the choice.

Hon. P. Collier: They took into consideration who would be the most likely to win their seats.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is a bit of a reflection.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I did not mean it to be so. I am only dealing with the actions of the party as a party. They found it necessary to select for their leader for the time being a man who was popular. It did not matter who he was so long as he was popular and there was no objection to be lodged against him, and it did not matter whether or not it was in the best interests of the country as a whole that they should appoint him as leader of the party.

Hon. P. Collier: They would sacrifice ability for popularity.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier was accordingly appointed leader. First of all he said at Moora that a platform was formed. I have a copy of this platform, and I am going to give the member for Sussex some credit in the formation of this platform, because it is one which every member in this Chamber could support.

The Minister for Works: Why not adhere to it, then?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We do.

Mr. Thomson: Are you supporting it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, certainly.

Hon. P. Collier: Tell us what it means, and then we will tell you whether we support it or not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We will go further than this platform, which I will deal with later on. The Premier said that a platform was formed, and a leader appointed, but when it came to the question of how the Ministry should be selected, it was decided to adopt the principle of elective ministries. According to the statement by the Premier at Moora the party had not decided in favour of the principle of elective ministries until after the leader had been appointed. But is it not a fact that dissension on the point took place even before the leader was appointed? Is it not a fact that the party wanted to elect the

Ministry and that that was the reason why the late Premier, with one or two of his colleagues, left the room? Hence the leader could not be appointed before the principle of elective ministries came under consideration at a future meeting. A Government takes building, and it should be built on good foundation lest it fall—no matter what or whom the Government is. Unless the Government have a substantial foundation the structure is bound to fall. The Premier said—

There is some difference of opinion about this new departure—

New departure! It is a departure which has been followed by the Labour party for several years, a departure condemned absolutely by the party which at that time the Premier represented, condemned absolutely in Chamber and out of Chamber as being detrimental to the best interests of Australia and of the State—the principle of election of Ministers by caucus. And yet we find that the Premier calls this a new departure. The Premier proceeded—

differences of opinions which must always exist where changes are contemplated. But we must recognise this, that times are changing and we must be prepared to change with them. Men who are satisfied to remain in the old groove—

I regret the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) is not here to-night; but I wish the member for Sussex (Hon. Frank Wilson) to note and remember this—

Men who are satisfied to remain in the old groove never make a country progressive; we must advance with the times. Thus, according to the statement of the Premier at Moora, we have in this Chamber three or four men who are not progressive. That cannot apply to any member on this side of the Chamber, because they have followed for years the procedure which the Premier now says is a new departure. But some of the members opposite put their principles in their pockets. Why? Are they honest enough to tell this country why they did so? I doubt very much whether they are honest enough to tell the country the true reason for adopting the principle of elective ministries. The reason has been expressed in common talk, but they them-

selves will not give the actual and true reason, because they know well that so far as the people are concerned it is their desire that we shall have honest politics, straightforward action, and shall have in public life men who will at all times do what is considered by them to be right; otherwise they would be turned down.

The Minister for Works: Will you give us the reason why you are over there?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not going to suggest reasons; the Minister may think he knows, I do not. I was referring to the question of elective ministries and quoting the Premier as having said that there was a difference of opinion on the principle. We may always be guided by official statements made to the Press. I shall not take any notice of anything pressmen have written as expressing opinions formed by talking first with one member and then with another and coming to certain conclusions, but shall quote from statements given officially to the Press. On 30th June, 1917, the late Premier, Mr. Wilson, made a statement to the Press—

He could not, however, help commenting on the fact that every move which he made during the present negotiations with the combined parties had received full endorsement by Cabinet.

Mr. Thomson: Are you trying to convert the member for Sussex to your side?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I believe the member for Sussex was telling the truth in his statement, which continued—

For instance it was definitely decided in Cabinet prior to the meeting he had attended at Parliament House that Ministers would unitedly oppose any attempt to foist the principle of elective ministries on the new party. For some reason or other some of his colleagues thought fit to depart from that understanding. Then, again, it had been decided later that Ministers would stand together to maintain the identity of the Liberal party, and that whilst they in no way wished to force upon other sections of the new movement their principles, they would as one man adhere to the right of the Liberal party to select Ministers according to their own methods.

That is a statement made by the member for Sussex, the late Premier, which shows conclusively that Ministers were not loyal to the attitude they adopted in Cabinet, not loyal to their own colleague.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a serious charge.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is why I stated last night I had every sympathy with the Treasurer. I realised he has associated with him men who, as they could not be loyal to their leader in the past, could not be relied upon to assist him in the manner he has a right to expect in his ministerial capacity. But it may be said that is only the statement of the member for Sussex, that it is Frank Wilson's statement and that he is annoyed at the action taken. But unfortunately for that argument we find that on 2nd July the Premier made a statement as well, in which he said—

It is true that Cabinet decided to oppose the system of elective ministries, and I voted against it when under consideration by the party. No Minister departed from that understanding. When the party again met, being engaged with others on a set purpose, in which I genuinely believed, I had no hesitation in accepting the views of the majority.

I ask the Premier now if he had any inkling at that time that at the second meeting of the party there was a possibility of the party accepting elective ministries and that if so he would be appointed Premier of the State. Opportunity came his way and realising the position in which he was placed, loyalty to his leader was set aside and he accepted the views of the majority. A man who is not loyal to his leader when he is a member of the Government can never be loyal to the State of which he is the Premier.

Several members: Oh!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have my own opinion on the matter. I meant to say what I did.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I said just now that a Government was like a building, that if the foundation is not good the structure is bound to fall. The present Government came into existence on an insecure foundation. We know that two, if not more, of its members sat in Cabinet and discussed mat-

ters, approved certain action, and then went out and acted contrary to the decision of Cabinet.

The Minister for Works: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I may say that one of the greatest shocks of my life was when I found that even the Minister for Works (Hon. W. J. George) had not been true to his old friend and colleague.

The Minister for Works: I rise to a point of order. That is an absolute lie.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The Minister for Works is not in order in making that remark.

The Minister for Works: I regret that I am not in order and therefore I must withdraw. The member for Sussex is my late leader and this is my business and his: not the business of the member for North-East Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I want to say that in all the transactions which have taken place in this matter, in my opinion, the action taken by the member for Sussex will meet with a greater measure of approval from the people of this country than will the action taken by some of his colleagues. While I am opposed to the policy of the member for Sussex I have always admired the man. I want to say in this House that while I hold his policy to be wrong, I decline to remain quiet and say nothing when I honestly believe that injustice has been done to the man. Hon. members who supported him in politics are the men to take home to themselves their action, which in my opinion represents a stain on the history of Western Australia. The Premier at Moora trotted out an old, old excuse. There might be some justification for that excuse had this been a new Government, or if the majority of the present Government had not been members of the preceding Government. The Premier said—

The National Government have only been in power a few weeks, and even the most exacting cannot expect that we should be able to mould a policy in such a short period of time which shall embrace the exact and precise methods by which the objects we have in view shall be arrived at. We have in the Ministry

men of ability to do it; it is our duty to do it; and, if permitted to do so, we will carry out that duty. We are firmly determined that economy in administration must be practised.

I ask, does the Premier intend by that statement to make the people believe that the only two amongst his late colleagues that were against a policy of economy were the late Minister for Railways and the late Premier?

The Minister for Works: Of course you know he does not. Why put up a cock-and-bull story?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Is that what the Premier intends to convey? The inference is there, anyhow.

The Minister for Works: It is your imagination that draws the inference.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not the only one who has drawn it. The Minister for Works is evidently feeling his position. Economy is to be practised, we are told; but four of the present Ministers were members of the late Cabinet. Did they practise economy then? How was economy practised? Let us take the late Minister for Lands and Agriculture, the present Premier. The expenditure in his departments for last year was greater by £13,000 than the expenditure for the previous year. Was there any necessity for the increased expenditure? The land revenue was £40,000 less than for the previous year. These facts to my mind show clearly that the statement as to economy in administration was made merely for the purpose of playing on the sentiments of the people. Then, in the Taxation Department there is an increase in expenditure of £3,556 over the previous year, while approximately £2,800 less revenue was collected. The Attorney General kept within bounds. He was a little under the estimate in the Crown Law Department, though he exceeded the previous year's expenditure in Mines and Forestry. Next, there is the Colonial Secretary, whose expenditure largely exceeded that for the previous year. It is true that the Charities Vote was reduced, and also the Police Vote, but the latter reduction was due to the Defence Department's taking over certain duties previously carried out by the police. The total expenditure of the

Colonial Secretary was considerably higher than that for the previous year. And these are the Ministers who go to the people and say, "We are firmly determined that economy must be practised in administration." Is it any wonder that the new Treasurer feels the responsibility which is placed on his shoulders? Is it any wonder that the new Treasurer thinks it wise to go into every department for the express purpose of cutting down expenditure? That is really the duty of Ministers, and not of the Treasurer. It is the duty of Ministers to assist the Colonial Treasurer in accomplishing economy. The Premier further said at Moora—

The Government are also firmly pledged to as far as possible wipe out any service which at the present juncture is either an extravagance or a luxury.

If I were holding office for 12 months and thought that any luxuries existed in the departments under my control, I would have wiped out those luxuries long ago. In times like these, when a deficit is mounting up, and when every shilling is required, is it possible to believe that immediate steps would not be taken for the abolition of all luxuries? Each Minister is responsible for any luxuries existing in his departments. If he did not abolish them, he failed in his duty. It is not for him to say that the Treasurer must take the responsibility. It is impossible for the Treasurer to do so. If luxuries exist, there has been laxity in the past.

Mr. S. Stubbs: The Premier did not say that luxuries existed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Why did he mention them, then?

The Minister for Works: That is his business.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is my business too. I am sent here to represent a constituency, and on behalf of my constituents I am entitled to find out what luxuries exist.

The Minister for Works: Why not go at it straight, instead of making an election speech as you are doing? You are not addressing your electors now.

Hon. P. Collier: That comes very well from the Minister.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If any luxuries exist, I say they should have been wiped out



long ago. Again playing on the sentiments of the people, the Premier said—

We will even deal with the privileges of members of Parliament.

What are the privileges of members of Parliament? It is true we receive an allowance of £300 a year, but we have to give half of that away, or more than half. What other privileges are there? Certain people outside believe that members of Parliament receive moneys unknown to the general public for services rendered, in addition to their allowances; and statements such as that which I have quoted from the Premier's speech tend to encourage that belief. I do not know what action the Premier is going to take with regard to the privileges of members of Parliament, and it does not worry me very much. The Governor's Speech draws particular attention to the financial position. I do not intend to deal at length with that to-day, because it was pretty fully debated last night; but I may again refer to the hard work the Colonial Treasurer will have to do, seeing that four of his present colleagues were members of the late Government. The deficit for the year which has just closed is stated at £669,741, or £351,526 more than for the year 1915-16. If the four Ministers to whom I have referred did not try to economise in the past, how can we expect them to do so in the future? The revenue for last year was stated at four millions odd in the Governor's Speech, and if State trading concerns were included it would be nearly £200,000 more than the revenue for the previous year. And yet there was an increase in the deficit of over £350,000. That is the position. Last year the whole of the receipts from trading concerns were included in the revenue. This year that is not the case, as regards either receipts or expenditure in connection with trading concerns. In order to draw a fair comparison, both items should be included. From to-day's newspaper I learn that a gentleman speaking in another place pointed out the great detriment resulting to this State from the withdrawal of moneys owing to the fact that Western Australia had entered upon trading concerns—a smack at the late Labour Government, of course. Hon. members will be aware that last year, apart from the Rail-

way Department and the Water Supply Department, which are the two largest revenue producing departments of the State, trading concerns and business undertakings showed a surplus of receipts over expenditure amounting to £139,882. This demonstrates clearly that so far as the revenue is concerned the business undertakings and trading concerns helped to build up revenue instead of depleting it. I am pleased that the Implement Works for last year showed a revenue exceeding the expenditure by £18,770. I reiterate a statement I made here some months ago, that the balance-sheet of the Implement Works published last year and just laid on the Table of the House is very unfair to the undertaking. It may pan out all right for the future, but the effect of showing the deficit last year in the manner adopted is to give the appearance of a much larger deficit on the actual working for the year than did in fact result. Twelve months ago I pointed out that there would be a deficit owing to certain actions which had occurred previously, but I am pleased that this year the works show a balance of £18,770 of revenue over expenditure. Another matter to which I had intended to refer to-day was dealt with last night. The Premier in his policy speech said—

The Treasurer hopes that when Parliament meets after the general election he will be able to have economies ready for presentation, and I will then ask Parliament to put through any necessary legislation to give them effect. These economies must be made, because the Government do not think it fair to start taxation until they have tried their utmost to effect savings.

Last night the Treasurer gave an undertaking that before the general election he will, as far as possible, give the country an idea of the nature of this taxation. But the Premier told the people that the Treasurer is not going to do so until after the general election. According to the Premier's statement, therefore, the Government are going to ask the country for blank cheque, saying, in effect, "After the election has taken place, we will tell you what we are going to do." That reminds me that just after the outbreak of war there was a meeting at the Palace hotel. It was said a few

years ago that the country was run from the Palace hotel. This meeting was held on the 4th September, 1914. Various gentlemen attended and took part in the discussion of means by which to save the country. They found it necessary that there should be an increase in the revenue, and that taxation should be imposed. It was only a difference of opinion as to what form that taxation should take, whether it was to be imposed on those in a position to pay, or on those not in a position to pay. There was a proposition for a poll tax of £2 on bachelors, £1 on married men, and 10s. on single girls. That scheme was put before the meeting. The present Treasurer was at that meeting, and apparently he did not care what happened. He was willing to break constitutions, set them aside, break Governments or anything else, because, in his opinion, the time was opportune for something to be done in order to keep the State in a sound financial position. At that time we were going through a serious drought and he thought it necessary to keep the wheels of production going at full speed. He said—

“Even supposing the Treasurer had to raise £1,000,000 on his own Treasury paper and gave it 10 years’ currency to bear 5 per cent., protected by a sinking fund and a poll tax on bachelors—and he would not allow them to vote if they could not produce the poll tax receipt——”

The Premier: Who said that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The present Treasurer, according to the *West Australian*.

The Minister for Works: What about the *Worker*?

Mr. Munsie: The *Worker* is not admitted to the Palace hotel.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Perhaps the Treasurer will tell us before the elections whether it is his intention to abide by the decision of that meeting.

The Premier: What meeting? Where was it held?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am quite willing to give you the notice of attendance, if you like, as follows:—

Your attendance is requested at a preliminary meeting to be held at the Palace Hotel to-day at 4 p.m. Business: To con-

sider a prepared scheme to keep the wheels of the above industries going at full speed, and to evolve a remedy for any crisis that might arise. Production and yet greater production should be the motto of the West. It vitally affects you. Do your duty, attend. (Signed) H. E. Stanistreet, Farmers’ and Settlers’ Association.

The Premier: That has nothing to do with this Government.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I did not say it had, but it has something to do with the present Treasurer, who was there.

The Premier: Not as a member of the Government.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He was present and, according to his own remarks last night, he still entertains similar opinions. He said last night, “I am going to do this and do that. If I do not do it I am going out.”

Mr. Holman: And if he does not do it the others have to get out.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I told him that he could not do it; I am afraid he has not at his back the assistance necessary to do it. But I am merely bringing this forward to show hon. members what was in the mind of the present Treasurer at that time, namely, that a scheme for raising money should be introduced, even at the cost of imposing 10s. per head on single girls. We are justified in asking if this is the scheme of taxation to be brought in after the elections. The Premier has something to do with that, at all events.

The Premier: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But you said so before.

The Premier: No taxation can be introduced without the approval of Parliament.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, but the Premier said he would not be able to tell the people until after the general elections whether there was any necessity for further taxation. I wish to refer to the platform of the National party, of the late Government, the platform of the member for Sussex (Hon. Frank Wilson). It is as follows:—

War—To marshal all our resources to aid the Empire in winning the war. Finance—Economy in administration; con-

centration of Government offices; legislation where necessary to admit of re-organisation of departments; amalgamation of all branches exercising similar functions, and the encouragement of efficiency. Taxation—After making all possible economies and in order to keep the State expenditure within the revenue, the introduction of a graduated income tax and other equitable taxation.

Of course, if they get the revenue, no further taxation will be required. Hon. members know that the finances cannot be put in order without taxation. Those gentlemen were the strongest opponents when taxation Bills were brought in here previously, measures which would have served to keep the finances in a satisfactory position; and the Premier now asks the people to believe that taxation will be unnecessary. He believes that taxation will be unnecessary. He believes we can economise, but he wants to just warn us of the possibility of further taxation. I remember Mr. Daglish's Government were abused up hill and down dale because we brought in a land tax. The Premier who followed that line went to the country. It was said that the land tax was not necessary; not taxation was necessary, but only economy. Yet after a few weeks in office Mr. Daglish's successor brought in the very tax that Mr. Daglish had proposed.

Hon. P. Collier: The same thing was said 12 months ago by the Attorney General.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am coming to that. In 1905 this same thing took place. It was successful at that time, and the Premier now thinks it will again be successful with the people. This platform to which I was referring continues—

To aid production and encourage to the utmost the development and protection of the natural resources of the country; also assisting to establish and develop secondary industries.

The only way that can be done is by a heavy tariff. Let me ask the members of the Country party how their policy will come in when we have a heavy tariff. Yet this is the only way to assist the secondary industries, more particularly in view of the attitude of the manufacturers of a certain nation who, owing to the position brought about by the war, are sending their goods

on the markets of Australia, goods against which, in the future, we will be unable to compete without the aid of a heavy tariff. The platform continues—

Repatriation of soldiers and sailors—the State working in co-operation with the Commonwealth Government in all matters relating to the well-being of returned men, including settlement on the land, provision being made for partially improved farms in suitable districts. Developmental Research—In view of the decision of the nation to develop necessary industries within the dominions by science, inventive genius, and national capital, every provision to be made by the establishment of local committees to take stock of our many natural products and thus enable us to participate to the fullest extent in this great development scheme.

In regard to that, the member for Swan (Mr. Nairn) apparently thought it was something new. As a matter of fact there has been a local committee in existence in Western Australia for nearly three years; and not only that, but a committee was formed for this purpose by the Commonwealth Government immediately after the outbreak of war. Mr. Mann, the Government Analyst, has been a member of that committee almost since its inception, and I think there is another member in the Lands Department, and a third in the University; so we have nothing new here. It is a very good idea, but it is already in existence, and was supported in its entirety by the Labour Government, who were then in office. Yet it is now being put up as something new for the people. Then, in this platform we come to the subject of immigration. I remember a few months ago, just after some of the present Ministers came into office, they made a big song about immigration. They were going to bring in 25,000 persons per annum and make preparation to settle those people on the land. I believe it will take this or any other Government, no matter what special ability they might have, all their time to properly place our returned soldiers on the land, without looking to England, or elsewhere, for immigrants. I would say, too, with all credit to Sir Newton Moore, that in all proba-

bility we would have had thousands more Germans in this State had Mr. Connolly, instead of Sir Newton Moore, been Agent General; because Mr. Connolly, when Colonial Secretary, told Sir Newton Moore, "Do not be too particular what immigrants you send here." And when Mr. Joseph Cook found that the obtaining of immigrants in England was a failure, that England desired to keep her own population, and that an agitation had arisen in England against emigration, he sent a commissioner to Germany to see whether sufficient immigrants could be obtained there, and the report came back recommending that this be done. Sir Newton Moore said, "So far as I am concerned, I can get sufficient immigrants from England. I do not agree with going to Germany in order to increase our population." Popular opinions on immigration are based on what has followed previous wars, and what action has been taken by numbers of people settling back into old avenues of employment. But we are under entirely different conditions and we only suppose that the same things will happen again. If Great Britain in 1912 could not afford to lose her population, when New South Wales and Victoria were paying for hundreds of berths coming to Australia empty, how is it possible that she can afford to lose her population to-day?

Hon. Frank Wilson: We got 15,000.

Hon. Frank Wilson: We got 15,000. 1913-14.

Hon. Frank Wilson: As a result of our policy; yet you closed down on our immigration policy.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, we did not.

Hon. P. Collier: We got 13,000 in three years.

Hon. Frank Wilson: McCallum closed you right down.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There was never in the history of Western Australia so many immigrants introduced into this State as during the term of the Labour Government. More money was provided for it. Perhaps my friends opposite will tell me that that was extravagant. At the time the war broke out we had shiploads of immigrants in England which could not be brought here. One boatload was loaded with immigrants and

they had to be taken off. To fill the waste places of Australia it will be necessary to have immigrants and in my opinion we shall have to wait a few years before we can carry the immigration policy into effect. One well-known gentleman, in discussing this question with me, said: "Are you not of opinion that children would make the best immigrants for Australia?" I replied that in all probability they would. He said, "You must remember that unfortunately in Great Britain to-day there is a large number of fatherless children and widows that might be brought out to people Australia"; and he went on to say that he was instrumental with some other gentleman in raising three millions sterling to carry immigrants to Canada to people land which they had there. I said that in my opinion perhaps children would make the best immigrants, but money was not available to bring them here. It is useless to talk of bringing women and children here unless we can see our way to maintain them until they are in a position to obtain their own livelihood. Another question that comes to the forefront, as far as politics are concerned, is the bulk handling of wheat. I read a statement last night—I do not intend to repeat it—in regard to the action of Mr. Hughes and the erection of silos. The Government must be very careful at the present time in entering on work of this description. There was a report prepared by the Engineer-in-Chief of Western Australia in 1914 after he came back from Canada, which I think should be placed on the Table of the House as it would give some good information to members, particularly those engaged in farming pursuits. Though Mr. Thompson bases his estimates on the bulk handling of wheat at a very low figure in regard to appliances and the erection of elevators, I am very much afraid, after reading the reports of Commissions in the other States, that it is going to cost Western Australia a million of money before we have bulk handling established in Western Australia. With the expenditure mentioned by the Engineer-in-Chief there is a possibility of the farmer saving a half-penny a bushel, and that will apply only to those who live close to where the silos are erected.

Mr. Troy: How do you explain it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He gives various tables and points out that with extraordinarily clean wheat the farmers might get a penny more. I want to say this, so that some of my friends opposite, who are opposed to socialism, will bear it in mind—that it is no use to start bulk handling unless the Government decide to become bankers as far as the farmers are concerned. Bulk handling in Canada is carried on by companies, but we shall have to go in for socialism pure and simple to make bulk handling as successful here as it is in Canada. I would like members to have the report of Mr. Thompson before them. It is very interesting. I am afraid that the price mentioned in that report for the purpose of building elevators and silos in parts of the State is too low by a long way. Then again, I would like to see the Government bring in a Bill this session for controlling the price of food. We know that since the Act which we had previously in force was discontinued, prices of commodities have considerably increased and large prices have been charged. Another thing that is required is a fair rent Bill. In New South Wales they have had one in force since 1915. It allows landlords to get as a return from their property after deducting insurance and so forth, the same interest as they would pay to the Commonwealth Bank for an overdraft. Though times look bad so far as Fremantle is concerned, extortionate rents are charged. Some land changed hands the other day for £17,000, and the rents have gone up approximately to £3,500 a year. Not only does that apply to the property I have mentioned, but properties adjoining and opposite are following on the same lines. The reason given is that in all probability in the near future the Commonwealth will find it necessary to increase taxation and the owners say that they must get it from someone else, and this has to be passed on, first to the tenant, and the tenants pass it on in the price of goods; ultimately it comes to the worker, as it always does. There is one little matter to which I wish the Government would give some attention. We have at the present time several hundred residents of Western Australia, or persons who are domiciled in Western Australia, working just over the border. West-

ern Australia is their home. It is the place to which they look in every shape and form. Many have their wives living here at the present time; but because they are engaged on a public work and it is necessary, owing to the manner in which the Transcontinental line is being constructed, that they must cross the border to do their work, these people are to be disfranchised as far as Western Australia is concerned. I think it is only just and fair that under such conditions a Bill should be brought in, if it cannot be done otherwise, to enable these persons to vote at the general elections.

Mr. Piesse: Who disfranchised them?

The Premier: They are disfranchised because they have gone out of the State.

Hon. P. Collier: They are domiciled in Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I think it would be only just for the Government to introduce a Bill giving those persons who are domiciled in Western Australia, but who have gone over the border, and who are engaged to work on the Transcontinental line, an opportunity to vote at the next general election. It could only apply to those entitled to vote because a person must be resident in Western Australia for six months before being entitled to the franchise. The Government should make provision by Act of Parliament if it cannot be done otherwise. I regret that owing to the finances, provision cannot be made for the purpose of constructing the railway bridge at Fremantle. I also regret that a report has not been made during this year as to the present bridge at Fremantle and I advise the Premier—owing to the heavy rains that we have been having and the high tide, the water has never been higher than at the present time—to order an inspection of the bridge at the earliest possible moment to see if it is safe for traffic.

The Premier: Is it the railway bridge or the road bridge to which you refer?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The railway bridge, but it should apply to both. I would like again to point out to the Government the necessity at the earliest possible date of getting a new dredge for the purpose of deepening our harbours. Unless this is done, according to the reports received and the decision arrived at by the

Dominions Commission, it is going to be a loss to Western Australia in connection with oversea shipping. New South Wales and Victoria have already taken the matter in hand so as to provide for the new class of ships which will be coming out here immediately at the close of the war. New South Wales and Victoria are preparing for the new class of steamer which will be engaged in the Australian trade. Only a few months ago a steamer came to Western Australia and tried to get into Albany and then Fremantle to load coal, but there was not sufficient water to enable the boat to get in and the vessel had to go to Tasmania for coal. Unless something is done to deepen the harbours it will be a very serious loss to Western Australia, and in the future there will be some difficulty in getting these vessels back again. I hope the Government will take the matter into consideration. I am sorry the finances are in such a condition that this work cannot be done now.

The Attorney General: Is there not a depth of 40 feet at Albany?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not as deep at Albany as at Fremantle.

The Attorney General: I was always under the impression that there was a depth of 40 feet there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I want to compliment my friend the member for Leonora (Mr. Foley) on the influence he has been able to exercise with the Federal Government on the subject of the tax it was intended to impose on the war profits of mines. The member for Dampier in the House of Representatives (Mr. Gregory) repeatedly endeavoured to prevail on the Federal Government not to impose this taxation, and he spoke on the subject on several occasions. Several other members in the Federal Parliament did likewise but until the member for Leonora brought the matter before this House, the Federal Government were solid. They eventually saw that a member of the State Parliament had taken action in the matter and dropped the idea of imposing the tax like a hot spoon. I compliment the member for Leonora on the ability he displayed in influencing the Federal Government. I have not had an opportunity of perusing the evidence taken in

connection with the Nevanas inquiry, nor the comments of his Honour Mr. Justice Burnside, but I am very pleased indeed to find that his Honour has borne out the statements which were made in this House, and removed entirely the imputations which were cast on members of the late Government in regard to this matter. There is not the least doubt in my mind, as I have said here repeatedly, that everything that was done in connection with the freezing works was done in the opinion of every member of the late Government in the best interests of the State. We are all liable to make mistakes, and perhaps a mistake was made in rushing this job on, but it will be pleasing, not only to the members of the late Government, but to every member of this House to know that the good name of Western Australia has not been besmirched.

Mr. Troy: What about the missing correspondence?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That has nothing to do with it.

Mr. Troy: It has a lot to do with it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I think that was cleared up entirely.

Mr. Troy: Mr. Scaddan ought to have been impeached.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am of the opinion that while Mr. Scaddan was Premier of this State he devoted all his ability towards the interests of Western Australia. I felt right through that job—perhaps an error was made—that every action which was taken was taken in the best interests of Western Australia. I only hope that when the next Parliament assembles we shall meet under much brighter auspices than we are doing on this occasion. I trust the war will be ended, and I also trust that the cause for the utterances of the Treasurer last evening will be removed, and that the pessimism which must have prevailed after the Treasurer's speech was read this morning will have disappeared, that the horizon will be brighter and that we shall be able to go on progressing as we have always done in the past. In my opinion Western Australia has not yet felt the effects of the war except to a small extent, and as I remarked last night, immediately the war terminates—which we hope will be soon—there will no longer be an expenditure of 40 millions annually in

Australia, and our position will be alike to that of the man who fell from the building, we shall feel the bump.

Hon. P. Collier: That will be the time when there will be depression and unemployment.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is not the least doubt about that to my mind, and it is up to every man and woman in Western Australia to remember this and to look ahead. It has been asked, what will the States do for money? Speaking only the other day to a man who is engaged in financial circles, the fact was pointed out to me that in Western Australia the population of approximately 300,000 people spent annually about three millions sterling in intoxicating liquors. This man also pointed out to me that in Russia, immediately after the prohibition of the sale of vodka, the savings of the people increased from nine to eighteen millions in the short period of eighteen months. My friend put this matter in a way that convinced me that if the people of Western Australia would only reduce their expenditure on liquor by half, and put a million and a half into the Savings Bank, there would be no occasion for Western Australia to go outside for the purpose of financing its Government. The Treasurer would then be able to remove the difficulty which exists to-day. I am very much afraid that for the time being, however, it is not possible to carry such an idea into effect. The man to whom I have referred was not a teetotaler like myself, and when we meet people of this description who realise the position in which the finances of the State are it should incline others to think whether it would not be in the best interests of the country to take action in the direction, first of all of wiping out the obnoxious gallon and wine licenses, and allow only properly conducted licensed premises to carry on the sale of intoxicating liquor. The license fees could then be considerably increased and much revenue would be derived by the State.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What are your views on anti-shouting?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have come across many men in my time who would never have known what it was to be under the influence of drink if it had not been for

shouting. In conversation with a man after the anti-shouting meeting in the Town Hall, Perth, a few nights ago, I was told that while he did not agree altogether with the object of the meeting, he confessed that the only occasion on which he had ever been the worse for liquor was brought about by shouting. In my honest opinion if an anti-shouting measure were carried in this Parliament it would be one of the principal things which would have a tendency towards putting the million and a-half to which I have referred into the Savings Bank.

Mr. Hickmott: You do not enforce the laws you have already in operation.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I regret very much that I have had to speak in the manner I have had to do to-day, but I think I was justified in doing so. I should like to make a few concluding remarks on the subject of one of the planks of the National platform, namely, "Parliamentary freedom, Representative Government, free discussion and action of members of Parliament who shall be responsible only to their electors." That is very good sentiment. I am entirely in accord with that policy. But is it not a fact that only a few days ago the present Government held a Caucus meeting to discuss certain matters? And were all who were present at that meeting unanimous? When they came here they were unanimous. Yet they talk of Parliamentary freedom.

The Attorney General: When was this, and what question was it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If there is not a member of this House who will not say what he believes is right and correct, he should never have a seat here. With all due respect to this platform of the National party, members on the Opposition side of the House do say what they think and that has been the unfortunate part of it, especially when a member expressing his candid views has been a member of the Government. What is the position in regard to the present Government? The members supporting them sit dumb. The Premier moves something, and someone seconds it, and all the others say "Aye." The freedom is on this side of the House and not on the Ministerial side. And whilst they have felt the necessity for a plank such as the one I have read, we know there is no intention of carry-

ing it out; it is there merely to throw dust in the eyes of the people. The whole position is a sham. I have sat on the front Ministerial bench and opposed a Bill brought in by one of our own Ministers. Yet we are told that we on this side do not know the meaning of freedom.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [7.30]: I desire first of all to deal briefly with the position that led up to the taking of office by the present Administration. When the Wilson Government came into power there were some fairly bitter complaints from two or three newspapers, and particularly on the floor of the House, as to the intrigue that had gone on between the then Liberal party and the Country party; but let me say that the then negotiations have been completely outdone by those that took place over the formation of the present so-called National Government. To me it seems most peculiar that, during the crisis in the Federal arena, when Mr. Hughes refused to agree to the majority rule of his party, he was held up as a strong man, as the man who was going to save Australia, because he took a definite attitude; and the newspapers lauded him to the skies for having disagreed with the majority rule of his own party. At that time I believed that Mr. Hughes was wrong, and I criticised him from many platforms. I hold that it is not possible for any Government, municipality, roads board, society, or other organisation of any description to carry on its functions except by majority rule. But when the negotiations for the formation of the present Government were proceeding, the then Premier (Hon. Frank Wilson) took exactly the same stand as Mr. Hughes had previously taken, and practically defied majority rule; and, strange to say, almost the whole of the Press, and particularly the party which had been behind him, stoutly opposed Mr. Wilson because, forsooth, he had adopted the attitude previously adopted by Mr. Hughes. If there is any one thing in which the present Government are consistent, it is their inconsistency. They have made it appear throughout the State, in the Press and on the public platform, that they

are out to drop party politics, that we require a National Government for the purpose of winning the war. If for a moment I thought there was any sincerity whatever in the forming of a National Government to win the war, I would be prepared to give that Government some little consideration.

The Attorney General: Come right over here.

Mr. MUNSIE: Let me tell the Attorney General that he will require to show something vastly different from what he has shown to date. Take His Excellency's Speech, which was prepared by the present Government for His Excellency to deliver. The first reference in that Speech to which I would point is as follows:—

It is the duty of my advisers to aid the Federal Government in every effort that may be made to secure their adequate reinforcements in order that Australia may perform to the full its duty to the Empire, and be represented by a complete army in the field when the triumphant peace to which we look forward with assurance is achieved.

I contend that the present Government could do a good deal towards assisting recruiting if they were so disposed. But the action of many of their supporters to-day, and the attitude of the Government towards those supporters, in my opinion, is doing more to retard recruiting in this State than anything else that can be mentioned. I refer to the repeated utterances by hon. members opposite, and by the Press of the State, proving that because a man happens to differ from them politically he is by them classed as a member of the I.W.W., or as pro-German, or as anything else that is bad and disloyal. We have in Kalgoorlie a workmen's inspector, appointed by the late Labour Government, who I believe holds the respect of every man working underground on the Golden Mile. Yet that man has been accused of being a member of the I.W.W., and has practically had to go before a magistrate to swear that he is not so. Why? For no other reason than that he is an absolute out-and-out supporter of the Labour party's policy and principles.

The Attorney General: Absolute moonshine.



Mr. MUNSIE: It is for no other reason whatever. The charge has been laid against him for no other reason than that he has advocated the ideals of the Labour party. Nor is he the only one. In many of our prominent workshops, and particularly in the Government workshops, there is practically a reign of terror, and it is highly dangerous for a man to express a labourite's views. If he does, he is immediately accused of being a member of the I.W.W., is reported to his superior officers, and has to appear before them to disprove the charge. If it is desired to encourage recruiting, it is time to drop this attitude of classing all labourites as members of the I.W.W.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Take Dennis, one of the most ardent conscriptionists in the State.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, yet because he had the audacity to stick to his principles he has been accused of being a member of the I.W.W. In regard to the recent Brownhill-Ivanhoe election, I see by this morning's paper that the late Minister for Mines has had something to say. I wish to refer to two of the points mentioned. He says that a certain monster raised its head again in the late election. Unfortunately that was so, but on every occasion it was due to Mr. Scaddan's supporters and canvassers. I defy Mr. Scaddan or any of his canvassers to point to any instance of a canvasser or speaker on our side insinuating anything in regard to orange and green.

Hon. P. Collier: His speakers did it from the platform.

Mr. MUNSIE: And from house to house. In the interests of the present member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) I canvassed a good few houses during the election. In one portion of the electorate I went from house to house where a certain individual from the other camp had been canvassing before me. If he came to a house whose inmates he knew to be, or if the name told him that they were likely to be, Roman Catholics, then Mr. Lutey was a rabid Orangeman. If at the next house the canvasser knew that they were Orange, then my friend Mr. Lutey was a Sinn Féiner and a supporter of the I.W.W., while at any

house where the canvasser could not determine whether the occupants were green or orange, then Mr. Lutey's mother was German and could not speak a word of English. I know that all this was done by a prominent supporter of Mr. Scaddan in the late election. I mention this, because I detest methods of that kind in an election. When the Canning election was being fought and I was behind Mr. Scaddan against the Attorney General, I believe I was the only member who on the floor protested against the tactics used in classing Mr. Scaddan as pro-German. I protested against the circular issued by the All-British Association, and I say again that the man responsible for the issue of that circular in the Canning election should be behind the bars to-day.

Mr. Smith: Is he a member of the House?

Mr. MUNSIE: No.

Mr. Smith: Then what has it to do with us?

Mr. MUNSIE: I wish to draw public attention to it for the reason that I am perfectly satisfied that notwithstanding all the misrepresentation put up, notwithstanding this cry of Nationalism, the workers are waking up and are not going to be gulled any longer, particularly when we get such national subjects brought before us to deal with in this Parliament. Before getting away from the Governor's speech I want to deal with the national aspect of the present Government. I do not need to read much of the Governor's speech, but only the concluding paragraph, which is as follows:—

In view of the necessity of submitting the policy of the Government for the endorsement of the people, my advisers are of opinion that the time is inopportune for the introduction of legislation, and only measures of urgency will be submitted. These will include Bills—

When I came to this I naturally expected to see something which was going to be of national benefit both for the State and the Commonwealth as a whole, but I find that the first of these Bills is one—

to unite the municipality of Victoria Park with the City of Perth on the expiration of the current municipal year;

That is a wonderfully national project, there is no question about it. The next items are—

to validate the distribution of Sand Bag Funds, to postpone the commencement of contributions to the sinking fund of the Melville Park tramways, and for the continuance of certain expiring laws.

With regard to the whole of this programme, there is a possibility that the Government can show their sincerity in respect to doing something for the people of the State by carrying out the final paragraph, which has to do with re-enacting some of the laws of the State. We had a statement made by the member for Leonora (Mr. Foley), in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, with regard to arbitration. Anyone reading that hon. gentleman's statements in *Hansard* would almost come to the conclusion that he was the only member of the House who was a supporter of arbitration. I have been just as great a supporter of and believe just as much to-day in arbitration as that hon. member. The time has come when something has to be done, besides introducing arbitration for the purpose of fixing the wages which a man shall get. It is an absolute absurdity to say that the only commodity which a man has to sell, namely, his labour, has to be taken by him before a Board presided over by a Judge of a Supreme Court, who has with him a representative of the workers on the one hand and a representative of the employers on the other, and disposed of there by him. If he disobeys the verdict that is given in any way it is said that he is absolutely disloyal and ought to be stood up against a wall and shot. I have heard hon. members of this House make that statement in regard to working men. Throughout Western Australia there are no more than three or four organisations the members of which have had their wages increased by 6d. per day since the outbreak of war, and when we realise that a man receiving 9s. a day on the 4th of August, 1914, is to-day only receiving the equivalent of 6s. 9d. a day, we can see that he has practically had his wages cut down by 2s. 3d. per day as the result of the increased cost of living. The Government could certainly do something in that

direction. It is absolutely unfair to ask the workers of the State to submit themselves to arbitration unless the Government are prepared to introduce price-fixing legislation to control the price of commodities after an award is given. What is the use of a man going to the Arbitration Court to get an increase in wages? The ramifications of that Court have practically reduced themselves to this, that the employees have to find sufficient evidence to prove to the Court that they are not getting a living wage when the present price of commodities and the amount of wages they are receiving are taken into consideration. If they do succeed in proving this and getting an increase of 6d. or 1s. a day on their wages, three months after receiving the increase of 1s. a day there is 1s. 2d. a day taken off their wages as the result of an increase in the cost of living. What is the good of men going on in that way? There never was a time in the history of the Commonwealth when a more fitting opportunity was afforded to the Government of doing something to regulate prices than now exists. That would only be a natural corollary to our Arbitration Court. Our friends say that we ought to drop party politics. The party politics which they want us to drop are the Labour party politics and the Labour party principles. They would be quite satisfied if we sacrificed the principles which we have, and have advocated all our lives, and allowed them to go on in the old way. I am not prepared to drop party politics if by so doing I am sacrificing the very people who are responsible for my being in Parliament to-day. We have ranged behind the present National Government in Western Australia the whole of the forces of the State which have always been antagonistic to the working classes of the State. We have ranged behind them the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Mines, and the Employers' Federation, together with every other organisation which can be mentioned, whose interests are to get as much as they can out of the worker and give as little as they can in return for it.

Mr. Nairn: What do you mean by "ranged behind"?

Mr. MUNSIE: There is not a member of the National party on the other side of the House but who when he goes up for election will not receive the support of every one of these organisations.

Mr. Nairn: Rubbish.

Mr. MUNSIE: I should at all events like to have some instance to the contrary. I would ask the hon. member, who has been to Kalgoorlie recently in connection with the by-elections, for whom the members of the Chamber of Mines who live in the Brown Hill-Ivanhoe electorate and are on the roll for that electorate voted. Did they vote for my friend, the newly elected member? Where did the conveyances which were run in the interests of the National candidates on Saturday last come from? As a matter of fact two-thirds of the mine managers on the fields and the engineers, and all who possessed motor-cars, were running their vehicles for Mr. John Seadman on Saturday last. The Labour party represent the trades unions in this and all the other Parliaments of the Commonwealth, and the whole of the forces which have ever been opposed to trades unions are to-day ranged behind the present National Government. I, for one, am not going to sink the principles which I have advocated all my life for the purpose of letting that National party do as they like, when they are showing no sincerity whatever so far as doing anything in the interests of the workers is concerned.

Mr. Nairn: You cannot sink your prejudices.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not intend to do so. I came here prejudiced in favour of the working classes of the State, and am going to remain so as long as I am in Parliament. I desire to see the workers get a fair deal, and they cannot get that unless legislation is in existence for the purpose of fixing the price of commodities. Will the hon. member persuade his friends, the members of the Government, to introduce a Bill this session for the purpose of fixing prices? The Government will of course say no, that it is party legislation, and that they do not desire to introduce party legislation. I would point out to them that irrespective of whether they do or do not introduce price-fixing legislation during the session

they are not going to get away from the fact of being a party serving the interests of a party as a whole. If they do introduce a Bill for the purpose of fixing prices they will then certainly be doing something in the interests of the consumers of the State, and will be working in the interests of that class of the community. If, on the other hand, they refuse to introduce such legislation they will be doing something in the interests of the commercial section of the community, those who at the present time are practically robbing the consumers of the State. They will be party irrespective of whether they introduce such legislation or not. I urge them to take the advice of one who I believe they will admit is sincere, and do something which will be in the interests of the masses of the people and not in the interests of a few. I listened attentively to the speech of the Colonial Treasurer yesterday. I sympathise with that gentleman in the task with which he is faced—and I suppose he realised the magnitude of the task he is taking on before he took it—and believe he is sincere in his intentions to do something in the direction he has indicated. He had not spoken for more than two minutes, however, before he announced that there would shortly be an appeal to the people of the State. He was asked by interjection during the course of his speech, times without number, what taxation proposals he had or what reform proposals he had from the economic standpoint, and the only reply we have up to date is that he intended to cut out *Hansard*, which I believe would effect a saving of about £4,000 a year. That is the only definite statement the Colonial Treasurer has made up to date. The difference between £600,000 a year by way of a deficit and £4,000 a year, the cost of *Hansard*, is not going to account for much in the finances of the State. It is up to the Government to let the people know what they intend to do. Personally, if I was to consult my own feelings and was ambitious and wanted an easy time at the next general elections in getting back to the House, I would not mention anything at all about it, because I am satisfied that if the Government go to the country with their policy sealed, as it is now, they will

get the greatest surprise they have ever had in their lives. It is the duty of the Government to let the people know what they intend to do. All they have said up to date is that they are going to economise. How are they going to economise? Are they going to reduce wages? If they are, they should be came enough to say so.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They should start on the Governor.

Mr. MUNSIE: They will not do things like that. I quite agree with the hon. member. If they were sincere in their advocacy of retrenchment and were desirous of economising, I am of opinion that they would never have allowed the Hon. J. D. Connolly to leave the State to go to England as Agent General. Under existing circumstances I believe that the Agent Generalship of Western Australia and other States of the Commonwealth could well be wiped out, and that whilst we have a High Commissioner to look after the interests of the Commonwealth, that is quite sufficient. I expect the Government will say that would be unconstitutional. I am satisfied that they could do something in that direction by attempting to get rid of State Governors and the upkeep of Government House. I believe it is necessary under our existing laws that we should have some connecting link between Western Australia and the Motherland, but while we have a Governor General that is all that is necessary. The people of Western Australia are part and parcel of the Commonwealth. They are practically paying their quota to the salary and upkeep of the Governor General and his establishment and on top of that have to pay for the whole of the upkeep of the State Government House. On top of that they have to pay the whole of the upkeep of a State Governor. That is a waste of money, and if the Government honestly desire to retrench, there is a direction in which they can do something. In conclusion, I wish to make one or two references to two other matters, one of which I am sorry I overlooked when dealing with the formation of the National Government. Before touching on that, however, I wish to deal with a matter dealt with by the late Minister for Mines in this morning's newspaper, when he remarked that in those portions of the electorate bordering on the

boundaries of the Kalgoorlie and Hannans electorate he had secured a majority. I do not know what inference he draws from that, but he says that the fact does not augur too well for the prospects of Official Labour party candidates. I want to say this: He has had a contest at Brownhill-Ivanhoe, which touches my own electorate at three different points, and if he is anxious for another contest on the goldfields I invite him to come to my electorate.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: He may prefer Kalgoorlie.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am not optimistic, but I do believe that if he accepts this challenge I shall win. It has been said that he has represented Brownhill-Ivanhoe for 13 years. That is not correct. He represented Ivanhoe for nine out of those thirteen years, and the greater portion of the then Ivanhoe electorate is now included in Hannans, which I have the honour of representing. He has, therefore, represented a portion of my electorate longer than I have myself, and if he is anxious for another fight on the goldfields, I invite him to come along and try next time against me. With regard to the formation of the present Government, I am sorry I missed this point when dealing with the subject previously. I would like to ask members opposite what position they placed the late Premier in? We—and when I say “we” I refer to the Labour party—are constantly being accused of being ruled by caucus, that we hold caucus meetings. Anyone might think that a caucus was some kind of serpent with seven heads. The present supposed National party also holds caucus meetings, and we can get only that information which they prepare and supply to the Press. If we may believe that information the members of the party placed the member for Sussex (Hon. Frank Wilson) in a very awkward position, a position which reminds me of the crew of a ship who have mutinied. Having reached a certain point, the member for Sussex was given the choice of two options. A plank was placed on the edge of the boat and the member for Sussex placed on the plank and given the option of jumping overboard or of being pushed in. Those people who would thus persecute the member for Sussex for taking exactly the same stand as was taken by Mr.

Hughes in the Federal Parliament are the very people who lauded Mr. Hughes for the stand he took. I cannot understand such people; I contend that in both cases the leader took the wrong course. The instant Mr. Hughes learned that he had not a majority of his party behind him, he should have submitted to majority rule, and on the other hand, the instant the member for Sussex knew he had not a majority he should have done likewise.

Mr. Nairn: Hughes had a majority of the people of Australia behind him, that is the difference.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not think he had. It is all very well for the hon. member to say that Mr. Hughes had a majority of the people behind him. At the last Federal election the people of Australia were gagged, and while the Cook-Forrest-Irvine party did secure an overwhelming majority throughout Australia, the Hughes party went back one fewer in number than when they left Parliament. The Hughes party had one more member in the House when the dissolution took place than they had after the elections were over. Therefore, Mr. Hughes did not get an enormous victory at the election. That election, too, comprised one of the gravest scandals of any electioneering campaign in this or any other State. I realise that the present National party in this State proposes fighting the forthcoming State elections on exactly the same cry; but I would warn them that they will not succeed in fooling the people of this State with the cry of nationalism unless the Government show some sincerity, show a desire of doing something which will stamp them as National, something in the interests of the people of the State. And the one small thing I ask the Government to do is to introduce legislation for the fixing of prices, so as to give the working people of the State a reasonable chance of living decently.

Mr. LUTEY (Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [8.5]: I read His Excellency's Speech with some surprise, although I have known for years past, having taken an interest in public affairs, State and Federal, that the opponents of the party to which I belong have had a particular catch cry at each general election. The cry on this occasion was that we must have a National Government

in the interests of the State. When there was a previous change of Government some months ago the cry then was of business acumen and economy, but we find that after 12 months that Government made a worse fist of the job than any Government up to date in this State. So far as the party to which I belong is concerned, we shall do everything possible, provided an attempt is made in a proper manner, to right the finances of the State. We have the Treasurer speaking of retrenchment, and although he has sitting alongside him Ministers who have been in office for some months, we find that he is going to take the reins now and economise. One economy which he has mentioned is his intention of doing away with *Hansard*. In my opinion *Hansard* is very essential for the information of the people generally. Through the newspapers the people are given only that which the newspapers wish to give them, but in *Hansard* they get the truth, and the whole truth, and without *Hansard* many matters upon which the people should be informed would never come to light. For that reason I think *Hansard* should be left alone. At the present stage in our history the Government should act carefully in the matter of retrenchment. They might follow the lead given by the late Sir George Grey in New Zealand. He found retrenchment operating in his time but he took a different attitude; he taxed the land and raised wages, with the result that immediately New Zealand began to forge ahead. On the other hand, in Victoria Sir George Turner cut down expenditure in every direction. I was a resident of Melbourne at that time, and I can assure this Chamber I have no desire to see a similar spectacle in Western Australia as was presented at that time in Victoria. I think there are other ways in which we might retrench. The civil service, the teachers, and other Government employees, will be interested to know what the Government really intend to do, and I think we have now arrived at a stage when the people are entitled to know the Government's intentions in the direction of economy. If the Government are in earnest on this question of retrenchment opportunities are offered by the State Governor and State Government House. When we en-

tered into the Federation, it was understood that it was intended to do away with State Governors and State Government Houses, leaving one Governor-General for the whole of the Federation. We have found on different occasions when the Governor has been absent from the State that a Lieutenant-Governor, or a Chief Justice, has been able to satisfactorily carry out the duties. That is one avenue of expenditure which might be easily cut out, and one which should be immediately tackled. It was also thought, when the Federation was formed, that the six Agents General, and their staffs, would be cut out, and that they would be replaced by one representative of the people of Australia. But we now find that, instead of six, we have seven representatives, including the High Commissioner. If the much talked of business acumen were made use of, I think it would be easily possible for one High Commissioner in London, with a competent staff of officers, to do all the work necessary for the  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions of people we have in Australia, instead of having seven different officers and seven different staffs as at present. I should like to refer briefly to the question of the cost of living. On the goldfields this cost has been rising month by month. Despite the figures quoted by Mr. Knibbs, and by Mr. Justice Powers in the Arbitration Court, we know from practical experience that the cost of living is increasing every month. The late Government raised the freights to the country and goldfields by 10 per cent., which meant an increase of 11s. 2d. per ton to the people of Kalgoorlie, and thereby added an indirect burden on the people of the goldfields. That burden was not only on commodities of life, but on mining requisites also, such as fracture machinery, cyanide, and articles of that description. That increased cost of requisites was a heavy burden on a number of mines just about paying their way, and if the Government are really anxious to do something for the benefit of the industry, here is a direction in which something might be done. Gold, we are told, is at present more essential even than men to the winning of the war, and here is a direction in which the Government can assist the production of gold. On the subject of taxation I note that £47,000 only is derived in revenue from

the land. That is a question which must be grappled with. There should be unimproved land values taxation immediately imposed, and without exemption. Twenty years ago I was in the south-western districts, and on going down there a month or two since I find that the country is in practically the same state to-day as it was 20 years ago. Yet during that time we have been building railways, as referred to by the member for Northam in his excellent speech last night, when he said that millions had been spent in railway construction. I believe that, had there been adequate unimproved land values taxation in this State, those millions need not have been spent, and we would have been able to settle the people close to railways without sending them out into the dry areas where the Government have found to their sorrow that the settlers have become bankrupt. People have come from the goldfields to take up land in the agricultural district, and in their case history has repeated itself. Instead of their being given decent land on which to settle, they have had to go into country subject to drought, and realised later they had made a mistake and had to leave their holdings. Yet in the South-west, where the good land is to be found, there are numerous instances of country held up. That position arises from land monopoly. The same thing obtained in Victoria—from which State I come—at the time when the miners left the Ballarat and Creswick goldfields to make homes for themselves. They had to go away into the dry areas, the mallee country, to obtain land. The statistics of Victoria show that during the past 30 years the population of the dry areas has increased, while that about Warrnambool and in the Western district, which contains some of the finest land in the world, has actually decreased. History is liable to repeat itself on those lines here in Western Australia, unless the problem is grappled with at once. That is desirable if only from a financial point of view, in order to impose direct taxation and make those who obtain the benefit of the unearned increment pay their share towards the upkeep of the State. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) mentioned that the Commonwealth were taking by hook and by crook anything and every-

thing they could obtain in the shape of revenue. Let me throw out the warning that the State Government, if they wish to tax land, must proceed to do so at once, because the Commonwealth Government also have the power to tax land, and they may strike out the exemption of £5,000, and take everything in the way of land taxation. Then the State Government would receive only the paltry forty odd thousand pounds Western Australia derives from the land at the present time. Something of the kind is, I believe, contemplated by the Commonwealth. If that position is brought about there will be an outcry against the enormous burden of indirect taxation thrown on the people. In regard to the mining industry, the Government should strike out the concentration of labour provision, so that a number of leases in good auriferous centres may be made available to the people. For years past hundreds of acres right in the heart of the Golden Mile have been held up, and miners have been unable to work them except on the heavy tribute demanded by the mining companies. With regard to boring, I know that some 18 years ago the Great Southern Development Company went in extensively for boring in the south of the belt, and spent some thousands of pounds in putting down a shaft to a good depth. If the records of those operations were looked up and made public, a continuation of the Golden Mile might be found in that quarter. I observe that my opponent in the Brownhill-Ivanhoe election complained in the Press regarding the electoral law. I, too, had a good deal to complain of. Although the police and the electoral officers went through the district within ten days prior to the election, I know of people who have been living in the one house in my electorate for 20 years and who found themselves struck off the roll when they desired to vote at the election. The electoral laws ought to contain a provision that any person who can prove to the electoral officer that he or she is entitled to a vote should have a vote, and not be struck off the roll, as was the case at the last election.

Mr. GREEN (Kalgoorlie) [8.20]: I have a few words to say on the Address-in-reply.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Are they all done on the other side of the Chamber?

Mr. GREEN: I regret that some of our late friends, who sat with us on this side of the Chamber during the last session, have seen fit to absent themselves altogether from the Chamber this evening. Their absence goes to show that the idea of fusing with the present Coalition Government for national objects has not impressed itself upon their minds as being of sufficient urgency even to induce them to occupy their seats in this Chamber. Let us examine and discover, if we can, what is the reason why, in the words of the Premier at Moora, the present Government was born into existence. Again to use the Premier's own words—

Well-nigh three years ago the god of battles flung the dice of destiny from his hand, and the time has arrived now when parties should be swept aside.

Nigh three years have elapsed since the commencement of the greatest war in history before it was considered necessary by the present Government to form a coalition. I say, the present Government, because the alteration of the Cabinet is very slight indeed, as I shall presently show. Or I may put it that three years had elapsed since the commencement of the war before either the late Labour Government or the present Government considered a coalition necessary. What do the present Government propose? What is the reason alleged for all this sinking of partisanship? For the Premier himself as a man I have the highest esteem. I have never for a moment doubted his politics as long as I have been in the Chamber. I have recognised the Premier as a worthy exponent of Liberal politics. Speaking at Geraldton no longer ago than the 11th April last, at a conference of farmers and settlers, who have been termed by one of their present friends "the Bulgarians of politics"—

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The member for Cue said that.

Mr. GREEN: I was not going to accuse any member in particular. The interjection of the member for Williams-Narrogin shows that, as the immortal William says, "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." Mr. Lefroy's remarks at Geraldton were that—

He had every sympathy with the Farmers' and Settlers' Association, and he

trusted the time would not be far distant when the alliance between the Country party and the Liberal party—  
No third party mentioned.

would be on more distinct lines than it was at the present time.

The two parties seemed to be one family. The present Premier, who was then a member of the Liberal Cabinet, felt that politically there was really no difference in aim or in ideals between the Country party and the Liberal party. He said further—

The two parties should come together—  
Come together, let hon. members note.  
and accept the responsibility of office together.

Once the hon. gentleman could persuade the Country party to accept a portfolio, he knew very well that the tactics which the Country party had adopted in submarining the last Labour Government, with whom they had been, shall I say, in tow, could not be repeated. He knew that once he had some members of the Country party in the Cabinet, once some of them were drawing Ministerial salaries, the Country party would be absolutely bound, not only by the ties of honour, but by the ties of pecuniary interest, to remain faithful to their ally. That, of course, would be in the interests of the farmers. The farmers at the present time, however, are unable to see that the coalition is in their interests. With that obsession of mind characteristic of the agriculturist, they are unable to see eye to eye with their representatives as regards the action they have taken. In fact, a reference to the *Primary Producer* shows that all over the State the Farmers' and Settlers' Association are calling for nominations in the selection ballots. Selection ballots represent a borrowing by the Country party from the Labour party. This method of selection ballots is "what has for so many years suborned the real interests of government and of Parliament." The Country party have adopted that method, and they are calling for new members.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The hon. member is mistaken. There is no selection ballot in the Country party. It is only nominations that are called, and they are all approved.

Mr. GREEN: Will the member for Williams-Narrogin tell me, if what he would

have us believe is correct, how it is that "Uncle Tom" and he are crossing swords in Williams-Narrogin although they are members of the same party? Birdlime of that kind may catch flats in the hinterland of Williams-Narrogin, but is not likely to impose upon the credulity of members of this Chamber. The *Primary Producer*, the sheet that is printed in the particular interests of the man on the land, the backbone of the country, he who is responsible for the production of all wealth, disagrees with the methods which the present Parliamentary representatives of the Country party are pursuing. At York, for instance, the most energetic member of this Chamber—I will not say, always the best advised member of this Chamber, because Sydney Smith has shown that energy is not all, since a tiger with his tail in the air is not more dangerous than a stupid man with good intentions—is being informed that he is no longer "the man for Galway." The present Premier, however, told the people at Geraldton that the Country party were the National party.

The Premier: No; that the Liberals were the National party.

Mr. GREEN: The editor of the *Primary Producer* has evidently misunderstood the Premier. He has taken the remark as a compliment paid to the Country party, and the members of the Country party who attended the meeting evidently misunderstood the Premier also, because immediately after that statement appears the interpolation, "Hear, hear." I think the Premier will agree with me that no member of the Country party has ever been so ill-advised as to utter a "Hear, hear" to anything said in favour of any party except the Country party.

The Premier: They always say "Hear, hear" to what I say.

Mr. GREEN: Unfortunately the Premier will find on reference to the official organ of the Country party that that organ does not consider the party to be represented at all in this Chamber at the present time, and that the present Premier is not proceeding on lines conducive to the welfare of the farmer. So far as I can gather, the Country party have a railway policy which means that the carriage of wheat—a point they particularly bear in mind—should be a burden



upon the whole community. The Country party, apparently, are aghast at the idea that a farmer at Bruce Rock consigning wheat to Perth or Fremantle should be charged railway freight, seeing that the wheat is intended to help the Allies to win the war. The idea is preposterous. I may remark that the Government railways are a socialistic affair, and that the Country party are red-hot socialists when it comes to State railways and State superphosphate and agricultural works. The idea at the back of the Premier's mind when speaking as Minister for Lands was this:—

If there were two parties, the one party could then keep itself together to contend with the common foe.

That is the scheme. What party had the Premier in mind?

The Premier: Did I speak of the common foe?

Mr. GREEN: I have quoted from the *Primary Producer* and they never make a mistake in that newspaper. The common foe which the Premier, then the Minister for Lands, had in his mind at that time was the Labour party. His one anxiety was to get the Liberal party and the Country party to become a national party. By reason of some circumstances over which the Liberal party apparently had no control, there was a rift in the lute and they and the Country party worked to come together as brothers in order to fight the common foe.

The Premier: I think that is Sir John Forrest's language.

Mr. GREEN: The Premier is a happy student of that, shall I say, immortal statesman. On the 17th July, Mr. Lefroy, the National Premier, speaking at Boulder for the edification of the National section of the goldfields electors, was reported as follows:—

The Premier, in responding, said that from the time he had first entered politics he had never regarded himself as a representative of a particular class.

The hon. gentleman was trimming his sails to catch the fleeting wind.

The Premier: I am exactly the same now.

Mr. GREEN: Precisely; the hon. gentleman was National Premier then and he is National Premier now. But when in Geraldton the Premier, as Minister for Lands,

wanting to bring about a coalition, adopted a different attitude. He was further reported to have said at Boulder—

When first elected he had gone into Parliament with a free hand to represent his constituents and to do the best he could for the State generally. On the formation of the Country party they asked him to nominate as a candidate in its interests, but he had preserved his ideals as a true Parliamentarian.

None of the Country party for him. He went on to say—

And he refused on the ground that he could not attach himself to a party which held itself up as a purely class party. He believed it was because he took that view of politics that his fellow members had elected him as leader of the National party.

What does he say the present Government has been formed for; what have they in view? I say without the slightest hesitation that if this Government had been formed six months before, they would have had only one plank in their platform, namely, that of winning the war, and though the win-the-war cry has become a little stale, the people are dropping to it, and they are saying that under that cry there is just a taint, not in the present Premier's mind, but in the minds of lots of people who are using it—a taint of hypocrisy.

Mr. Thomas: What about the resolution passed by the Labour bodies in Sydney the other day?

Mr. GREEN: The hon. member was just as much in favour of what was agreed to there before he joined the coalition.

Mr. Thomas: They were not even in favour of voluntary recruiting.

Mr. GREEN: The hon. member had not even left the Labour party when that resolution to which he refers was passed; he left it afterwards.

Mr. Thomas: He left it in his mind on that instant.

Mr. GREEN: The hon. member took part in a conference which drafted certain resolutions and has stood since for office with another party who had as their objective the joining of the Country and the Liberal parties with the view of fighting the common foe. That foe included the hon. mem-

ber up to the time he decided to throw in his lot with the Nationalists. I could interest the House by quoting extracts from speeches made by the hon. member in this Chamber, and from this side of the Chamber when he was with our party in opposition, and from the other side when we were in power. If I could at the moment lay my hands on those speeches even with my poor powers of description and advocacy of the cause I represent, I would willingly read them and convince the House that they were the finest exposition of Labour party principles it was possible to find in the pages of *Hansard* in this State. The hon. member for Bunbury has adopted a weather-cock attitude on many occasions, but I am going to be generous to him to-night and say that his heart does not beat with the hearts of those with whom he is now associated, and that he regrets having left the party for whose ideals he so strongly fought. I would like to show the hon. member's attitude towards our party in February last. In speaking with regard to the present Premier, and on the subject of secret contracts, he said—

The Government sought to buy Holmes off. . . . This was a most disgraceful proposal. It is scarcely believable that in Western Australia to-day any Government would have been guilty of such an act, for everything is provided and guaranteed, but for the small growers nothing whatever is done. It is the most ghastly attempt—

I heard him use that word "ghastly" when he was talking about the rivers of blood that had flowed at Gallipoli.

It is the most ghastly attempt that has ever been made in Western Australia; it is the most disgraceful agreement ever put forward by any Government.

Let me ask hon. members to remember these words—"The most disgraceful agreement ever put forward by any Government." That is a world-wide charge. It embraces not only Australia, but corrupt America. He says to America, "You have nothing to show which is as disgraceful as this contract made by the present Premier." That was the opinion held by the member for Bunbury of the present Premier in February last.

The Minister for Works: Perhaps he has gained better knowledge since then, and you have not.

Mr. GREEN: When the Minister for Works makes a statement like that he is talking with his tongue in his cheek, because we have had his opinion of the member for Bunbury. What is the object of the Government's existence? We find, for instance, that the Premier, speaking at Moora, declares that the time has arrived when parties should be swept aside.

The Premier: I have been trying to abolish parties all along.

Mr. GREEN: It is the first time I have heard the Premier propose such a thing. Now he says that this Government is composed of men who are prepared to work whole-heartedly. Were they not working whole-heartedly before? It is true that thousands of people have relatives at the Front and expect perhaps to hear of their death, but notwithstanding this, and the fact that the Empire is still engaged in the bloodiest engagement in history, for the first time after three years he has secured a number of men who are prepared to work whole-heartedly and loyally in the interests of the State. All I want to say is that the Premier knows, as we all know, that the Labour Government when in power worked loyally to further the best interests of the State, to increase production if you like, to help the Allies in every possible way, and let me say further, that I give full credit to the Government of which the member for Sussex (Hon. Frank Wilson) was Premier, for having worked in the same direction. It simply shows when we find a statement like that, and when that is the whole of the platform that is offered, the Government have absolutely failed to realise that there is something important required of them, and that they are failing to deliver the goods. What does the present Government propose to do. There are thousands of soldiers back in our midst from the fighting front and hundreds of them are unable to secure employment. We have the largest State in the British Empire, and yet, forsooth, the present Government propose, not another mark-time policy such as that which was suggested by the Daglish Government, but it seems to me that the policy which the

present Government intend to follow is the policy of "Halt." Let us take up their programme and see what it is they propose to do. In order to help the Empire in its time of need, and in order to help our brothers and kindred overseas and to see that our Allies on the side of Great Britain are able to fight to a finish the present Government say—"Gentlemen, we propose to unite the municipality of Victoria Park with the City of Perth at the expiration of the current municipal year." Then, in order to see that our boys get rest from their work in the trenches and in order to see that the Germans are driven back into their own country, the Government declare, "We propose to validate the distribution of the sand bag funds." Is there any connection between this sandbag idea and the fact that there are monopolists in Australia who are taking advantage of this way of practically sand-bagging the rest of the population by charging high prices for foodstuffs during the currency of the war? I do not know whether that is the purpose of the Bill. If so, I would like a thorough explanation of it. But, as far as I can see, this Bill has not that for its object. If it had, it would have my whole-hearted support. In order that Western Australia does its bit and in order to deal with the I.W.W. faction in this community the Government propose also to postpone the commencement of the contributions to the sinking fund of the Melville Park Tramways. Also in order to do what is required of them as loyal Britishers under the flag that has braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze, the Government propose to bring in measures for the continuance of certain expiring laws.

Mr. Thomas: What do you expect in a couple of weeks?

Mr. GREEN: This is not what has been done in a couple of weeks; these are the proposals to be carried out sometime. If instead of sending out S.O.S. signals this Government were prepared to do something for the people, prepared to deal with the urgent problems arising out of the war, they would be ready to lay aside promises and get down to work. The people are not going to put any Government back on promises alone.

Mr. Thomas: Do you think you will get back?

Mr. GREEN: Never mind about that; it shall never be said of me that in order to hold my seat I deserted the party that had put me into that seat. If I had to choose between being a renegade or a sweeper of the streets in the town I represent, I would sooner sweep those streets. We have heard the proposals of the Government and, without being in the slightest degree ungenerous, I say the Government have utterly failed to grasp the situation. The Government know that there are certain problems calling for immediate solution. They claim that to stimulate production is their particular object. It was put very tersely the other evening by a member in another place when he said he believed that every man should resolve to work harder. That is the solution of the whole of the problems arising out of the war. There must be no slowing down. That is the curse of this country, this I.W.W. system of slowing down.

Mr. Nairn: Do you approve of it?

Mr. GREEN: I do not admit that it exists. The only gentlemen who slow down are those who are battenning on the foodstuffs of the people. The workers of this State have never slowed down. The hon. member left hard work so long ago that he has got utterly out of sympathy with the people who are doing the manual toil in this country.

Mr. Nairn: I did not infer that they slowed down.

Mr. GREEN: The hon. member asked me if I approved of slowing down, thereby inferring that slowing down exists. I give him the blank denial and say that it does not exist. Let me tell that other hon. member in another place, he who made the statement I have quoted, let me inform him that the real cold-footers are those who are forcing their male employees to go to the war, the real object of those employers being to make room for female workers at a lower wage.

Mr. Nairn: What are you doing about it?

Mr. GREEN: Raising my voice against it, as I will continue to do while an impos-

ture of that kind continues. The present Government are proposing retrenchment.

The Premier: The word is not mentioned in the Governor's Speech.

Mr. GREEN: I have here the platform of the party, signed by H. B. Lefroy, the leader, and by R. H. Underwood, the secretary, who is now away in his electorate putting people on the roll with a view to his return at the next election. As the first plank in that platform, we have the significant word "War." Then under the heading of "Finance" we come to "Economy in administration; concentration of Government offices." That means retrenchment.

Mr. Smith: Not at all.

Mr. GREEN: The hon. member may disclaim on behalf of himself, because under this glorious constitution and platform we have "parliamentary freedom." I am not going to accept the word of any private member as to the interpretation of the policy of the Government. Why? Because under the sixth plank we have "Representative Government, free discussion and free action of members in Parliament, who shall be responsible only to their electorates." The hon. member disclaims retrenchment; he knows that, being responsible only to his electorate, all he has to see to is that there shall be no retrenchment of public servants residing in North Perth. How is expenditure in public offices to be decreased without the sacking of men?

Mr. Thomas: Do you want to retain in employment men for whom there is no work.

Mr. GREEN: I am not going to be sidetracked by the present—I say it advisedly—member for Bunbury. There are two ways of effecting economy in administration; one is to sack men and the other to reduce their wages. There is no third method. This platform stands for "taxation after making all possible economy." That is the time to do it. It does not matter that at present a large number of people in the State are making larger profits than ever before. It does not matter that some men in the National movement outside of Parliament who in 1913 had an income of £5,000 have to-day an income of £12,000.

Mr. Nairn: How did you find it out?

Mr. GREEN: It is a fact. I make that statement with full responsibility. Again, on 27 articles of food-stuff there has been a rise of no less than 35.4 per cent. This, too, on articles of food manufactured in Australia, the cost of which in many instances has not increased. While such immense profits are being made it is the duty of the Government to bring in a Prices Fixing Bill, together with taxation proposals here and now to catch the war-time profits of those gentlemen who are asking other people to go to the war but who, rather than make the same sacrifice themselves, prefer to stop on and scoop the profits. It is this neglect to face the position, this timidity in opposing the forces largely responsible for keeping hon. gentlemen in power which will make it impossible for the present Government to solve the problems of an oppressed people. In 1915 there was in Australia a surplus of butter sufficient to permit of the export of 15 million pounds; for the nine months ending March last Australia exported 66 million pounds of butter. Yet the price of butter has risen by 33 per cent. And so on through the whole gamut of the articles of food consumption.

Mr. Smith: How can the West Australian Government control the price of butter?

Mr. GREEN: It can be controlled in Western Australia. Are they prepared to try to fix the price of any one article of food? They defeated the Bill the Labour Government brought down with the object of fixing prices on a reasonable basis, reasonable both to the producer and to the consumer. The hon. member knows that the wealthy class, the people who make possible the production of his newspaper, the people who are responsible for his presence in Parliament and for the existence of this Government in office, would have something to say if he or the Government attempted to deal with those who are holding up the prices of the people's food. But for such temerity he and the Government he supports would lose caste and lose their seats also. That is why we find the Government unprepared to deal with the situation or grapple with the problems arising out of the war. Talk about the Win the War Government! It is rather merely a weak-kneed Government, not prepared to

face the situation and say "We will be true patriots and see that the wives, mothers and sisters of those men who are fighting our battles at the Front shall get their food at reasonable prices, and that no man in the community shall be able to batten on the food consumed by the people." I have no wish to prolong the debate. I regret that the Government have not evolved a policy, have not brought in taxation proposals. There is in this country a wealthy class apart altogether from those who have raised the prices of foodstuffs. I refer to the pastoralists, who are very dear to the heart of the Premier. That hon. member has always evinced the greatest solicitude for the pastoralists, as evidenced by the Bill brought forward by him last session. Whilst the common people, the doctors, lawyers, farmers, tradesmen, storekeepers and publicans are paying on an average an income tax of £5 5s. per annum, the pastoralists last year paid something like £44 each. Even in the drought year they paid an average income tax of £33. It shows that if there is one class doing particularly well it is the pastoralists. These gentlemen during the war have received a price for their wool of, roughly speaking, 50 per cent. more than they received during pre-war times. They are practically languishing, if I may say so, for taxation proposals—because most of them have too much adipose tissue to take their place in the firing line—to enable them to play their part on behalf of the country, if the Premier will bring them forward, as he should do if his Government is a courageous one.

Hon. P. Collier: The wool growers have been getting the biggest price they ever had for their wool.

Mr. Wansbrough interjected.

Mr. GREEN: Let the hon. member stand up in his place when his time comes, instead of making inane interjections when I am speaking.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GREEN: He will then be able to let the House know exactly what he stands for and why he has thrown in his lot with the Coalition Government, an action which does not meet with the approval of his party outside. This Government and the late Minister for Mines proposed to do a lot for the

gold mining industry. The late Minister for Mines is deserving of full credit for being the greatest promiser that this Chamber has ever known.

Mr. Wansbrough: You have him on your side now.

Mr. GREEN: He was the greatest promiser the Chamber has ever known.

Hon. P. Collier: The late Minister for Mines is not in the Chamber now.

Mr. GREEN: He has left behind him a legacy of proposals which were dealt with in the *West Australian*.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Which one do you mean?

Mr. GREEN: Whoever may be consigned to the position of Minister for Mines, I trust that he will do something for the great gold mining industry. We have quoted figures here from time to time which have probably wearied members of the Chamber, but on behalf of that industry I find it necessary on every possible occasion to raise a note of warning that the greatest industry of the State, which even now is responsible for half the wealth of the State, has suffered a serious decline during the last few years. In 1907 we produced £7,210,000 worth of gold, whereas last year we fell to £4,508,000 worth. Any Government in power should do their utmost for an industry which has produced nearly £131,000,000 worth of gold and paid 26½ million in dividends, and yet we find that when the proposals for deep boring are mooted, they fall upon deaf ears. The late Minister for Mines, who was recently unsuccessful in his contest for the Brown-hill-Ivanhoe seat, promised during the campaign that the question would be looked into. I look to any successor in that office to do something with regard to deep boring at the north end of the Golden Mile, which is immediately east of my electorate. The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) can speak with some authority on this matter, and I think would support me if he were so disposed in connection with this proposal. When Dr. McLaren, who is possibly the greatest mining expert in the Southern Hemisphere, visited Kalgoorlie, I made it my business to see and consult him in regard to the deep boring scheme, and he unreservedly stands for the pro-

posal for deep boring at the northern end of the belt known as the Golden Mile. I trust that the Government will do something, and do it soon. This can be done out of the abundant funds which can be reaped from the taxation proposals which should be brought forward by the Government, as well as out of the dividends tax which is annually paid to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The Esperance railway report is now satisfactory, we are told. Whatever doubts there may have been in the minds of the present Government in their individual capacity, these have been entirely removed by this report, and in order to honour that report it will be necessary for them to resume the construction of that railway before a mile of any other railway is laid in any portion of the State. That railway was in process of construction, and by stopping a public work of this nature, because the greater number of members of the Cabinet who had succeeded to office were against the proposal, the Government put up what constitutes a record in the history of responsible Government in any part of the world, so far as I am aware. I trust that the Minister for Works who was responsible for the stoppage of this undertaking, by direction of Cabinet, I presume, at a time when he held the same position as he does now in the previous Government, will see that the sleepers and rails which are already at Esperance are laid at the earliest possible moment. There is no question of material in this matter. Such action will be an earnest of the intentions of the Government to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Before concluding I wish to refer to the disgraceful state of the rolls in Western Australia. If the Government intend to pursue a policy of economy they ought immediately to take it upon themselves to get in touch with the Federal Government in order to see that there is only one department so far as the rolls of the country are concerned, and that our rolls are handed over to the Federal Government.

The Minister for Works: You will have a worse job than you have now.

Mr. GREEN: If that be so let an arrangement be made whereby the whole of the work will be carried out by the State

Government, and a monetary allowance made by the Federal Government for the work done by the State. In any case the present duplication of claim cards places the electors in a position of confusion. People have to get on the Federal roll or they are fined. The present Government would be well advised to impose a fine to force people to get on the State rolls until such time as there is a coalition of the functions of enrolment between the Federal and State departments. The sooner that is brought about the better. In order to show the state of the rolls in my own electorate, I would point out that on the Kalgoorlie Federal roll during the last election there were 942 names which did not appear on the State roll for Kalgoorlie, and this notwithstanding the fact that the Kalgoorlie State roll embraces a larger area than does the Federal roll. It would be safe to assume, therefore, that were one to check one portion of the Kalgoorlie State electorate that was in the Hannans Federal electorate, one would find that at least 1,100 names were off the Kalgoorlie State roll as compared with the Federal roll. That is a disgraceful state of affairs, and yet we have the statement given out as part of the policy of the late Government that they were not going to provide anyone to put people on the roll. Moreover, there is no fine which can be imposed to make it compulsory for people to get on the roll. When we have an electorate with an enrolment of something over 4,000, which has a quarter of the names off the roll, we cannot possibly expect to get a true reflex of the people in such circumstances, and it is only a delusion and a snare to have a roll such as this. Some radical alteration will have to be made. There are several other things I was going to touch upon but I will not detain the House longer. I do not believe that the country will much longer be misled as to the composition of the present Government. Let us examine the present members of Cabinet and see what their past political leanings were. If I had the whole of a session at my own disposal it would be impossible for me to give the individual record of every member of the present Cabinet. The matter would be too intricate for me.

Mr. Nairn: It would be very interesting.

Mr. GREEN: It would be most interesting but be too devious for me to undertake. There are certain facts which nothing short of a Royal Commission would elucidate, and possibly a Royal Commission would not be able to get all the papers, for some of them might have been destroyed by silverfish, as was the case with the late discreditable Nevanas matter which we have recently got over. The present Premier was a Liberal. The present Attorney General and the Colonial Secretary were Liberals, and the Minister for Works held that office in the late Liberal Cabinet. The present Treasurer is an ex-Liberal, and of the Honorary Ministers two were Liberals, and only one has ever had the stamp of Labour placed upon him, or was ever suspected of being guilty of Labour principles.

Hon. P. Collier: One lonely outpost.

Mr. GREEN: A Cabinet of that kind cannot long fool the people of the country. On top of the declaration of the present Premier, and of his having besought the Country party to join hands in fighting the common foe, and in face of the fact that the Liberal Cabinet are still intact and are prepared to do nothing to hurt the susceptibilities of those who are the controllers of the food supplies of the people of the country, I say that the citizens of the State will wake up to find that the mountain has laboured and brought forth a mouse.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) [9.12]: Let me congratulate you, Sir, on the high and honourable post you now occupy. May I also express the wish that you may long remain in the House to occupy that office. I should also like to congratulate Ministers upon their accession to office, but would remind them that their Ministerial responsibilities will be greater than the responsibilities of private members. They now have an opportunity of doing great things for the country, and I hope they may be done. We are imposing a fairly heavy burden upon those hon. members who are sitting in Opposition, for no one on the other side of the House has as yet answered them or carried on the debate. Although during this short session we will not be discussing the Estimates in the ordinary way I think it is wise to discuss matters of general in-

terest. The people expect, at any rate once during the session, that there shall be a general discussion. Except when Parliament is sitting members generally have, of course, no control over the administration of the affairs of the country, and the fullest opportunity should therefore be given to them whilst Parliament is sitting to have some say regarding them. I have no doubt that the leader of the Opposition will take full advantage of the opportunity on this occasion. I have no wish to take up the time of the House to-night, but the member for Kalgoorlie has referred to the legislation passed during the last session in connection with our pastoral industry. I agree that a man should not be allowed to hold more than one million acres, but I do at the same time think we should show some consideration to those men who have borne the heat and burden of the day, who went out into this country 20 years ago in an endeavour to develop this important industry. I say that a man who spends 20 years, the best years of his life, in that country, pays a tremendous price for the money he makes, and I have no wish to place on those men restrictions further than those included in the new Act. Members, I think, will agree with me that if the result of that legislation is the adequate stocking and the enforcement of improvement conditions on our pastoral leases, we shall have done something of considerable value to this country. And when the increased rents are imposed I hope that increased revenue will result, and there will still be an extensive area of pastoral holdings available for settlement in that country. I was pleased at the introduction of the Bill last session, because I felt that those men were entitled to know, before the expiry of their leases, what their position would be. One result will be that the pastoral leases will be improved, and that we will have greater stocking of the pastoral leases. I admit that some of those leases should be carrying many times the number of sheep and cattle that are at present on the holdings; and I know there are some pastoral lessees who hold more land than they are using. But those people have pioneered the industry, and should receive consideration at the hands of the Government. In my opin-

ion those men who have spent 20 years of their life in the development of the industry should be permitted to retain the areas now held, and I trust the Minister for Lands will take that suggestion into consideration and will introduce a Bill with this object. The schedule at present sets out that no one man may hold more than a million acres, but provision might be made that this should operate on the death of the present holder. Any man with a run carrying 20,000 sheep is well provided for, but at the same time I think it would be wrong to leave him in doubt of what his position will be on the expiry of his lease. It has to be remembered that those men holding a larger area than a million acres are improving their holdings and increasing the carrying capacity of the land in the interests of the State. We heard from the Colonial Treasurer last night something about the condition of the finances. It is to be deplored that since the commencement of this great war three years ago, a war the like of which the world has not seen before and which it is to be hoped will never see again, the finances of this State have fallen into difficulty. The past we cannot control, but we can and should endeavour to control the future, and in this connection the question with which the Government should concern itself is as to what we are going to do in the future. I endeavoured to show last evening that much of our borrowed money is invested in works which at the moment are non-productive because of the stoppage of our industries, and I endeavoured also to show that our immediate want was to develop our industries. This State's money has been invested in solid and valuable assets, which must, when the war is over and trade has returned to normal conditions, produce for us a largely increased revenue. Our revenue is large enough in all conscience, but since the war our expenditure has crept up, especially in interest and sinking fund. Personally I have the utmost faith in the future of the State. We certainly have cash troubles; but if any country in the world is solvent, it is Western Australia. This State is not bounded in its future by one industry and we have not produced anything like the amount of gold which is to be won. I have no wish to dis-

cuss what should be done to encourage our gold production. With so many of our miners away at the war at the present time, I am afraid very little can be done immediately, but I do hope that some day means will be devised to increase our gold production. It has always appealed to me as a weakness of our administration that we have not given sufficient assistance to the prospector. When a prospector discovers a new field he should get his reward. I know a speculator in this State who has made a fortune as the result of a few pounds put into helping a poor prospector. I think the prospector should be protected, and he should be encouraged to go out and make new discoveries. Money will be available for mining no doubt when the war is over. Then again we have the valuable timber industry; and I want to say here that I admire Mr. Lane-Poole, the new Conservator of Forests. He is an enthusiast in his business, and we might well allow him to run the timber interests of this country. I think the State is fortunate in having his services at the present time. During a visit to the South-West the present Premier remarked on the timber destruction. I agree with him that valuable timber should not be destroyed at all, but should be marketed. Land on which jarrah grows is not fit for settlement, as is well known, but I do not think there is much danger to the timber industry from the expansion of settlement. Years ago it was said that our timber lands would be cut out, and that the jarrah mills would be shut down; yet to-day timber is being cut adjacent to the railways between Perth and Chidlow's Well. While admitting that karri is a valuable asset to the State, I contend that when the timber has been cut out in any favourably situated area the land should be settled upon. Another important question to which consideration should be given is the subject of irrigation in the south-western portion of this State. There are, of course, areas in the South-West that can be sold. Where specially well situated land is cut out, it ought to be set aside for settlement. It is just a question whether a successful settler—and many settlers are successful in that karri country—is not far more valuable to the State on 40 acres of land than 40 acres of



karri trees are. I quite realise the value of the timber, which has provided an enormous amount of employment and of trade and of railway traffic. I know the country has not got much out of the timber in the past, but it may get something substantial in the future. I wish to say again that the specialists must be kept under control. I do not know what Mr. Lane-Poole's ideas are now in regard to the reservation of karri country. I do know that a little time ago they were very extensive. I am glad to gather that they have been somewhat modified. Reference has been made to an area ringbarked near Bridgetown, and I believe some gentlemen who visited the area spoke of it with tears in their eyes. I had not any hand in it, and I do not know that any large area was ringbarked. Had the land been cleared and placed under cultivation after being ringbarked, the position would have been totally different. The trees are now standing as dead trees, while saplings are coming up. I wish to say a few words about South-Western development. In my opinion, it is the duty of the country and of the Government to see that the development of the South-West proceeds apace. I have no doubt at all that the British people, who sent Sir Rider Haggard here to prepare for the coming of English settlers, were perfectly serious. I know that a couple of hundred million acres were to be secured in Canada for the settlement of British immigrants. We have our own soldiers to provide for, and I may say that while I do not propose to discuss the soldier settlement scheme at any length to-night, I shall have a few words to offer on that subject later. We ought also to provide for the settlement of British soldiers, if Britain will furnish us with the capital necessary. Undoubtedly this country must be settled and made self-supporting, made to produce the food we require. When we set about developing the wheat belt some years ago, we had to accept everybody and anybody we could get; able-bodied men were placed on the land whether they knew anything about farming or not. Most of the settlers were built of the right stuff, and stuck through two of the worst seasons this country has ever experienced, seasons such as I hope Western Australia will not

know again for many years to come. The newly elected member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) referred to gold miners who settled in dry districts. If the hon. member visited those districts to-day, he would not find them very dry; and he would find that the wheat being exported to-day is without exception—if we allow for our own requirements, which are supplied from the older settled districts—produced in the back country.

Mr. Lutey: In exceptional seasons.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Our export wheat is produced by the men who went on the land 10 years ago, often without experience.

Mr. Hickmott: In years to come that country will be the great wheat-producing portion of Western Australia.

Mr. Green: It is becoming the butter-producing part, too, in spite of the South-West.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: When one turns to that development of the last 10 years, and remembers that through the Agricultural Bank we have lent to the people who settled that country, many of them without a penny of capital and without any experience,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions of money, and that the amount of money in jeopardy to-day is only about £138,000, one must own that no financial institution in the world has a better record than our Agricultural Bank, and that no other financial institution in the world has ever taken on men with so little capital to put them to such work. The £138,000 in jeopardy will not be lost; the State will probably recover £100,000 of it. There are a good many blocks on the hands of the Agricultural Bank, but they are mostly blocks which have been very slightly improved. Blocks which have been substantially improved are speedily taken up. It is generally the block with only a few acres cleared that is left on the hands of the bank. Eventually, every block of land held by the bank will be selected if it be worth selecting. Possibly, in a few cases money may have been advanced on land which is not suitable. The position of the bank is as I have stated. It has advanced to men often without experience and without

money, but willing workers; and the great bulk of them, at least 85 per cent., are to be found on the land to-day. There is not a more honest class of men in the community, and on the whole there is not a more deserving class to be found than the 2,000 farmers under the board. They have struggled against adversity, and to-day they are doing their very best for the country. They are to be trusted to do their work, and they are to be trusted to use only the advances they need for the purpose of carrying on the work of cropping. The people of this country are to be congratulated upon the class of farmers we have sent out. They came from every walk in life—parsons, lawyers, doctors—

Mr. Green: Not parsons?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes, parsons; and also politicians. Our old friend Mr. Titus Lander is a successful farmer at Bruce Rock. He told me that he had implicitly followed my advice with regard to a farm, and that on this account he had succeeded. So much for our wheat farmers and our wheat lands. The South-West, if it is to be developed, must be developed speedily. An additional ten acres cleared, with half a dozen cows, would enable many settlers, who are struggling to-day, to live in comfort and become profitable assets to the State. It is not good that there should be waste time on any farm in newly settled country. The settler must have a certain area cleared if he is to avoid waste time. The South-West has been tested and proved, and there is no South-Western district where sufficient evidence is not available as to the quality of the land and the possibilities ahead. At Denmark, Nornalup, Bridgetown, Busselton, Bunbury, Boyup and elsewhere ample evidence is to be found of the value of that great country. No other State in the world would allow such a vast area, well watered, and with a rainfall of 25 to 35 inches, to remain unoccupied and idle so long. It is ridiculous to assert that there is too much rain in that country. During the last two and a half years New Zealand, which is a fairly wet country, has sent to the Old Land over 20 million pounds worth of meat and cheese, apart from other produce. A country of one million people has done that. Another butter-producing country, Denmark, has sent

to Britain year in year out 20 million pounds' worth of butter and dairy produce. America is sending to Britain something like eight million pounds' worth of bacon and ham each year. A great deal of these requirements could be produced, and ought to be produced, in our South-West. The district must be opened up, however. As I mentioned last night, railways must be built to open up the country between Denmark and Bridgetown, and Bridgetown and Mount Barker, and, possibly on to Flinders Bay. A policy of railway construction should be proceeded with until the whole of the South-Western lands are opened up. Certain hon. members argue that we have too many miles of railway for the population now. But unless we build more railways we shall not increase our population, and it has been the policy of this country to give facilities to settlers. It is plain that where one can settle a family on 100 acres of land, as against 1,000 acres in the wheat belt, a much larger population can be built up on 100 miles of railway than on 100 miles of railway in the wheat country. In addition, there are in the South-West the vast belts of timber to be dealt with; and I hope the work of converting the timber into money will be proceeded with speedily, because we do not want to see wooden trees there, but live people. I trust the South-West will soon be converted into a land of useful work. New Zealand is not a large country, but its export to Great Britain of meat and cheese alone during the last two and a-quarter years was something approaching the value of the timber exported from this country. In view of that fact, who will say that sometimes agriculture is not the chief benefit of a country? Let us clear the land and get settlers, and sell the timber as soon as the war is over. I hope surveys of railways and of roads will be made promptly, and that inquiries will be instituted in regard to drainage, in order that this work may be done without delay when the war is over, then there will not be much danger of our soldiers not finding work here upon their return. The work could be proceeded with as soon as the war is over. I do not think there will be any difficulty in getting the money

necessary for developments; certainly not the limited amount we require. I hope the butter factories and bacon factories which are needed will be proceeded with also. I do not, of course, see any immediate prospect of our producing the butter that we now import; but, so far as bacon is concerned, we can begin right away, since the number of pigs in the State increased last year by about 40,000, which is quite enough to provide all the bacon we require in this State. Unless these bacon factories are established pigs will not be worth very much. I do think it is a pity that since farmers have been producing pigs, they should not be able to get a fair price for them. We are to have a bacon and a butter factory at Northam, and I believe there we shall turn out a very large quantity of bacon, and the people will get it at a cheaper price than they are able to secure it for to-day. There is a general complaint about the price of food, but people can get all the bacon they want at 1s. a pound if they like to send to Northam for it, and they will find that it is equal to the imported article. I had an opportunity recently of sampling jam and pickles made at the factory, the establishment of which was assisted by the Government. Both these articles appeared to me to be really excellent, and I sincerely trust that they will be appreciated by the public and purchased widely. Unfortunately, I have not seen these local products in the stores of the country. If these local manufactures are to be pushed they must find their way to the country markets. Some little time ago I had an opportunity of inspecting some of our factories and I was surprised to find what was in existence in Perth. I wonder what the St. George's-terrace opinion is of its own industries.

Member: They should have seen the exhibition in Boan's window.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I know of instances where English labels have been put on locally manufactured articles.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I am not concerned about the labels so long as it is a Perth product.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It does make a difference though.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The other day Plaistowe's were shipping stuff with the West Australian label to New Zealand and the other States. Nothing could be better than that. I really do not know why sweets are imported at all when we see the quality turned out by Plaistowe's.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We compel them to put proper labels on now.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: At any rate all our industries should be encouraged. I noticed this morning the Minister for Industries made some reference to farm wagons which are to be made in the State. We have been importing iron wagons from America, when the wood of this State should be used, because it makes a far better vehicle. We had determined to place orders with the various shops throughout the State. We did place a considerable number of orders, and I hope that every centre from Geraldton to Albany will be given the right to manufacture wagons. The order which it is proposed now to place for five wagons will not only mean that only five wagons are to be built in each centre. There is a great deal to be done in that direction and we can encourage this industry without much expense. We can also have a great many of the rougher manufactures attended to here. The member for Swan said nothing definite had been done with regard to the soldiers' settlement scheme. I think the Minister for Industries will confirm what I say when I tell the House that so far as money is concerned, the assistance to be given to soldier farmers is definite and clear and has been approved by all who have troubled to read it. We have settled a number of soldiers upon farms which the Agricultural Bank held in districts to which they wished to return.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are they being burdened with old debts?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Probably there have been some old debts on the farms, but I issued instructions that a soldier settler was not to take over any part of the debt outside of the actual value of the improvements on the farm when he took it over. For instance, a man has taken over a farm with a debt of £550. The inspector declared that the value of the improvements on that farm was

£350. The soldier declared he was willing to take it at the value of the improvements and that was agreed to. Instructions were given to write off the other £200 and the soldier got his farm and, paid nothing more than £350. The assistance to be given I think is satisfactory to the soldiers. We promised at the Conference in Melbourne, and the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) promised before us, that we would find the land for a large number of soldiers. Of course if soldiers do not settle upon the land and they elect to work for wages their future cannot be very bright. Any man can work for wages but we want to make the soldiers into farmers and it is good for them that they should be offered inducements to go on the land. Under our scheme a soldier takes no risk; he does not put up any money. He will draw 9s. per day until his funds in hand are sufficient to carry him on for the year. The money is advanced to improve the land to provide machinery, stock, seed and fertilisers and also feed for the horses and wages for himself. Of course the money has to be repaid under the Agricultural Bank system, spreading, in the case of permanent improvements, over a period of 30 years. This position will continue until the soldier settler is able to carry on.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Does that not apply to almost all the settlers?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No, and it never has done so. I wish we could apply it to the ordinary settlers and also to the great South-West which would then soon be conquered and developed. The soldier settler can go on drawing a living wage so long as he is working on his farm. He will get no more than a living wage if he works for someone else. Unfortunately we are not able to do as much for the ordinary settler. We have found that the Industries Assistance Board's advances have strengthened the Bank's securities, and I consider that the Board is a perfectly safe institution. Under Mr. Paterson it is doing good work and I should be willing to have it continued in order that when bad times arise farmers, who after all are doing national work, may be helped over their troubles. There is another question I wish to touch

upon and it relates to the Royal Commission on agriculture. So far as this Commission is concerned I had no hand in originating it; it was an arrangement made between the Liberal and Country parties before the late Ministry assumed office. The Premier, the Minister for Works, the Treasurer and the Honorary Minister (Mr. Willmott) were at that conference with the Colonial Secretary, and also the member for Sussex (Hon. Frank Wilson). I was not there because at that time they did not think it wise to take me too close to our friends, therefore I was not responsible for the idea that prompted the appointment of this Commission. The arrangement was made without my knowledge.

Mr. Green: They are trying to saddle you with it now,

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I am perfectly willing to be saddled with it, because I believe it will do a great deal of good.

Hon. P. Collier: You ought to give us some idea about how the Esperance Commission was appointed, because the Premier stated that the construction of the railway was stopped by the late Premier.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I know nothing about that. So far as the Royal Commission on agriculture is concerned, I believe the recommendations which will be made will be of value to the State. The Premier declared that the policy of his Government was not one of Royal Commissions. I do not know about that. I think something may arise which may necessitate the appointment of a Royal Commission. I have no faith in Boards. This Commission will do much good though unfortunately the Chairman of it is very ill and the work of the Commission has in consequence been held up to some extent. I wish to urge on Ministers that this Commission be allowed to complete their work. They cannot visit the South-West with advantage until the summer. In the meantime they will cost nothing, because they will be in recess. Since there are in office four Ministers responsible for the appointment of that Commission, I take it the Commissioners will be allowed to complete their labours. I look forward to the report of that Commission as likely to be of material

benefit to the State. Then there is the report of the Esperance Lands Commission. Those Commissioners are perfectly honest and capable men, and if they are right in their conclusions we have in the Esperance district a vast area of country likely to be of great value for wheat production. I do not say that I agree with the Commissioners in their findings, but they are capable men and they have made careful inquiries both in this State and in the Eastern States, and they say that splendid crops can be grown on the Esperance land. However, I do not think we would have been justified in building that railway without the thorough investigations made by the Commission, and I believe that even now the proper thing to do is to ask the few settlers in that district to thoroughly test the country. Seeing that we cannot obtain the necessary rails for the line I think it would be well if we bought from the settlers down there, at the price it would be worth if the railway were there, all the wheat they can grow. It could then be taken up to Norseman by motor tractor, the cost of which would be much less than the interest on the railway. I offer that suggestion to the Honorary Minister (Hon. F. E. S. Willmott). I hope that during the coming elections the people will awaken to their responsibility and do their duty at the poll. Of course it is futile to ask that all the electors should go to the poll, for when election day comes round it is found that a great many people are taking no interest whatever in public affairs. I hope that the result of the recent Perth election may be taken as indicative that the people are alive to their responsibilities. If all the people would go to the poll and vote free from party influence, we would have a very much stronger and better Parliament than we have to-day; but they will not do that. Generally speaking the ladies are more interested in politics than are the men. I believe it was a good thing to give the women the vote, and I feel convinced that, election after election, we shall continue to get improved results in consequence of the women's vote. I regard the election of the member for Perth as the people's victory over themselves. They have disregarded party and voted for the man they thought would serve them best. It must be remem-

bered, too, that in the Perth electorate the voters are, to a large extent, working people. I hope that Nelson's message will be remembered when election day comes round. The State will expect every man to do his duty, and it can truthfully be said that the Empire's needs demand that on that day every man shall do his duty. I hope the pessimistic ring that was the dominant note of the Treasurer's speech last night will not influence other hon. members. When one has a good idea one can always get money to carry it out. There never was so much money in Australia as at present, never so much cash in the Australian banks as there is to-day. We may have difficulties, indeed we are here to get over our financial troubles. Whatever happens, the progress of the State must not be retarded. The future of this country depends entirely upon immigration and production. We must have immigrants and settlement and increased production. It might well be said that the future of the State is in the hands of the small landholder.

On motion by Mr. Lambert, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.8 p.m.*

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## Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 26th July, 1917.*

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

### QUESTION—VENEREAL DISEASES, DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT.

Hon. J. DUFFELL asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What facilities have been provided under "The Health Act Amend-