

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 4th December, 1930.

	PAGE
Motion: Urgency, unemployment	2313
Questions: Government buildings, imported material	2355
Bus route, cancellation	2355
Railway Workshops, dismissals	2355
Cost of Living Select Committee Report presented	2355
Bills: Land and Income Tax Assessment Act Amendment, 1A.	2355
Salaries Tax, report	2355
Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment, 3A.	2356
Premium Bonds, 1A.	2357
East Perth Public Hall, 3A.	2357

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 7.30 p.m., and read prayers.

MOTION—URGENCY.

Unemployment.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the following letter from the Leader of the Opposition:—

Dear Sir,—I desire to inform you that it is my intention to move the adjournment of the House under Standing Order No. 47 to debate a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the state of unemployment now prevailing. Yours faithfully, Philip Collier.

Before that motion can be entertained, it will be necessary for seven members to rise in their places.

Seven members having risen,

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [7.35]: I am taking this step of moving the adjournment of the House because I consider we ought not to close the session without having a discussion upon the position regarding unemployment in Western Australia to-day. It is not necessary that I should stress the fact that there are large numbers of men out of work throughout the whole State. That is well within the knowledge of every hon. member. I have not seen the latest figures from the Labour Bureau as to the actual number of unemployed here, but I should say that fully 20 per cent. of the workers throughout the State are out of employment. That is a most unfortunate situation, particularly as the trouble is growing worse week by week. For a while the position was not so acute because of the work effected by local committees who rendered great assistance to the Government in find-

ing employment and providing additional funds. We learn from newspaper reports, however, that the funds of those committees are becoming exhausted and that they will not be able to render the same measure of support in the future as they have during recent months. The longer a person is out of work, the more difficult his situation becomes. Whatever savings he may have put aside, become exhausted; his clothing becomes worn out; his existence becomes more difficult. After a few months of unemployment, he is in a desperate plight. I know it is difficult to find a solution for the existing evil. The whole problem is governed by finance, and because of the London market being closed to borrowing for the whole of Australia, public works and development in this State have not proceeded apace as in years gone by. In consequence, there has been a great falling off in the opportunities for employment. We know, too, that the difficulty is world-wide. It seems to me that unless society finds some remedy for the tragedy of unemployment, civilisation itself will ultimately crash. There is a considerable percentage of men out of work in practically every country in the world. While we are suffering from great depression, our warehouses are stored with foodstuffs. Over production obtains everywhere, but we are unable to market our goods. Although supplies are plentiful, large numbers of our people are feeling the pangs of hunger. It is extraordinary that the world should be suffering from over-production of foodstuffs that are essential for life itself. We produce in abundance, but we are unable to sell what we produce. Despite all this, a considerable percentage of our people are unable to obtain the necessities of life. That is the position that confronts us. The figures published in the monthly financial returns indicate the gravity of the unemployment situation in this State. During the past two months those returns show that we have expended by way of unemployment relief payments, sums monthly at a rate that represents something like £500,000 a year. That is a staggering sum for a State with a population of only 400,000 to provide for such a purpose. I would like the Government to indicate whether there is any possibility of securing further funds from the Commonwealth to relieve the situation. I know there are great difficulties to be overcome

in that respect, and I believe that the Premier has been pressing the Commonwealth Government for further financial assistance. I would like to know what the prospects are, and whether there is any hope in the near future of the existing position being relieved. For the State Governments, there is no other source of supply of necessary funds except by means of increased taxation. On the other hand, the States, and particularly Western Australia, have taxed the people up to the limit. We know there is a point beyond which additional taxation serves merely to add to our troubles. While raising funds by that means to afford relief to those who are out of work, we can, by over-taxation, easily create further unemployment. However, in Australia the community, both in the Federal and State spheres, is already overburdened with taxation. The position can be relieved, I think, by the Commonwealth Government; and it ought to be done. Whatever may be said regarding the inflation of the note issue—I am one of those who believe it is a dangerous thing—it seems to me that we have reached the stage in Australia when some limited measure of inflation will have to be resorted to. There is no other way out of the difficulty: there is no escape from it. The Commonwealth Government will have to finance the nation over its trouble, and out of the difficulties we are experiencing to-day.

Mr. Willcock: Or else prevent deflation.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. It is the rate of deflation that has caused our troubles. No one would say for one moment that if war were to break out to-morrow and were to continue as the Great War did, some means of financing the nation through the upheaval would not be found. We had experience extending over four years of the war period, during which extraordinary and unexpected expenditure was forced upon us, of finding means that enabled us to finance our war activities. Surely in times of peace and production the nation can find some means of financing the employment of its citizens! If we cannot find some machinery or method for financing our people so that they may be employed, we will have to admit that the nation is bankrupt. We can never recover from the distress of to-day while such a large percentage of our people are out of work. It is only by producing wealth and keeping people in employment that

countries can rise above difficulties and troubles such as we are experiencing. In Western Australia our percentage of unemployment is as high as in any other part. Statistics show that throughout the Commonwealth quite 20 per cent. of our manhood is out of work. That is an appalling situation. It leads to catastrophes. Day after day we read reports in the newspapers of tragedies that arise from the depressed state of mind from which many of our people are suffering through want of employment. Those tragedies are caused by fears entertained for the future and the hopelessness of the outlook ahead. Truly it is an appalling state of affairs. Some remedy must be found to overcome the tragedy of to-day. I hope the Prime Minister, when he returns from London will immediately call a meeting of Premiers to deal with this, one of the most important and urgent questions that could be discussed by the heads of Governments throughout the Commonwealth. I hope the Premier will suggest it to the Prime Minister.

The Minister for Railways: There was a time when a meeting of all parties was called because the position was so serious.

The Attorney General: Yes, let us have a meeting and include members of the Opposition.

The Minister for Railways: It was less serious then than it is now.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is a question that ought not to be treated on party lines. The Minister for Lands: It cannot be.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is too serious to be treated on party lines, and the people suffering do not care who brings them relief. They want work; they want assistance in this terrible time of stress, and it is the duty and responsibility of every section of thought to assist to overcome the difficulty. Personally I should be willing to assist any Government in any way I could to overcome the trouble. I know what the difficulty is: I experienced some of it, particularly during the last six or 12 months I was in office, and it is ever so much worse to-day. The numbers have increased greatly during recent months and, I fear, will continue to increase. The position is becoming appalling. We cannot and we must not allow our people to suffer for the want of food. It is bad enough for a single man to be in want, but when we have such a large number of married men, with families and re-

sponsibilities, unable adequately to feed those dependent upon them, it is indeed serious. I do not know what the situation must be in the homes where there are young children who have to live on sustenance provided by the Government. It will have a serious effect upon the future generations in this State. Most certainly the children being born and reared at the present time will not get a fair chance in life. They will be handicapped for the rest of their lives, because of the insufficient nourishment available to the mothers and to the children in their early years. We must endeavour to do something, and if we cannot find money with which to carry on works, the Government will have to devise some means to increase the sustenance. While the sustenance allowance is sufficient to provide the bare food necessities of life, there is no provision for all the other things required in the homes. There is no provision for clothing; stocks of clothing soon become worn out and people are in want of clothing. Rents are going up, furniture is going to pieces, clothing is disappearing, and there are no means of meeting those difficulties. I confess that I have not any suggestions to make. It is easy to talk. We all know what the position is, but it is difficult to suggest any way to meet it. I can only think it will be met by the aid of the Federal Government, and the Commonwealth Bank will have to find some means of coming to the assistance of the States. I am glad that the Federal Labour Party have decided that the Parliamentary session shall not close until provision of some kind has been made to meet the unemployed situation. It was announced last week that the State Government would be able to find work for 1,300 men, mainly on drainage work in the South-West. I do not know when that will be; probably it will be some months ahead.

The Premier: No, they are being sent out now.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is a start, but it will be some months before the full number can be employed. I do not know what the works are or what the Government have in mind, but I hope the Premier will be able to give the House some assurance that the Commonwealth Government will be able to supply funds to enable us to employ more of our citizens. I do not wish to labour the question. It is an appalling state of affairs that such a large number

of our people should be out of work. There is not a home in the metropolitan area with a grown up family of boys and girls, many of whom are not of necessity being maintained by the father who is in work. Bad as that is, it is not so bad as the position in those homes where there is no income whatever. I know that large numbers of artisans who have never had to ask the Government for assistance in their lives are to-day living on sustenance. It is heart-breaking for them to have to do it. I was informed yesterday that one union, not a large union—the furniture makers and upholsterers—have 750 members out of work. Every organisation in the country is similarly affected. I hope we shall be able to do something. If there are no present prospects of the Commonwealth Government doing anything, I hope that immediately the Prime Minister returns, a conference will be held. In fact, if the Prime Minister on his return passes through Perth, he should be approached to the end that some provision might be made to overcome this terrible tragedy that is abroad in the land.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [7.52]: I have already suggested, as the Leader of the Opposition knows, that on the Prime Minister's return we should meet him to discuss this question, and I am drafting suggestions with the object of getting Leaders of Opposition to join with the Premiers in discussing the matter. Nothing can be done to increase employment without the aid of borrowed money. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that taxation has already exhausted the limit of usefulness. We have taxed far beyond that limit and have destroyed enterprise by taxation imposts. There are three taxing authorities—the Commonwealth Government, the State Government, and the local authorities—and the three of them this year will take between them by way of taxation at least one-third of the gross production of wealth. When such a large proportion goes to the tax-gatherers, it cannot be spent on wages. There are many reasons for the prevalence of unemployment. One is the cessation of borrowing. The Leader of the Opposition has told the House that we must borrow and can only borrow through the Commonwealth Treasury. That is true. For the moment, Australia cannot

approach the London money market. It is closed to us. The money available for Government loans in Australia is almost exhausted. At any rate, there is very little more than can be borrowed. I had hoped when Mr. Scullin went to England that he would be able to arrange for Australia to go upon the London market again. Only during the last year has the London market been entirely closed to us. This State has been in the habit for many years of borrowing about £4,000,000 a year, principally in London, and much of our work has been carried on by means of money borrowed there. Not only is money scarce in Australia but it is very dear. Until money can be obtained from the Commonwealth Government, there is no chance of the State getting money to spend. Last year we borrowed £3,600,000, of which £260,000 was spent on road construction, while our total expenditure on road construction for the year was about £1,100,000. That was a fairly considerable sum. Last year our wheat brought twice as much as it is bringing to-day, and wool was also commanding a better price. This year we shall have less loan money to spend unless, as the Leader of the Opposition said, the Federal Government can obtain some for us. Our wheat will bring about £6,000,000 this year, whereas on the basis of the price at this time last year it would have realised £12,000,000. The financial institutions are not now lending money because they had previously lent almost to the limit. Probably £1,500,000 is lost to enterprise as compared with a year ago through the banks reducing advances. Of money brought into the State we shall have £4,500,000 less this year than we had last year, and side by side with that has to be remembered the fall in price of wheat, wool and, in fact, every commodity. Very little timber is being cut at present because of the lack of export orders. The whole world seems to be unable to find money with which to buy goods, although it seems the world is well supplied with money. However, that is the position. I am told that the timber mills are about to close down for a few weeks, but I hope they will re-open after Christmas. That will depend upon their getting orders from overseas.

Mr. McCallum: Are you referring to the State Sawmills?

The PREMIER: No, I am told that the privately-owned mills are to close down for a few weeks. Timber is not being shipped in any quantity. The railway returns show that; there is a falling-off month by month. It is because there is no export and no easy sale for any commodity that we are short of the capital which was previously available and which we used together with the money we borrowed. If we could borrow £2,000,000 and it could be spent exclusively on wages, we could put everybody who is unemployed back in work. It is unfortunate that so much more depends upon Government employment in bad times than in good times. It can readily be understood that when our farmers are getting only 2s. or 2s. 2d. a bushel for their wheat, they cannot employ labor. I do not know how the crop is being taken off, or how it is being handled, or why so few men are being employed in the harvest work, but the wheat is being taken off and is being shipped.

Mr. McCallum: The harvest is exceeding expectations everywhere.

The PREMIER: It is fortunate that the yield is better than was expected. With the 50,000,000 bushels of wheat to be handled in the next few months, what with the stacking, storage, trucking and handling on wharf and on ship, one would imagine that most of the men out of work would have been absorbed. They would have been had wheat brought a reasonable price. The trouble is that the farmers cannot obtain the cash with which to pay wages.

Mr. McCallum: It all has to be handled and will make a lot of work.

The PREMIER: Yes, but the farmers are doing a great deal of work with the assistance of their families. The shortage of work on the farms is due to more than one cause. It is due to the fall in the prices of wheat and other products, but another cause is the deflation of values referred to by the Leader of the Opposition. In this State I believe the deflation means about £75,000,000. If we take that over the value of the freehold securities there is bound to be fearful trouble. For Australia as a whole the amount would be many times greater. Men who hold securities which have always enabled them to secure accommodation in order to carry on legitimate operations now find them deflated in value, money is not available to them, and they cannot

spend as they did. There never was a time in the history of the State when money was so tight, and so hard to get and when it was so dear. The deflation has not been checked. A year or two ago sheep fetched up to £2 a head. To-day they can be purchased for 1s. 6d. and lambs for 5s. That does not leave any margin for profit, or much to spend when selling charges have been deducted. These are some of the causes for the shortage of employment. They have created difficulty not only for those in work but for all people. There never was such widespread trouble in the State as there is to-day. People who are well off in assets have great difficulty in getting any money. Not only the farmers and the workers in the timber industry, but business people in every walk of life are experiencing difficulty in carrying on and obtaining accommodation. It is deplorable that in a country such as ours, as undeveloped as ours, and containing so much land that could be brought into use, there should be men out of work. The work is there to be done. The Leader of the Opposition said the unemployment trouble was world-wide. One can understand it in the Old Country where they have 45 million people and only a small area of developed country. They must look for a market for their manufactured goods outside their own territory. We can all point to the work that needs to be done here, useful work of development such as would produce wealth. All this is hung up and idle for the sake of two or three million pounds for this year. It is an uncomfortable thing to know that the money cannot be borrowed by this State in the circumstances. I am in communication with the Federal Government, who are just as anxious as we to find money and to put people back into employment. I believe the money will be made available, though I have not had a reply from the Acting Prime Minister for the last three or four days. The minute he says the money can be made available we shall set about providing work that will mean expenditure, and practically all of it will go on employment. Ordinarily our public works mean the expenditure of a considerable amount on imported materials such as rails and other things. This year, and probably for some time hence, we shall have to devote every penny we get to the wages fund. We cannot borrow and we cannot sell our goods at a reasonable price. There are men going out on works now, on

works for which nothing requires to be purchased, except goods of local manufacture. I refer to drainage and irrigation works fairly convenient to the metropolitan area, between here and Bunbury. Certain railways could be constructed if we could afford to buy the rails, which cost a considerable percentage of the total outlay on a railway.

Hon. P. Collier: You would not require rails until the work was well advanced.

The PREMIER: They would be needed fairly soon. We could do the earthworks, but most of our railways need very little of that work. We are carrying on such work as we can. The men to whom the Leader of the Opposition referred will, I hope, soon be out on work, which has been looked into and on which surveys have been made for some two or three years. These preparations for grading and irrigation have already been made, otherwise we would not be able to put the men out so quickly. But this will absorb only a few. I do not know from day to day if work can be carried on. Our revenue is falling rapidly. The earnings of all concerns are lower than ever. Even the railways, with all the extraordinary crop of wheat we are handling, are earning less than before. This month will show a considerable falling off again compared with last year. People are not travelling. Then there is the fact that we are importing only two-thirds of the value in goods that we imported this time last year. That is a serious matter for the railways and for employment. If our importers buy only a third of what they did, it affects employment to much the same extent. The importation of goods means employment. We do not pay money for what we buy, but pay in goods. The drop in imports represents a big sum, and it certainly affects employment, not only in the case of warehouses and shops but all over the State. I appreciate the moderation with which the Leader of the Opposition put his case. It is extraordinary that suddenly, and without warning, the bottom should drop out of the financial market. It is difficult to see a way out, particularly as we are in financial partnership with all the other States. We are all more or less in the same boat. We cannot turn to another State expecting assistance such as has often been rendered. Neither can the other States turn to us. The position is so intensified by many diffi-

culties that are unusual, unprecedented and unexpected, that one does not care to say he sees any way out at all. All we can do is being done. We are feeding the people and looking after them as well as we can. I do not know how long the money will last for this purpose. I am in communication with the Federal Government. I know they are doing the best they can to get the necessary money to provide the requirements of the States. A meeting to discuss the whole question of finance will be held immediately on Mr. Scullin's return. I have been called into conference four times in the last six months. We go over there and settle a point or two, and there is no time for anything more. We then disperse. I hope in January, when we meet again, the financial position will be gone into thoroughly, and that we shall find a way out of our difficulties. I am very disappointed that Mr. Scullin has not been able to rectify the position in London. I am sure it is not his fault. So far as I know he has not been able to rectify the position. Australian stocks are very much lower than the stocks of municipalities. The Perth Municipality's £100 bonds at 5 per cent. payable in 1950, are quoted at £94. Australian 5 per cent. stock payable in 1935-45 is quoted, I think, at £85, or £9 less. Our security is perfectly good and our honesty is undoubted. We surely will be able to pay and certainly shall pay. I doubt if the British moneylender could have a better security than he has. Tasmanian stocks are quoted at £91 because there are very few of them, and Australian stocks at £85. Western Australian stocks are a better price than the Commonwealth stocks; it is hard to explain why that is so, because in the case of each of the States the guarantee of the Federal Government is behind them.

Mr. Willcock: It all depends on the hands in which the stock is held, and whether they have to sell or not.

The PREMIER: The buyers fix the price, and they were giving £94 for the City of Perth bonds and only £85 for Federal stock. That is wrong. It would not happen here. If members were asked which they would rather have at the same price, they would undoubtedly take the Federal stock. We will do all we can to relieve unemployment and secure the money necessary for the purpose. I do not think it can be done by tax-

tion. I doubt if our produce will sell quickly enough to bring about a change in the financial position of the people generally to meet the urgent situation as soon as it should be met. So we have to turn to the use of borrowed money, which can only come to us from the Federal Government.

HON. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [8.15]: I have been anxious to get something like hope for the unemployed from the speakers who have gone before me, but in both instances we can only gather a story of increasing depression. No real word of hope can be uttered, I think, with conditions in society as they are. We are not getting down to the bedrock of solving this very trying and oppressive problem. It stands to reason, if we look at the facts of the past few years, that with our present system of finance there is no other term to express our condition than that of bankruptcy at this moment—bankruptcy at a time when the world is wealthy as it never was before, bankruptcy in a country rich with not only every necessity but every luxury of life. If we review only a few years past, we find that we have been living not on our own resources but on borrowed money. We have poured our resources into the lap of the world in order that we might receive back a loan. We have been continually adding to that process, until at the present moment we have to contemplate a population of a little over six millions—included amongst them the latest born baby, the sick, the workless, the maimed, the aged—with only a very small proportion of the whole bearing the burden of carrying the Governments. And see what those Governments have incurred in the way of responsibility as representatives of that small, wealth-creating section of the community. We lavished our millions upon war. We created credits then, as the Leader of the Opposition has said. Those millions went in destruction. We offered up a holocaust of our own citizens, our dearest life blood, and brought sorrow into innumerable homes, despair and lifelong suffering and sorrow into many a relative's house. And that amount of money which we then borrowed we have now to pay back. Whilst we pay it not back, we have to pay the interest on it. What does that mean? That interest represents the sum which if in our own midst and in our own pockets, so to speak, would be utilised in the channels of

industry, in the creation of wealth, in the employment of our citizens. Every now and again we borrow from the Old Country. We send back money, or equivalent goods, to employ people at the Antipodes. Our own men are idle. In order to pay our loans and meet our ever faster recurring responsibilities the Commonwealth is not only borrowing abroad but borrowing from our own citizens—borrowing to send goods abroad. Our own citizens are deprived of the circulation of that money, the representative of our goods. Money is taken out of the channels of industry, of employment, and put into loans foreign and local. There is no enterprise. The consequence is that circulation within the community has stopped. It is the passing from hand to hand of what we call wealth, which is to say the symbol of wealth, that keeps a country moving; it is that that keeps everybody participating in at least a little. By circulation some of this representative of wealth goes into every household, and families are happy. What are we doing to keep that wealth in our own country and for our own citizens? We are employing a dying, aged system—the system of the worship of gold. It is nothing else but a fetish. This old superstition which regards gold alone as wealth, this pure sentimentality of the human race, is crippling every nerve and muscle of the human family, especially of that part of it which is concerned in industry. What have we done? This rich, golden country Australia has been producing its untold gold. And where is that gold? Where is it for our benefit now, in times of adversity? We have shipped it—I was going to say, in ship-loads—to foreign countries. We have shipped it to England, and England has transhipped it to America. Gold has become guarded and watched and locked and buried in vaults. That is the benefit we get from our worship of this precious metal, this so-called symbol of absolute wealth. We derive no benefit from it. There seems even a curse upon it. We are crippled. The country that has received it hoards it. From every belligerent nation of the world gold has flowed to America, until the phenomenon that we have here has occurred in every civilised country of the globe. America has lost her customers. Her industries, her commerce, her trade are languishing because this mere symbol of wealth has become her obsession. And the country that gave it to her, languishing

now in purchasing power, is no longer able to trade or have commerce with her. And that is humiliating every one of us. The return to a gold basis has much to do with the unemployed starving in the city of Perth to-night. Because this symbolic glittering metal has been locked up in one big vault, we are starving here in the midst of wealth, in the midst of all that nature requires to keep body and soul in contentment. We must change this. It is not gold that is the genuine basis of wealth. It is brain and muscle, the exercise of the intelligence and the use of the limbs we are endowed with, that have created every ounce of wealth the world possesses. All this great country was as rich before ever Captain Cook visited Botany Bay, as it is in our time. What has given to this great continent its signs of life and luxury? What has built its capitals, created its towns, cleared the forests, and made even the wilderness a place of beauty and of rich returns? Only man's brain and man's muscle; only the application of labour. Labour is the only foundation for genuine wealth. Stop your labour all round the world, toil no longer, apply not the physical forces you have to the creation of wealth, and what does the globe become? An absolutely silent planet moving lifeless in space. It is only the application of brain and muscle that unlocks every fountain of wealth the world possesses. It is labour, combined with and directed by intelligence, that has built this beautiful city of Perth. It is labour that has made tracks through the lonely spots of this continent, and has placed homesteads, hamlets, small towns, and I was going to say cities there. And here is the startling paradox, that the labour that has created all this wealth has not a particle of it now to enjoy. As, eloquently, the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, not only has this labour that has created this wealth now no supply of the very necessities of life, but his health has become faded, his bed has become comfortless, his home has become gloomy and dreary, and in some instances he has been turned out of that very home to the pitiless comfort of the park or of the street. The labour that has built up wealth for this continent is in that position at this very hour. Is not there something wrong? Are not we trying to do the impossible? How can this 6,000,000 people meet the interest on over a billion pounds' worth of

debts? How can we expect, and especially at a time like this, when as I say, the mouth of the great leviathan, Loan, is swallowing every available element of fluid capital and taking the means of circulation out of the country—how can we stand up against it? Now, when all our great public works have stopped, our harbour extensions have ceased, our railways stay where they are, or at a loss we have to pay for the very running of them; when our roads need improvement, when our chief source of natural wealth has faded, when the abundance of the season has created a magnificent harvest that would have gladdened the eyes of our farmers in days gone by, but the fine crops now so luxuriant are yet so little in value that they are scarcely worth taking off—how can we meet our difficulties? It is not with wealth, as the Premier himself has put it, it is with goods we have to pay for things we need. We have the goods, yet cannot pay our men decent wages to keep their wives and little ones in comfort, or at least in tolerable existence in their homes. We must take some drastic steps to remedy this drastic disorder. The disease is sapping the very vitality out of the best of our citizens, those who create the wealth. As Mr. Collier has suggested, the mothers bearing infants that in the future will have to replace the citizens of the present, are starving themselves, are suffering from malnutrition in the vital stage of human nature, and so are bringing into the world wasters and weaklings instead of fine men and women. This in the midst of luxury! This disease is not alone for us, but for coming generations. It is putting its stamp on the citizens of the future. And we declare ourselves helpless. We are to hold conferences with the Premiers of the other States and with the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. Will that help us out of it? We are all bound in the same galling iron chains of custom, the old fetish, the old symbol of gold. They will confer and will say one to another, what are your assets? The assets of this State have gone down by over 50 per cent. within the last 12 months. Our security has gone. Who is going to lend us money in those circumstances? Where are we to get the money to keep those who need work and who have the right to work in order that they may live? For such is the constitution of society that without work the multitudes cannot live. Where

is our security upon which to borrow? And if we borrow, we are only piling up the debacle that must come upon us at no distant date; we only make the burden heavier, the outlook gloomier, the possibilities of success the lesser. Some more drastic measure must be taken. I was glad to hear the Leader of the Opposition when he said it was perhaps necessary to create a circulating medium; in other words, to have a certain amount of inflation. I spoke the other night in brevity upon that point, but it is the only solution. The promise to pay is all that is ever done initially in commercial transactions, and when you pay, you pay in goods. We have the goods—more than we need. This is the problem in order to help, in order to safeguard, in order to preserve the British Empire. When war was declared, our gold was commandeered and we sent away wealth in the shape of the exportable products of the soil that we had, and so we kept things in a certain measure moving. But we have left behind an enormous debt. Here is the spectacle that preserved the integrity of the Empire. We incurred these enormous debts to a nation that does not provide for her citizens the food necessary to keep them alive. She has to buy from other nations the wheat and the food that is necessary to sustain her population. We for our part only buy back what we have sent to her, woollen garments. Over the seas we send our wool, and over the seas in return we import the same stuff manufactured into clothes. By the surplus of real wealth which this country has, the wealth that affects the nation, we feed, not in full, but to an extent we feed her, and in return we get what we have sent to her, now manufactured. We pay in interest what gives the people abroad the means of buying food and keeping life going with shelter and the little comforts they are able to show. This of ours is the wealthy country. Yet we are in poverty. We need the distribution of our wealth to create more content and far better homes for our workers. We are in poverty because of our great wealth and the further borrowing will make the debt still greater. It is a wrong system. We can never get out of the wood by the course we are taking; we can never lift the burden. Six million people cannot carry over a billion pounds' worth of debts and pay the interest as it falls due. We cannot do it. What are we to do? I say a drastic

step is necessary. It is absolutely necessary that we should create a credit of our own and not wait for the Westminster Bank or the Bank of England or the Commonwealth Bank or the Commonwealth Government to create credit and means of exchange. We must drastically assume the right ourselves. The people who are in a state of agonising hunger cannot wait until all these conferences are arranged and we consult with one authority here and another authority there. The stomach will not stop its cravings whilst all these red-tape processes are being taken. We must create a credit of our own, circulate what should be a legal tender, a right to a part of the wheat that has been produced, of the wool we have gathered and the food we have accumulated. Our first duty is to the basis of society upon which all society stands, the workers of the community. We cannot see them starving. We cannot get the money to stop them from starving by taking by way of taxation wealth out of the pockets of those who have it and sending it to the money lenders abroad. We must give them the means of exchange, the credit on the wealth of the State itself. And that may be done without waiting for the Prime Minister's return. It can be done almost immediately, and it should be done to meet a crying and painful emergency.

MR. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [8.41]: I do not intend to take up much time on this question. The speeches made so far have been commendably short. If one dealt with all the ramifications of unemployment, what has occurred, what is likely to occur, the methods in regard to getting money and the methods in regard to spending it we would stay here, not only this evening and next week and the week after, but probably month after month. But the position is that talk is not required at the present time. Something must be done. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) has suggested as a remedy that we should so arrange the credit as to get the production of wealth going almost immediately. It might be possible to do that, but unfortunately we are dealing with a system that cannot be altered in five or ten minutes, or even five years, without creating disabilities and without many obstacles having to be overcome. Reading the savings bank statistics during the past seven or eight months, it becomes apparent

that many people have been able to keep going only by withdrawing their savings from those institutions. Throughout Australia half a million every month is being taken out of the savings bank to provide for necessities of the people who themselves cannot provide them in any other way. The flow of capital from the banks has been accelerated during the past few months, and at the end of this year about £10,000,000 will have been withdrawn from the savings banks of Australia because of the fact that people have been unable to obtain employment and have been obliged to live on their savings.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Commonwealth loans are more lucrative investments.

Mr. WILLCOCK: In regard to those loans, people who invested in them did so on the understanding that they were to receive $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., but so dire has been the necessity of many of the bondholders, that the bonds have been thrown on to the market in such large numbers that they can be bought to-day so cheaply as to ensure a return of not $5\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. but 8 per cent. The sellers of the Commonwealth bonds to-day are mostly holders of small parcels, people who, for patriotic reasons during the war, invested their twenties, thirties and forty pounds in them. Those people now are being forced to sell, and because there are no willing buyers, they have to accept unusually low prices. A glance at the "West Australian" will show that the purchase of one of these bonds will yield £7 19s. 6d. per cent. per annum. Bonds that cost £98 10s. are only realising £94 to-day, and notwithstanding the fact that they will mature in the course of two or three years.

Mr. Sampson: It may be a mistaken idea that money is better than bonds.

Hon. P. Collier: Sheer necessity is compelling people to sell their bonds.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Gold is withdrawn from circulation and if the Commonwealth bond is not worth £1, of what value is the £1 note which is backed by the same authority? People are withdrawing their money from the savings bank to purchase necessities of life. Through being unable to secure employment, many people are forced to dispose of their assets at a very serious discount. Regarding unemployment itself, I do not think anybody wants to make a party matter of it at this stage. It was, however, a party matter at the

elections and for some time afterwards, but now it is too serious a question to be dealt with in anything but a broad general way. All shades of political opinion should have no hesitation in uniting to ameliorate the position. A few nights ago I quoted from the official report dealing with Western Australian activities, a report issued under the authority of the Premier. This report says—

Due to a very great extent to the prosperity which in recent years existed in Western Australia, large numbers of people hastened to this State in the hope of bettering themselves, the result being that a glut ensued in the labour market, and an unemployment problem presented itself, this becoming enhanced by the financial depression which descended upon the Commonwealth as a whole and a little less heavily upon Western Australia.

and it goes on—

One of the promises Sir James Mitchell made upon the hustings was that in the event of his return to power he would make all possible effort to provide work without undue delay.

That is rather a remarkable statement to find here in a document issued under the authority of the Premier. It continues—

While this was considered by his friends and his critics alike as being almost impossible of fulfilment, he was nevertheless entrusted with the task, and within less than a fortnight of assuming office was able to absorb not less than 1,000 workless men into full-time jobs, in railway construction, road works, clearing of the land and other necessary works.

After this document was issued, the truth became so apparent that the Premier decided he would not have candid friends talking like this, and so the publicity pamphlet was discontinued. I think the issue I have in my hand was about the last.

The Premier: Do you say I closed it down because of that? I never saw it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Premier must be—I was going to say lackadaisical, but I will say instead, that he cannot have much sense of responsibility.

The Premier: What, in regard to that damned thing? You appointed a man to write it before you went out of office.

Mr. WILLCOCK: "This damned thing," as the Premier calls it, is headed "Western Australian activities," and it goes out to the world as having been issued under the authority of the Premier.

The Premier: Under your authority.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It also contains an account of Sir James Mitchell's political activities and makes laudatory references to every member of the Cabinet. Now the Premier repudiates it. Unemployment was a party matter at the elections, and the Premier did his share to make it such, but we have reached the stage when we must take it out of controversial politics. Any assistance that can be rendered or any suggestion that can be made by any member of the House, no matter to which party he may belong, should be accepted as something not put forward to embarrass anyone, or as something to be done for party purposes. Just as the people of the State some six or seven months ago united to take over the responsibilities of the Government in regard to sustenance, and to render relief, so we to-day should unite to do everything in our power to improve the position in which we all find ourselves. In Geraldton, the small population of 5,000 people in the space of a few months raised sufficient money to enable them to take over the whole responsibility of the unemployed. The acuteness of the position was relieved by their action and not £5 of Government money has been spent in sustenance there. I hope it will not be necessary to appeal to the Government to help the unemployed in that district, but means must be found to obtain work for those who are in search of it. One matter in which the Premier showed some interest, and which was discussed while the Loan Estimates were before us, was in regard to gold production, and the possibility of absorbing a number of the unemployed in prospecting for gold. Some people declare that the finding of gold would not have much effect on our material life, but it is surprising that there are so many in Western Australia out of employment who have been battlers and who are prepared to go out into the backblocks to do some prospecting. It is a strange fact, too, that just now when unemployment is greater than it has ever been, and depression has been more apparent than at any other period in the State's history, the production of gold is going up. This is not due to any bigger output on the part of the established mines, but it is because of the innumerable small shows that are being opened up and from which gold is being won. I notice from the returns that the 11 months of the current year have been responsible for the output

of more gold than for the 12 months of last year, or indeed for some years past. Quite a number of people with small resources of their own have gone out prospecting and have been more or less successful. Gold is the one commodity that can be produced, and which is of rising value. We know only too well that values have fallen considerably in commodities such as wheat, wool, timber and other things that go to make up the economic life of the State. I mentioned the other evening, to show the effect of the fall in the price of wheat, that two years ago the exportable quantity of wheat was between 40 and 45 million bushels, which was sufficient to pay the overseas interest bill. This year our exportable surplus is 50 per cent. greater, and that quantity will not pay more than two-thirds of our interest bill in London. In order to be able to pay our interest bill overseas, we have to more than double the exportable surplus we had two years ago. We have increased the supply by 50 per cent., but have not got within one-third of the amount necessary for the payment of our interest bill. Even if the Premier were to be provided with huge credits, his great difficulty in these times would be to determine the industry to which he could apply the money. No one would be anxious to extend wheat production under existing conditions, in which the cost of production is greater than the returns from the commodity. That applies also to other industries. So long as we maintain our present capitalistic system, which is based on the production of gold—I suppose we will have the system for a year or two yet—

Mr. McCallum: It will last till Christmas time at any rate.

Mr. WILLCOCK: —there is no other industry in which we can profitably utilise capital at the present juncture. Whenever men are willing to organise themselves in order to prospect for gold, the Government should not refuse them assistance. I had occasion to go to the Mines Department today with regard to a party of four men in the Geraldton district who were anxious to engage in prospecting. I received a letter from one of the men—an intimate friend of the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum)—who explained the position of himself and the other three to whom I have referred. They are willing and anxious to prospect for gold. They are good

workers and are prepared to undertake the task thoroughly. I made inquiries and found that it was impossible to get sustenance for them. On the other hand if those four men were prepared to come to Perth and go to Blackboy, from which they would be taken to engage upon what I may describe as useless work, the Government would be prepared to make sustenance available for them. Although those men want to engaged upon something that may contribute substantially to the economic wealth of the State, the Government are unable to provide sustenance.

Mr. Doney: Did they require sustenance only, or did they want something else as well?

Mr. WILLCOCK: They desired sustenance only. Of course, the department provides tools as well, but that is a comparatively small matter. The operations of the Main Roads Board have been so curtailed that ample supplies of picks, shovels and other implements necessary for prospecting parties are available for distribution. These men did not desire the basic wage, but merely sustenance payments, and yet that assistance could not be rendered to them. Surely the Government should be able to make arrangements whereby such men could receive assistance for work that will tend to increase the wealth of the State. Before the conclusion of the debate, I hope the Premier will be able to tell us that if men, who are well known to the Mines Department, are prepared to form themselves into prospecting parties, the Government will find the sustenance necessary for them. The money so expended would be utilised much better than if it were paid to men employed in making roads and undertaking other works that we could do without for years.

The Premier: Do you know that they found gold in National Park?

Mr. WILLCOCK: The men were not looking for gold there.

The Premier: They found it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I should be surprised if it were found there in payable quantities. I have already emphasised the point that our gold yield is increasing, and that the downward trend has been arrested. That is due simply and solely to the fact that men have been prepared to go out prospecting.

The Minister for Mines: You are not right in saying that.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The result may not be solely due to that, but it is, to a great extent. In the Murchison many small shows have been discovered during the last five or six months by men who usually follow ordinary avenues of employment, but who, through present-day circumstances, have been forced to go into the back country searching for gold. I know some of those men personally. I am sorry the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) is not present this evening, because he could have named plenty of them.

The Minister for Mines: What has happened has been largely the result of the huge expenditure in the provision of up-to-date machinery on some of the mines. That has resulted in increased production.

Mr. WILLCOCK: No doubt some of the increase has been due to that fact.

The Minister for Mines: A great proportion of the increase was due to that.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I would not say for one moment that later on, after April next, when the results of the workings at Wiluna are known, the increased production was due to men engaged in prospecting. But that has nothing to do with the point I am making now. A considerable proportion of the increased production of gold has been due to the fact that these men have engaged successfully in prospecting operations. I do not intend to take up much of the time of the House in further debating this question. We should be as concise and precise as possible in dealing with it. I associate myself with the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) regarding the necessity for arresting the deflation of our currency. Undue inflation is undoubtedly an evil, but, from the standpoint of the requirements of the people, still greater evil is likely to arise if we permit the deflation of our currency to go on without successfully arresting it. No matter what steps have to be taken, we must arrest deflation and make it possible for our people to produce more wealth and to obtain the commodities they require. If we can do that, it will be of benefit to the Commonwealth and to the State alike. The production of gold will have a wonderful effect upon our economic life. If we could produce an additional £1,000,000 worth of gold in Western Australia during the next 12 months, it would solve our trouble to a

great extent. There is no one industry capable of providing greater employment than goldmining. If one or two mines of any magnitude were to be opened up as a result of energetic prospecting in the back portions of the State, it would mean more to us than anything else at the present juncture. Our early prosperity was founded on the ever-increasing gold production. If the Premier is prepared to provide sustenance for the unemployed—I know he is, for otherwise those people would have to starve—he would be well advised to make money available to men willing and able to engage in prospecting in the auriferous belt.

MR. PANTON (Leederville) [9.10]: While I am prepared to agree that the question of unemployment cannot be looked upon as a party matter, I hope the Premier and those sitting behind him do not expect members on the Opposition side of the House to refrain from criticism where they think criticism is justified. It was rather pleasing to read that the Premier said he intended to employ at least 1,200 men within the next few weeks. That report appeared in the paper some little time ago, when a number of representatives of married men, who were out of employment, waited upon one of the members of the Government. When I read that statement in the Press, I spent the greater part of the following day in an endeavour to ascertain where the employment was to be provided. It was only when I encountered Mr. Macartney, who was in charge of sustenance work, that I was able to find out anything about it. When I made inquiries regarding him, I found that he was in conference with the Minister for Country Water Supplies, and subsequently I found that little was known about the proposal.

Mr. Raphael: Perhaps it was a misprint in the newspapers.

Mr. PANTON: I hope we shall hear something more about the matter this evening, so that it may be carried beyond the mere statement the Premier has made that he expects to employ 1,200 men.

Mr. Kenneally: When?

Mr. PANTON: Yes, when, and under what conditions? Dame Rumour is said to be a lying jade, but we hear that the conditions under which some of the men are to be employed at Waroona are rather startling.

As I say, I have nothing more to go on than Dame Rumour, and I would like the Premier, or one of his Ministers, to clear the matter up this evening. I am informed that it is proposed to take men to Waroona and put them on drainage work on piece-work rates. The Government believe in piece-work and payment by results, so we may expect that system to apply. I hear the men are to be allowed to make as much as they can, but they will be paid £3 a week while they are working. I understand that, in view of the fact it is impossible to keep two homes going on £3 a week, it is proposed to endeavour to get the men to take their wives and families out with them.

The Premier: Nothing of the sort. They can take them if they like.

Mr. PANTON: It will not be a question of taking their wives if they like—if they are to be paid £3 a week. The Premier knows—perhaps he does not know, because he has not had the experience—that it is impossible to keep two homes going on £3 a week. It will be stern necessity that will make these men take their wives and families with them to the job. What I am interested in is, What will become of the balance of the money the men will be able to make under piece-work conditions?

The Minister for Railways: You should get a divorce from that old woman you talk about, and get the facts.

Mr. PANTON: I said I had only Dame Rumour to go on.

The Minister for Railways: Whatever the men earn, they will get.

Mr. PANTON: Will they get it as they earn it?

The Minister for Railways: I am not saying anything about that.

Mr. PANTON: That is the point. When will they get the extra money? Are the men to receive the payment in such a way that they will be able to keep their wives and families in reasonable comfort, without having to take them on to the job if they do not desire to do so? Surely we should know something more definite about it.

The Premier: We have not got the money anyhow.

Mr. PANTON: In that event, it does not matter how much the men earn on piece-work; they will get no more than the £3. If that is the position, why not be honest? Why not tell the men that they will work

under piece-work conditions, but they can receive £3 a week only. I will leave that to the Minister concerned to explain. Like other members, I am prepared to assist the Government in every direction possible to arrive at a solution of the unemployment problem, but not to the detriment of what the trade union movement has fought for over the past 30 years. I will never recede from that attitude.

The Minister for Railways: You wait till that happens, and then you will have reason to fear that.

Mr. PANTON: I am just warning the Minister—

The Minister for Railways: We don't want any warning; we know our job.

Mr. PANTON: Very well. If the Minister knows his job, all I can say is that he is not making a good fist of it, notwithstanding the pledges he and other Ministers made at an earlier stage.

The Minister for Railways: You are a wonder!

Mr. PANTON: The Minister set me going the other night, and I would advise him not to goad me too far. I am sorry that the Chief Secretary and Minister for Education is not in his seat at the moment. Not often is he away. I have a question for him to answer and it is no rumor this time.

The Premier: He will be back at 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning.

Mr. PANTON: If he returns before 5 o'clock, he will be in time to hear some of the discussion. What I wish to deal with is a question of fact. I have a notice signed by the Director of Education addressed to one of the school cleaners and caretakers, stating—

I have to inform you that as your services will not be required during the whole of the Christmas vacation your engagement will terminate on 12/12/30. Payment for annual leave accrued will be made on the paysheet—3 days. You will be eligible for re-engagement as cleaner from 9/2/31, and should you be desirous of such, you should make application to this department on or before 17/1/31.

The Premier: To whom was that sent?

Mr. PANTON: If the Premier wants to know the name, he should look up the file and get the names of all who have received notice. I am glad that the Chief Secretary and Minister for Education has returned to his seat. The cleaners and caretakers are engaged on a weekly basis

and are working under an award of the Arbitration Court. Under the award they are entitled to a fortnight's annual holiday. When the schools start the Christmas vacation, the cleaners and caretakers generally take their fortnight's holiday. Afterwards they are required to clean the schools. It is not a spring cleaning but a Christmas cleaning. The whole of the schools are thoroughly cleaned, and the cleaners and caretakers are thus occupied until the scholars return to school. It is essential from a health point of view that the schools should be thoroughly cleaned. On this occasion, for some reason best known to the Minister or his department, the cleaners and caretakers are to be discharged as soon as they have completed their 14 days' annual leave. The man whose notice I have quoted has been transferred to another department, and consequently was entitled to only three days' leave: In a nutshell the position is that those people have been sacked instead of being retained to do the usual six weeks' cleaning. Ninety per cent. or more of the cleaners and caretakers are women. They have been transferred to the position of cleaners and caretakers from the Child Welfare Department, from which they were obtaining sustenance. Widows with families are given preference for this work. Do the Government imagine that it is possible for a widow and family to live on £2 9s. or £2 14s. a week? That is full-time pay and most of them are on half time. That pay is not sufficient to keep them during the six weeks they will be out of work. If they have been unable to save sufficient money to tide over that period, and it is impossible to see how they could do so on that pay, surely it must be patent that they must return to the Child Welfare Department for sustenance! The man to whom the circular was addressed has a wife and seven children.

The Chief Secretary: What has he been drawing?

Mr. PANTON: I think the award rate is £4 7s. a week.

The Chief Secretary: I think it is higher.

Mr. PANTON: It might be £4 10s. a week: certainly it is not more. Another of the cleaners and caretakers has nine children, and he, too, has received notice of discharge. Those men must return to the Child Welfare Department for sustenance and, if they are treated as other peo-

ple are, they will receive £2 9s. a week. The Education Department will save £4 7s. a week, and if each draws £2 9s. from the Child Welfare Department, the Government will save £1 18s. a week. Worst of all is that those men will be compelled to accept charity instead of being able to carry on the work they should be doing. What have the Government to say to this wholesale discharging of cleaners and caretakers? While on this subject let me mention a remarkable thing that happened. An inspectress, belonging I presume to the Education Department or the Child Welfare Department, was sent out in a motor car to visit the home of each of the cleaners. I understand she visited practically every one. I know personally that she visited a large number.

Mr. Kenneally: To capitalise their property.

Mr. PANTON: I would not have thought of that phrase. She demanded admittance to the homes, made all sorts of inquiries, ascertained the number of children, looked to see what sort of a home it was and how much furniture there was and, I suppose, made a report to the department whether the women were entitled to the pittance they were receiving from the Government for their work as cleaners and caretakers. Perhaps she also reported whether the Government could fairly put them off for six weeks during the Christmas vacation. The Minister for Lands frowns.

The Minister for Lands: I am not frowning: I am very sorry it has happened.

Mr. PANTON: I, too, am sorry it has happened. I cannot understand it, and I cannot believe that the Chief Secretary had any knowledge of what was being done.

The Chief Secretary: Yes, I had.

Mr. PANTON: Then I am surprised. The Minister has gone down in my estimation about 98 per cent. He was only two per cent. down before.

The Minister for Railways: He did not have far to fall.

Mr. PANTON: If I had admiration for any Minister it was for the Chief Secretary.

The Minister for Works: That is not very complimentary to the other Ministers.

Mr. PANTON: Not since the Chief Secretary has made that statement. If the Minister had a full knowledge of the fact that the poverty of those women was being exploited with a view to putting them off for six weeks during the Christmas vaca-

tion, he does not deserve the admiration of even a humble person like myself.

Mr. Kenneally: The fact that those people had continuity of employment at Christmas time was used as an argument when the board fixed their wages.

Mr. PANTON: The member for East Perth and I were on the board when there was a board to fix the wages and conditions and the argument was used—and it naturally influenced the board—that the cleaners and caretakers had continuity of employment and received a fortnight's holiday each year. The board were told that after the cleaners returned from the holiday and while the children were away, the schools were thoroughly cleaned. The wages and conditions were based on those considerations. Just as the Government repudiated a law last night, so they have now repudiated all that evidence. Those unfortunate women cannot have a few shillings to keep body and soul together, but are to be put off for six weeks. The Education Department evidently wish to save money, and the expenditure will be transferred to the Child Welfare Department. I appeal to the Minister, low though he has fallen in my estimation, not to permit this, but to be just to the women who have been working for his department. I understand that notices of discharge have been sent out only by the Education Department. Why not by the Treasury and the Department of Agriculture?

Mr. Ferguson: They are not closed for six weeks.

Mr. PANTON: What about the health of the children when they return to school? What have the Health Department to say of this decision? The health inspectors should inspect the schools where dust has been accumulating from top to bottom during the last 12 months and insist upon their being thoroughly cleaned. Surely the Government are not so bankrupt of ideas as to have to discharge those women. If they have to draw sustenance from the Child Welfare Department the saving cannot possibly be £30. Yet the Government will degrade themselves and the State and these women by forcing them to go on sustenance when they should be engaged at their everyday employment. This sort of thing makes one wonder whether the Opposition should treat unemployment as a non-party question, as the Government ask us

to do. Recently the Chief Secretary told us he would be prepared to go so far as to support a Cabinet representative of the whole House. If he was offering as a Minister, he would not get my vote. After all the ideas that he has been propagating I cannot understand his openly and unashamedly admitting that he was a party to this sort of thing. I can only say that my judgment of human nature must be sadly at fault. At this late hour, I ask the Minister to withdraw the notices and permit those women to continue at their work. Let him give them an opportunity to enjoy what the teachers enjoy. The teachers will have not 14 days but six or seven weeks' holiday, but not one of them has received such a circular. Can the Minister say that any teacher from monitor to head teacher has received notice of discharge for six weeks and an intimation to apply for re-engagement? He cannot. Why should the woman cleaner, drawing a paltry £2 9s. a week and the man with seven children getting £4 7s. a week be put off for six weeks while a teacher drawing £600 a year, or the Director drawing £900 a year, receives his holiday on full pay? Let the Minister treat the whole of the department equally and not differentiate between the cleaner and the Director or his inspectors. Let all have a fair deal. If sacrifices have to be made let the Minister start with himself and finish up with the cleaner and caretaker. He should not start with the cleaner and refuse to go one step farther.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [9.30]: I wish to touch upon the department that has charge of the sustenance meted out to the unemployed, rather than upon the problem that has arisen since the defeat of the Collier Government. It was that defeat that brought about so much unemployment. I will not deal with the matter from a party point of view. Members should join together in finding a solution of the difficulty. The member for Kanowna has shown the Premier the advantage to be gained by the credit note system. There is enormous wealth in this country. Had it not been for the anti-Labour senators, we should have had £5,000,000 more for our wheat than we shall now get. The Federal Labour Government were prepared to guarantee 4s. a bushel on wheat, but the anti-Labour forces defeated the project, and un-

employment has increased twofold. We are told that the Labour Government have brought much of this distress upon the country. If the Opposition had been more broad-minded we should not have suffered as we are suffering. The nation is existing in distressful times. People are being badly nourished and are suffering greatly. The Government expect a man to rear a family of nine or 10 children on £2 9s. a week. When a child reaches the age of 14, he is deprived of his right to live, because the officer in charge of unemployment (Mr. Macartney) stops the 7s. a week.

Mr. Sleeman: Do not blame the department.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I will deal with it and with all its faults.

The Minister for Railways: There has been no change in the instructions issued since the Collier Government were in office.

Mr. RAPHAEL: If the Labour Government did wrong, the Nationalist Government should not follow in their footsteps. The Minister should see that these young people have the right to live. Unemployment has increased threefold since the Collier Government went out of office. If they were prepared to starve the masses, there is no reason why the present Government should do so. When the sustenance of a child of 14 is stopped, the younger children in the family have to be deprived of some of their food to feed the older ones. Even a child of 14 is a citizen of the State and is entitled to be fed. Would the Minister for Railways like to feed his children on 7s. a week? The Herdsman's Lake scheme has been set up as a means of relieving some of the unemployment. The conditions provide that to get a homestead a man must put up £2 15s. and pay £1 a week on possession. Only a man in work could find that money until his block became productive. I appeal to the Minister for Lands to alter these conditions. Men who desire work should be able to live as decent citizens and have an opportunity to make headway in life. Then there is the Waroona scheme, propounded by the Minister for Railways.

The Minister for Railways: I do not know anything about it.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do.

The Minister for Railways: You are an encyclopaedia.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The secretary for unemployment in Victoria Park received in-

structions what to do with regard to the despatch of men to Waroona. The men are entitled to work there on piece work. If they like they can earn £20 a week, but, no matter how much they earn, they are given only £3 a week to keep themselves at Waroona and their families in Perth.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What becomes of the balance?

Mr. RAPHAEL: In every possible direction the Government save on the sustenance orders. A man may have earned £9 a week at Waroona. When he returns to Perth his pay is stopped, but he is allowed to draw the money he has earned. Are the Government prepared to pay interest on the money which has been withheld, or to subsidise the men to prevent their families from starving? The men are also told they may take their wives and families with them to Waroona. They can hire a tent for 1s. a week. They are expected to rear their children under filthy conditions and without any educational facilities. The scheme is rotten to the core. Fancy the Government countenancing the rearing of children in a tent rather than in a home! Many citizens have contributed to the Lord Mayor's Distress Fund. I am not one of those who was "mug" enough to make a contribution to it. Fully 80 per cent. of the money so raised went into Consolidated Revenue to keep the single men around Perth. The remaining 20 per cent. have gone to different charitable organisations.

The Minister for Railways: When was that fund established?

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister was the one who established it.

The Minister for Railways: You are wrong.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Whether he established it or not, he took care to get control of it.

The Minister for Railways: My friends opposite established it.

Mr. RAPHAEL: And you filched the cash from it.

Mr. Millington: It was not established by us.

Mr. Munsie: That was long after the elections.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister was one of the instigators of it in the Perth City Council. He tried to make the City Council responsible for the unemployment in the city, but they would not take it from him, and neither would I. Through no fault of their own perhaps, the Government have created a vast body of ill-nourished citizens.

The suggestion made by the member for Kanowna would help us to solve our difficulties. We have a perfect right to engage in the note system.

The Minister for Lands: Who will find the capital to back it?

Mr. RAPHAEL: If we get more gold it will go into the pockets of the Yanks. They will take it as soon as we get it. Our pound notes will not be of much use outside the State, but they will provide the means of solving the difficulty. They will be the only thing of any use within the State. All our roads and footpaths stand in need of repair, and we have the materials alongside them. We are paying men £2 9s. a week. If we gave them another £1 a week, which the Government should be able to find, they would have some chance of keeping body and soul together. The Government keep on saying that although we may find work for the unemployed, they cannot find any more money. They must have funds in hand. They are able to give gratuities to people who are dismissed. If the money had been spent in the right direction instead of being misapplied we should have less unemployment with us to-day. I am only trying to help the Government in the right direction. I hope some further effort will be made to solve the difficulty and lead to the fulfilment of the promise, "Work for all."

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [9.45]: As the Leader of the Opposition has said, it is deeply to be regretted that Western Australia has thousands of unemployed to-day. The worst feature of the situation is, not that these people are unemployed, but that hundreds amongst them are practically starving. The trouble is that when they were in work they were not able to put a little by for a rainy day, because of family responsibilities and the casual nature of their employment. Thus the bad times find them without a penny of reserves, and they are down and out. It is bad enough to be unemployed when one has a few shillings behind one, but to be without either work or food is a thousand times worse. In Fremantle the trouble is not to discover unemployed, but to meet people who are in work. For every person in work, six or seven are to be found out of work. That state of things cannot be allowed to continue. If something is not done, these people will take a hand themselves. We members of Parlia-

ment are responsible. We are sent here to govern the State. We must stand up to our job. I wish to protest against the Government's attitude towards the unemployed. The day before yesterday it was intended to hold a procession in Perth to demonstrate to the Government that there are hundreds of men and women who want something done for them. No tact, no sympathy was shown in dealing with the procession. The police were sent out with the prison van in readiness for arrests. Some of the unemployed were arrested, and placed in the cells. However, the police magistrate did not take a serious view of the matter, as he released all the defendants except one. Years ago many of the men went to fight in Europe in order to make the world safe for democracy. Now, when they are down and out and hungry, and wish to demonstrate the position to the Government, democracy is not safe for them. The police cart off demonstrators in the prison van. I do not blame the police for doing the job they were sent on, but I do blame the authorities who sent them. Two or three policemen could handle the unemployed well, with the use of tact. In fact, I could pick out two or three policemen who would achieve that. Then there would be no trouble or noise. People who are weary and starving, however, are put in gaol simply because they break some municipal by-law. It would be interesting to know whether the Perth City Council had anything to do with the matter. I fail to see how the Government could take action for breach of a municipal by-law unless requested by the municipality to do so.

Mr. Panton: Perhaps Councillor Raphael could tell you.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Perhaps; but I am sure he would not be on the side of those who wanted to persecute the demonstrators. I hope this is the last we shall see of interference with the unemployed when they merely wish to show that they are in considerable numbers.

The Minister for Railways: You are not so simple as to believe that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I believe everything I say. Moreover, the Minister knows it is true. However, he will not do very much about it. This is not the first show of strength we have had from him. Once there were machine guns and field hospitals on the banks of the Swan River, and there were also barbed wire entanglements. I do not

expect much more from the Minister for Police than the show he put up on that occasion.

The Minister for Railways: There has been no change of procedure since your Government left office.

Mr. SLEEMAN: There has been a great change.

The Minister for Railways: No. In the main the unemployed are as good citizens as you or I, but some of them were out to make a disturbance.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The unemployed might be better citizens than the Minister or I.

The Minister for Railways: You know what one or two of them are. There are a few out to create disturbances.

Mr. SLEEMAN: One finds a few squibs in every section, even amongst members of Parliament.

The Minister for Railways: The hon. member is entitled to speak for himself.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am not going to allow the whole of the unemployed to be blamed simply because the Minister says that among them are a few out for trouble. When they try to make trouble, it will be time to stop them. If they endanger life or property, the police can take a hand. However, two or three members of the force, if told to look after unemployed, could do it without trouble or disturbance. It is the duty of the Government of the day, whether a Labour Government, a Country Party Government, or a Nationalist Government, if they cannot provide work, at least to provide food. If the present Government cannot find work for everybody, as they promised, they must provide food for everybody. During the war period there was no trouble in finding food for the people. We are now passing through a more serious time than when our soldiers were being sent to fight in France. At that time, if the Government wanted anything they went and took it, and provided the soldiers and the people with food. There is abundance of food in Western Australia. Wheat is going to waste, and potatoes are rotting in the field because they are not commercially worth digging. There is practically meat to burn. Some time ago we were told that in the North there were thousands of sheep whose throats would have to be cut because there was no commercial use for the animals. And yet men, women and children

are practically starving. As regards sustenance for boys and girls over the age of 14, I know of Fremantle families numbering six or seven members of whom only three get sustenance—the man, his wife and one child. The explanation is that the other children are over 14 years of age. Practically the Government are telling the children over that age to starve, or trench upon the pittance their parents and their younger brothers and sisters receive. We have in this country wheat, meat, potatoes, and in fact practically everything that is needed to save our unemployed from starvation. If it comes to the point, the Government's duty will be to commandeer that food and hand it over to the unemployed so that they may keep body and soul together. It is the duty of the Government to provide food if they cannot provide work. I do not blame the unemployed for any steps taken in order to force the Government to provide them with at all events the wherewithal to live. In Fremantle two committees aiding the unemployed have been at work for some considerable time. One looks after married men, and is called the married men's committee; the other looks after single men, and is known as the single men's committee. The married men's committee have no funds left, and their work must now be taken on by someone else. In fact, the Government must see to it. The committee have done valuable work, and have raised large sums of money to alleviate the distress amongst married people. But neither money nor clothes can be obtained at present. Fremantle has hardly an old rag left. Old clothes have been raked up all over the place for the unemployed. The money has cut out, and so few clothes are available that many of the unemployed are almost in rags. The funds of the single men's committee will be exhausted in about a fortnight's time. Excellent work has been done by this committee also, in association with the Rev. Mr. Nye. I wish to compliment that gentleman. He is a thorough Christian, always striving to provide for those in need. Ever since last May the single men's committee have been feeding something like 130 men; though I should add that a few weeks ago some of these men were sent to Blackboy Camp. During those months the Government have put in £5 per week towards the keep of 130 men. The committee were not able to give those

men much, but at least they guaranteed them one good meal daily. They are doing that now. Immediately the committee's funds are exhausted, I shall be on the doorstep of the Government with the demand that they look after those men. I would not be above leading them myself and committing a breach of the municipal by-laws.

Mr. Panton: Then you will ride in that van!

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am sorry that the van was disgraced by being made to do work it was never intended for. Its purpose is to shield wrongdoers from the too eager eyes of the curious, not to convey unemployed to gaol. I trust there will be no trouble in getting the Government to do something immediately the funds of the local committee are gone. There are numerous ways in which the Government could get money, save money, and make work. We should do everything possible to produce in this State what the people of this State need. Not long ago I introduced a Bill designed to provide some work for the unemployed, but the measure received little support except from members on this side of the Chamber. I believe that the industry I was seeking to assist can be brought into a better condition, enabling it to furnish more employment. Yesterday the member for Katanning (Mr. Piesse) asked some questions about harvesters made at the State Implement Works. If there is going to be any argument, the harvesters need not be specially picked out. Let us give consideration to other implements manufactured at the works, and let us give preference to them so that some of our men may be kept at work. Men are being put off every day, and instead of trying to produce our agricultural implements in this State we are sending our money away from the State while our own people are starving. There are other ways in which the Government could save money. Very shortly His Excellency the Governor will be leaving us, his term having expired. The Government would be well advised to see that no successor to His Excellency is appointed. Tasmania has set that example, and I believe Victoria is about to follow it. If the Government were to decline to appoint a successor to Sir William Campion, there would be an additional £6,000 or £7,000 per annum available for distribution amongst

the unemployed. Even in Parliament here, money could be saved. We have too many members of Parliament. First there are our own 80 members, and then there are those members representing the State in the Federal Parliament. I believe 40 members would be plenty for our State Parliament. If we were to reduce the existing 80 members to 40, it would mean a big saving in the administration charges of the State.

Mr. Panton: It might be necessary to provide sustenance for a few of the members retrenched.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Not many members of another place would require sustenance, and for those that did we would readily do our best. I will not take up any more time. I have voiced my protest and I hope that something will be done. I am not trying to make a party matter of this. In the past successive Governments have done all they thought they could do, irrespective of whether it was Mr. Collier's Administration or Sir James Mitchell's Government. Clearly it is the duty of everybody in the State to do all that can be done for the unemployed.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. N. Keenan—Nedlands) [10.3]: The subject for the discussion of which the Leader of the Opposition moved the adjournment of the House, is of the greatest importance and the greatest magnitude. The opportunity has been used largely for the airing of matters in which private members are personally interested, altogether apart from the problem to which the Leader of the Opposition addressed himself. Unfortunately I desire to follow in the footsteps of those members who have discussed smaller matters, for I want to refer to a question touched upon by the member for Leederville, who commented on the fact that the Education Department had no full time cleaners, that for a certain period in the year their services were not required. They are all engaged on a weekly hire, and on the ordinary contract approved by the Court of Arbitration for that class of employee. The member for Leederville is not fully informed on the matter, because as I understand it—and let me say that I take full responsibility for anything done by the department for which I am responsible; whether the matter be small or large, whether it be a detail of administration or

a question of policy, the Minister must be responsible. And so I say I stand responsible. This, I understand, is what is being carried out: When the schools close for the vacation the cleaners are kept on for a week afterwards in order to clear away all the debris such as may have been left by the scholars. Of course that is ample time for the purpose. One day, or at most two days, would suffice for the task. Nevertheless the cleaners are kept on for a week. Then they get a fortnight's holiday on full pay.

Mr. Panton: They are entitled to that under their award.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am aware of it. Then they are brought in again a week before the schools re-open. Again that is ample time for the introductory cleaning of the rooms. The only question is should we keep cleaners on nominally working when there is no work for them to do, and that at a time when every penny has to be conserved for purposes absolutely of the greatest importance? At present we are very hard pushed to provide educational facilities for the children of the State, and we have therefore to save in any direction that is legitimate. Surely no one would suggest that the putting off of cleaners one week after the schools rise, and putting them on again one week before the schools re-assemble is not perfectly fair. It is not that a question of this magnitude can be discussed here with any great advantage, but it has been referred to, and I want it cleared up, and I want also to take full responsibility for it; because so long as I am in charge of a department I will never consent to having money paid away where no services are rendered. Nor would any member of the Opposition, if he were a Minister, tolerate it.

Mr. Panton: It is the first time it has been done in the history of the Education Department.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The member for Leederville referred also to school teachers. That is a different matter. The reason why the school teacher gets a fairly long vacation is because it is admitted that the duties of a school teacher are exhausting, and that he or she requires a considerable time in which to recuperate. That may not be right, but it is admitted, and part of the contract.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And it is said the cleaners require that time in which thoroughly to cleanse the schools.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The cleaners do not require more than a fortnight. No rational person would suggest that the ordinary school building requires more than a fortnight in which to be cleansed. At all events that is my opinion, and if I am wrong I accept the responsibility.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Then why not change the school teachers' vacation?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Surely the hon. member has listened. If he has not, I do not propose to repeat myself.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: But I cannot follow your logic.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not propose to repeat it. I have said I will take the responsibility for the present arrangement being a fair and equitable one. To allow a fortnight for the cleaning of a school building—not a big building, but in most cases one of two or at most three rooms—to say it requires more than a fortnight to clean such a building is absurd. Since I am speaking, I desire to address myself to larger and more important matter which the Leader of the Opposition has raised to-night, namely, the question of unemployment. That is a question on the solution of which depends the whole of our future. It is suggested by the Leader of the Opposition—and I think rightly—that it is extremely difficult to see how we are to solve that problem. It is true the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) has suggested that we might create some State credit—which I presume means the State issue of notes—upon which to re-establish our industries. Whilst I admire very much the language in which the proposal was put forward, I am afraid the idea does not commend itself to the common sense of this House. It would be an extraordinarily dangerous experiment to make, and I am afraid we should soon find that our printed notes were of very little value indeed. And with the failure of those notes we should have to meet a disaster very much greater than even the present disaster. I do not think there is any risk of any Government, whether this Government or a Government formed by members opposite, or a Government formed on national lines, committing itself to such a policy.

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

Hon. T. Walker: In Canada they have seasonal inflation.

The Attorney General: But that is by the banks, not by the Government.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is part of their ordinary banking facilities, a very different thing from a State Government attempting to finance the whole requirements of industry in the State. However, that is a subject about which I am afraid we shall have to hold different opinions and is a matter that would require, as the member for Geraldton suggested, a great many months before we could arrive at any unanimity about it. It is strong evidence of the magnitude of this problem that no one is able to suggest a solution. For borrowing is not a solution. It is true we could borrow, but that would be only a temporary expedient. And it has this curse, that every day makes the difficulty of the final solution greater.

Hon. P. Collier: It aggravates it later on.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so. Therefore it is correct to say that no one can suggest at the present moment a solution of this curse of unemployment. It is said to be due to many causes, one being the over-production of industry throughout the world. Therefore I presume if we were to suggest a solution based on that factor, it would be to reduce production. But we cannot reduce production except within local limits, while the over-production of the outside world would still remain. Therefore that must be ruled out. What would be the proper solution, I am not prepared to attempt to define it this evening. Why I say I would not dream of attempting to define a solution to-night is because I do not think it is within the capacity of any one man to define, with any hope of being correct, what that solution is. No doubt the member for Guildford will have a try at it, but I am not sure that he will succeed. That is one reason why I am addressing the House on another matter: I suggest it is only by a combination of the best brains we can command in this community that we can hope to arrive at a proper conclusion as to what are the steps to take to deal with this great problem. For that reason I suggest, notwithstanding what the member for Leederville said, that there is no desire on my part to block the way

to the formation of such a Cabinet by remaining on these benches.

Mr. Panton: I do not suggest that you said anything else.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Whatever it may be, I am only too willing to be a very humble member of a House that will assist a Government of that kind to attempt to find the solution of a problem which is such a grave and terrible one that it is almost a breach of decorum to introduce a joecular matter in addressing oneself to it. Therefore I apologise for the reference I made a moment ago. I only say the present occasion does not admit of an examination of this matter from all the proper angles, and therefore that all we can say in a debate of this kind is that it is a subject of such vital importance that it should be taken away from any possible arena of party strife and party politics, and should be dealt with by the best intelligences in this country.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [10.15]: Throughout the debate the difficulty of the Government in respect of the need of money, has been emphasised. We have heard that the Government have nothing with which to relieve unemployment. Does that not convey that what the Government are not able to do without money, we are expecting our people to do? The Government are contributing largely to the increase of unemployment by dismissing workers by the hundreds in various directions and so denying them the right to earn money. Governments cannot function without money and yet the individual is expected to function without it. I desire to subscribe to the policy outlined by the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker), and if we cannot function without money, if the system of finding work for all has broken down, if the Government have to admit that they are obliged to increase unemployment, we must realise that the people must be fed. If we cannot find work for all we must get food for all. I appreciate the fact that the present system has broken down so far as employment is concerned. Thousands of men and women are going short of food; yet it is admitted that there is abundance of food, more than sufficient, produced within the State. I submit that we have to get away from talking on this matter in terms of money; we must re-organise relief in terms of food, and I believe that is possible. I say most defin-

itely that it is not only possible for the Government to do that but that the Government must do it, that they will have to go into the question of getting food and distributing it on the basis that it will be available to all. The Government are active in regard to many matters. The member for Leederville has referred to the extraordinary attitude adopted by the Minister for Education who says it is generally accepted that it is essential for school teachers' salaries to go on because a period of recuperation is required, extending over six or seven weeks. He does not admit altogether that it is desirable, but he says it has become a recognised thing and must be continued, but it has also been recognised for years past that the cleaners of schools are not able in the limited time at their disposal to keep the schools thoroughly clean. The result is that there are corners where dirt accumulates that needs a week's cleaning to remove, and it is in the holiday period that the cleaning is done thoroughly. The Minister for Education says that because it has been the custom in the past, it is not going to continue. The Government can see the means of saving a week or two's wages when it comes to the poor unfortunate charwoman. If the Government cannot get beyond that kind of thing it becomes essential for us to realise that we are failing to appreciate the gravity of the situation. Thus a motion of this kind is necessary to emphasise the fact that if the Government cannot find work for the people they must find food. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) has pointed out that the organisation created when the present Government assumed office, by which local governing bodies were called upon to assist, has already shown signs of breaking down. He states that in Fremantle it will not be possible to continue rendering assistance as far as the married men are concerned and that already the single men have had to be removed elsewhere. Exactly the same thing applies at Bassendean. The Minister for Railways, a few nights ago, paid a tribute to the good work done by the Bassendean committee. He said that more had been done there by the local governing body than had been done in any other centre of the State. That is due to the fact that early in the unemployment difficulty all sections of the community combined for the purpose of relieving the limited distress that existed at that time. It was arranged that weekly subscriptions

should be canvassed for regularly, and practically everyone in work at Bassendean agreed to contribute an amount per week. Collectors were appointed to receive those amounts. The local governing bodies subscribed as much as they could from their funds. That money enabled them to distribute a certain amount of work, supplementing the Government sustenance. Improvements were done to the open spaces that are essential to public welfare. However, the enormous amount of retrenchment that has taken place in the district, particularly at the Midland workshops, has so increased the number of unemployed in Bassendean, and consequently diminished the contributions to such an extent, that the relief organisation has broken down. A public meeting has been called to deal with the question. I dare say the Minister has already received a report admitting that, fine as was the local organisation some months back, it is totally unable to cope with the present situation and must appeal to Parliament to do something to relieve, on a better basis, the distress that exists. The organisation established by the Minister some months ago is crumbling in some places and in many others has ceased to function, with the result that the plight of the unemployed is more acute than ever. We have to realise that in this country where we have adult suffrage, where Parliaments are elected directly from the adult population, that population looks to Parliament, as directly representative of the people, to protect the people in a crisis of this kind. I admit that that is not so in other countries, where only a section of the people is represented in Parliament and the people as a whole are left to their own resources. But that is not the Australian practice. We make our Parliaments representative of the people, and we expect and even encourage our people to come to Parliament in their distress, with a view to securing relief. It is definitely and distinctly a function of Parliament to look after the people of this State. If we cannot help them in terms of money, it is our duty to help them in terms of food. Again, the Government have been active in amending industrial legislation. They declare that the needs of the hour compel a review of that legislation. But why limit the review to industrial conditions? Why not review the financial affairs of Western Australia?

Why not inquire into the commercial organisations and ascertain whether we are carrying unnecessary duplications? Why not investigate whether foodstuffs are unnecessarily dear because of excessive distributing costs?

The Minister for Lands: A select committee is inquiring into that question now.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is wonderful how the Government are able to transfer problems of that kind to a select committee, problems more acute to-day, because of special circumstances, than the wages question. Ministers can always rush in to amend industrial laws.

Mr. Hegney called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung, and a quorum formed.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I was pointing out that the Government have turned their attention and devoted a good deal of their time to amending the industrial laws, attacking the basic wage, and other matters of a similar nature, but that they have failed to go into the more important question of control and distribution of foodstuffs. The Government are using this depression as a period of reconstruction from the industrial point of view. Why should the reconstruction be confined to industrial matters? Why not extend it to commercial matters?

The Minister for Lands: You know that it has extended to the primary producers.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The primary producers are suffering to-day from the enormous cost of marketing their products.

The Minister for Lands: That is not the point.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Minister would be the very last to relieve the primary producers in that regard. In fact, if the Minister and those associated with him had not interfered with Commonwealth legislation by influencing votes against it, we would not be in our present plight. As the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) has pointed out, if the guaranteed 4s. had been paid for wheat—

The Minister for Lands: It never would have been paid.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: What right has the Minister to say that? Is he an authority on what the Commonwealth Government can do? What Mr. Scullin says, what Mr. Moloney says, and what the Commonwealth Bank agree to do is all nonsense in the eyes

of our mighty Minister for Lands. He knows better. If the difficulty is to be tackled it has to be realised that action by the Government in the direction of rescuing the wheat growers must be in the terms of £ s. d. It is true that the Prime Minister, Mr. Scullin, appealed to us to continue producing wheat, but he said that the wheat would be paid for at a price equalling the cost of production. The Prime Minister took action along those lines, but the Minister for Lands did his best to defeat it. He and those associated with him are responsible for that position.

The Minister for Lands: You know that statement is not true.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I say definitely it is true.

The Minister for Lands: It is not.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I heard the Minister tell the senators that they should not vote for it.

The Minister for Lands: You heard nothing of the sort.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I was present when the Minister spoke at Bruce Rock.

The Minister for Lands: There was not a senator there.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Why did the Minister deliver such a speech there? It was at a critical period and the Minister knew that senators would read the report of his speech in the newspapers. What the Minister sought to convey was that the wheat growers of Western Australia were opposed to the legislation then under discussion in the Federal Parliament. There is no doubt on that point, and the views of the wheat growers of this State were misrepresented to such an extent that the senators from Western Australia alone were responsible for denying our wheat growers a price for their commodity that would have enabled them to employ labour, and so lift the country out of the difficult position it is in to-day. I am prepared to admit that had that legislation been passed, there would be difficulties in connection with it at the present juncture. What would have happened would have been that, instead of wheat growers worrying on account of various phases that they cannot help, those who made the promises of assistance to them would have had to devise methods by which the wheat growers would have been paid in proportion to the cost of production. I am

prepared to admit that the guarantee would have had to be reviewed, but it would have been revised on the basis of the amount the wheat grower would have required to enable him to continue growing and to pay for labour. That would have been his position, instead of that in which he finds himself to-day, not knowing what he can do because of the deplorable condition of the industry. If the Government do not intend to take the wider view, and deal with commercial and financial concerns, and are not going into the question of supplying money to the people, they must at least create an organisation to supply them with food. To-day bread is at an enormous price—

Hon. P. Collier: Compared with the price of wheat.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, out of all proportion to the cost of the raw material. I have been told that this is due to the cost of distribution. Why do not the Government organise the distribution of bread? Why tackle the basic wage and allow an absolutely silly system to continue, by which a score of carts are rushing round doing what one could do. That unwieldy system increases the price of bread enormously, and it is allowed to continue because the Government say it is not their function to interfere.

Mr. Wells: What you say may be quite right, but if it were done it would increase unemployment.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: What percentage of increased unemployment would there be compared with the saving to the community?

Mr. Wells: You would throw a large number of carters and drivers out of work.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: An enormous amount could be saved, particularly when we consider the large quantities of bread consumed in the metropolitan area, and the number of men required under the existing system of distribution.

The Minister for Railways: If we carried your argument to a logical conclusion we should eliminate distribution altogether and make everyone go to the bakehouse.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The present system has broken down. It is not limited to one section or to one industry. There must be a general review. Ever since the session started we have appealed to the Government to realise that the difficulty is not limited to the workers; all sections must get into line. Apparently it is useless. The

Government will drift along until something happens. They tax a limited section of the community. Their retrenchment is confined to a section, and no proper consideration is given to the interests of the general public. I do not wish to take up much time in further debating this question, and I appeal to the Government to take action. Speeches and promises are useless to satisfy the unemployed. Something more must be done. The Christmas season is approaching and we have to see to it during that period, and during all other periods that food is available even if we cannot provide work for all who require it. If we cannot give them money, we must provide them with assistance in kind. There are means by which that can be organised, and I trust the Government will lose no time in taking action along those lines.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [10.36]: I appreciate keenly the broad sentiment and non-party attitude adopted by the Leader of the Opposition. From the time he concluded his speech, however, the noble sentiments he expressed have been dragged through the mire of party politics.

Mr. Raphael: Assisted by your actions.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is a matter of deep regret and sorrow to me that such an important and distressing problem as that of unemployment should be made a party matter.

Mr. Raphael: Why not do your job?

Mr. Hegney: It is a national problem to-day.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is the view many people will take of the larger proportion of the remarks of hon. members this evening. No one doubts the difficulties that confront the world to-day. In Western Australia we have flooded markets, lack of distribution and insufficient food supplies in the possession of many of our citizens. It is very distressing, and the whole problem is one of contradiction. The introduction of labour-saving machinery for the production of wheat was anticipated to add to the wealth of the country. Unfortunately it has proved the reverse. We imported a large number of tractors, and the horse has been largely replaced by the internal combustion engine. What has been the result? To a large extent our position has become worse because of the introduction of power farming. Not so long ago when the horse provided the only power available on the

farm, the man on the land produced the horse feed and his money was thus retained in the country. To-day, under the system of power farming, we have sent immense sums of money out for the purchase of tractors and fuel supplies, and the result has been to assist agriculture on the downward path. I will not make any comment upon motor cars and so forth, because I realise they are necessary. It is impossible to go back. Once progress has been made in a certain direction, that progress must be maintained. Even at this juncture I question whether those engaged in the production of wheat would not be wise to alter their methods, and instead of continuing with tractors to revert to the horse. The sooner we get back the better. There will be a greater measure of prosperity and a greater amount of money available when that comes about.

Mr. Raphael interjected.

Mr. SAMPSON: The prototype of the McCoo politician may speak for himself. I realise the great difficulties which this State and every other State and every other country are facing at the present time. It is very easy to blame the Government and to put up destructive criticism, but if there is a man in this country who knows how this position is to be remedied, then it is a sin if he remains silent. For there are amongst us hundreds of men who have been accustomed to work and who, during a period of unemployment, feel very deeply the position they are in. I say without any reference to the gallery, for that does not affect me in a political sense, that the position of those men is of first importance to the State. If we could find means for keeping them employed in useful work, our problem largely would be ended. I have expressed my admiration of the efforts made by the Minister in charge of unemployment. He has an exceedingly difficult job, and I hope that as the days go by it will be possible to do something in respect of sending men out into the mining districts. I do not know much about the subject, but I say it is to gold mining we must look for the amelioration of our difficulties. As was well said by the member for Geraldton, there is an unlimited market for gold, whereas with every other commodity the markets of the world are glutted. So I hope the Government will find it possible to provide a limited

measure of assistance for those capable of going into the goldmining areas in small parties and so doing what is possible towards bringing some relief to themselves and, of course, to the State. I should like to refer to inflation. It is a most difficult question, and only those versed in high finance can afford to discuss it. It is an insidious, fascinating and withal poisonous doctrine, and I believe, with the Chief Secretary, that we shall be wise if we approach it with the utmost care. The experience of Germany and of every other country that has tried inflation has been disastrous. We learn in the "Daily News" that soon after the close of the war, as the result of inflation in Germany a second-rate cigar cost millions of marks.

Mr. Panton: The same thing applied to France.

The Attorney General: But France stopped in time.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: France stopped only when she got out of her difficulties.

Mr. Raphael interjected.

Mr. SAMPSON: The member for Victoria Park may discuss frankfurts. I dare say he is well capable of appreciating them. The real wealth of Australia is wheat and wool.

Mr. Raphael: And country newspapers.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the member for Victoria Park to refrain from interjecting.

Mr. SAMPSON: Much of our difficulty has been brought about by the high protective policy of Australia. Melbourne and Sydney are the homes of high protection, and seeing how the smaller and poorer States have been levied upon in order to afford protection to the manufacturers of the Eastern States, one would think that in the big cities of the Eastern States would be found some measure of prosperity. But in both Melbourne and Sydney there is more poverty and more unemployment than is to be found in any other part of Australia. So experience has shown that high protection is the last and worst policy for Western Australia. I believe, if we had the status of a Dominion and stood as a unit of the Empire apart from the rest of the Commonwealth, many of our difficulties would disappear.

Mr. Raphael: And we would disappear with them.

Mr. SAMPSON: Then by all means let us have it at once. In the meantime, I hope it will be found possible to so vary

our industrial awards as to permit of work being rationed. We must destroy existing methods under which some men have full employment and full payment, while others are thrown out altogether and not permitted to work.

Mr. McCallum: How about adopting that policy yourself?

Mr. SAMPSON: I think it is a splendid idea, and I admire the member for South Fremantle, because he is now expressing lofty sentiments which I hope he will live up to. I have here a newspaper cutting which has a direct bearing on this subject, and so I may be pardoned for reading it, as follows:—

Mr. Snowden is even more frank. He said (July 12th, 1930): "The state of trade in this country is a state which is common to every industrial country in the world. It is a common phenomenon, the main cause of which is a fall in world prices, which not only has the effect to a large extent of ruining the producer of raw material, but is arresting manufacture, because business men are not going to buy when prices are falling. The grave depression is in a very great measure due to the protectionist policy of the world. Protection in all the protectionist countries has raised prices and therefore reduced the purchasing power of the people, so that they cannot buy the same quantity of goods. All nations are so closely related to-day by trade and commerce that they cannot have a shock in one country without reverberations being felt all over the world. These causes are beyond any one Government's control, but they will touch bottom some time."

While the high protection policy continues, a big section of our people will suffer the gravest disability.

Mr. Panton: Surely you are not blaming protection for the troubles in England!

Mr. Walker: England's free trade is England's protection. She wants free markets for all her goods.

Mr. SAMPSON: I had better not enter upon a discussion of England's troubles tonight because they are very great. This is a young country, and we should not be experiencing the troubles that confront us. If we were not shackled to the high protection policy, our position would be much better. We are carrying on our backs the secondary industries of the Eastern States, and they are a galling and impossible burden. I hope we shall not be called upon to bear that burden permanently. If it becomes much worse we shall be in as bad a condition as those who have had the ad-

vantage of our help. In spite of the high protection, the cost of manufactures has continued to rise.

Mr. Panton: Let us send our wheat and wool away and we shall be right.

Mr. SAMPSON: The partial solution of our problem lies in borrowing, but the days of borrowing have gone for the time being. We have to make the best we can of a bad job and in the interests of those who are unemployed, we must, wherever possible, ration work. We can applaud the Government for their humanitarian treatment of the people who are in distress and can feel sympathy that the Government have not more funds at their disposal with which to alleviate that distress.

Mr. Panton: We are borrowing £28,000,000 at present. What is to be done with it?

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope the money will be spent as economically as possible. It is exceedingly difficult to know what to do, because if we produce more wheat, the world does not want it and the primary producers will be left lamenting. I regret that no immediate solution of the problems that face this country is apparent. We must do what we can by adopting a sympathetic outlook. It is useless, unfair and improper to use such an occasion to voice political propaganda.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. A. L. Davy—West Perth) [10.53]: I do not propose to follow the example of some other members and endeavour to offer a solution of our present difficulties. I rise to support the remarks made by the Chief Secretary. I was returned to Parliament some nine months ago, and when I opened my campaign I told the people of West Perth that, in my opinion, we were about to face a national crisis, at least as serious as that which we faced during the war.

Mr. Wansbrough: Your leader did not know anything about it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member should not interrupt. I further said that, in my opinion, there was no possible chance of effectively and properly surviving the crisis so long as we had a party Government controlling the affairs of the State. I received very little support for the opinion I offered. My opponent claimed that it was a confession of weakness, and

my friends, on the other hand, said it was disloyal to my own party.

Mr. Rahpael: You got it on both sides.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes.

Mr. Panton: And yet you got in.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is so. To-day I am more convinced than ever—and particularly after listening to this debate—that there is no possible chance of our surviving the crisis with any reasonable sparing of suffering unless we get together and decide mutually upon the proper thing to do. To-night a variety of cures have been suggested. The idea of the member for Guildford-Midland apparently is that we can organise ourselves back to prosperity, that we should have a compulsory wheat pool and a compulsory egg pool.

Mr. Sampson: That would help, anyhow.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The member for Swan evidently agrees. The member for Kanowna thinks we can overcome our difficulties by some form of note inflation. Another member tells us we can overcome our difficulties by commandeering the food supplies of the State and governmentally distributing them.

Mr. Sleeman: There is enough to feed the people.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am not going to say which of those three, if any, is an effective cure. But of one thing I am convinced, that if the Government either consisted of or was advised by representatives of both sides of the House, men who at any rate had the confidence of their supporters for their honesty of purpose, we might have a chance of formulating a scheme that would be acceptable to the people and would be believed in by them to be the only thing that could be done to save the situation. At present practically anything that the Government do is attacked politically. I have no complaint whatever to offer about the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition or his conduct of his business since the session opened. Within the limits of the party game, he has played it fairly and moderately, as far as human nature could allow him to do. I say he has played the game absolutely fairly. But I also say that every night we meet, remarks are made that would not be made against a Government representative of both sides. Outside the House, what is happening? A week ago I was invited to attend a meeting to discuss unemployment in my constituency. The invita-

tion came from a person whom I believed had no connection whatever with party politics. I attended the meeting, an open air meeting, and when I got there, I found that the first speaker was the organiser of the Labour Party. It might have been quite right for him to be there.

Mr. Sleeman: He is a good man, too.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am not saying anything against him. He may be the best man in the world; I had not met him before. After he had spoken, I was worked on to the platform—a motor lorry—and I found that I was sandwiched between him and the gentleman who had opposed me at the last election. I have respect for that gentleman, but he proceeded to make a pure election speech. He was playing the game. I am not complaining. But while we are going on with this stupidity, he is doing what is right and natural and proper from his point of view. So the game goes on. He told me that at present he was engaged night after night attending unemployed meetings throughout the metropolitan area, and no doubt he made speeches night after night similar to the one he made on that occasion. He attacked the Government in electioneering terms. I do not blame him, or charge him with any wickedness, or reflect upon his character or intelligence. He is playing this wonderful game of party politics.

Mr. Munsie: I wish you would talk to the "West Australian" like that about Federal politics.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am talking to the "West Australian" and to any one who likes to listen to me, about all politics, whether Federal or State. I am not concerned as to whether it is State, Federal or anything else.

Mr. Munsie: The "West Australian" tells us we should not criticise when sitting on this side of the House.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: What do I care about the "West Australian"? Do I own it?

Mr. Panton: I wish I did.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The member for Hannans has no right to complain about the "West Australian." It gave the hon. gentleman and his colleagues, when in power, a wonderfully good run. But we are not concerned about that company. It is a public newspaper.

Mr. Raphael: A public nuisance.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: And that paper is entitled to express its views. It has had some nasty things to say about this Government. I have no control over it. I may have been right in what I have said.

Mr. Panton: The "West Australian" is never wrong.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: But I do not believe any member sitting opposite thinks that any member on this side of the House is in any way inferior to himself in honesty of purpose or in the earnestness of his desire to do what is right. I have heard hard things said. In the heat of debate members opposite have said that we on this side are in the pay of the Employers' Federation, and that we were put up to carry out their behests and so on and so forth.

Mr. Munsie: I have heard exactly the same thing said by the hon. gentleman himself when we were on his side of the House and he was over here, with regard to Trades Hall. Do not blame us, but mind your own business.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I will accept what the hon. member says as true.

Mr. Munsie: It is true.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Let us say it is true. Was either of us right?

Mr. Munsie: No.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Then neither side was right when that allegation was made.

Mr. Munsie: It is only wrong when you are on this side, but it is right when you are on that side. That is what gets on my nerves.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I admit that if any member on this side were on that side and made a statement of that kind he would be wrong.

Mr. Kenneally: We accept the apology.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I say again that this game of politics we are playing, which causes that kind of remark to be made in the heat of debate or otherwise, is in the highest degree inimical to the solution of the problems we are faced with now. I hold a position in this Cabinet with the Chief Secretary. I will be not only ready but anxious to abandon that position, and become the humblest and most silent member of the House, if, as a result of doing so, it would bring about a combination of the best brains and the best characters in the House to solve the important problems facing us. I would even be prepared to

resign from the House and let someone else represent the West Perth electorate if I could achieve that. It is a firm conviction with me that we shall not overcome our difficulties and our troubles without the most immense and dreadful suffering if we carry on as we are carrying on at the present time.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [11.5]: This is the most important subject Parliament could possibly discuss. Even though we may not get very far in providing work for the unemployed the fact remains it is a question of paramount importance. It is involved in the present system of society. There always will be a certain amount of unemployment. These periods happen in cycles. They do not happen in a day. We get a crisis, and at varying periods we have first prosperity and then unemployment and deflation. The position is probably more intense, owing to the greater ramifications involved, than it has been in previous bad times. In 1921 we passed through a period of unemployment after the boom period of the aftermath of war. Unemployment was rampant; indeed it was world-wide. We are now passing through a worse period than we did then. Many suggestions have been advanced during this debate to remedy the position, or to account for it. The member for Swan said that wheat and wool were the basis of our wealth. They are only the basis of our wealth insofar as they can be sold at profitable prices in the world's markets. In those markets to-day there is deflation because of a glut in these things, due to an excess of production, especially in the case of wheat.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: And under-consumption.

Mr. HEGNEY: There is under-consumption because of the glut. The only way to remedy such a position is to cause the least efficient producers to cease producing and go into some other line for their livelihood. Since the war Mr. Bruce, who was Prime Minister for seven years, initiated the slogan of increased production on the part of both producers and workers. The capitalists of the country set about organising their enterprises, and the workers engaged in producing more wealth. Last year Mr. Scullin, the new Prime Minister, asked the farmers to put in a greater acreage of cereals, in order to adjust our position overseas, and so that

we could pay for our loans by wheat. Today's position was not foreseen by him, and he was not able to predict what would happen. This year we are expecting in this State a record yield of 50 million bushels of wheat, New South Wales is expecting 62 million, and Victoria 50 million. There is, therefore, a surfeit of production in Australia. Because the buyers of the world have not the necessary purchasing power, the price of wheat has declined. According to economists the only way to adjust that position is either to increase the purchasing power of the consumers or cultivate less land. That is not a solution of the problem. The Premier, who is well versed in agricultural development and experienced in wheat production made a remark on the Address-in-reply, no doubt believing it to be true. He said that there was latent wealth in abundance in the State, that there was an abundance of land whose latent wealth could be drawn from it by work and production, and that this could be brought about by stimulating activities through the Agricultural Bank under legislative authority. He said, "Work will beget production, and production in turn will spell progress and prosperity." It is true that work will beget production; but the second statement, that production in its turn will spell progress and prosperity, represents the opposite of what is actually happening. With all our production, with the abundance of goods Australia now possesses, the workers are in great difficulties. This is the problem of the age. The war brought untold suffering to millions in Europe. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) spoke about the misery and degradation of the war period. He also referred to the large section not engaged in production, and the other section that carries on the social services of the community. But a still smaller number produced wealth to keep millions of men fighting each other, consuming and destroying wealth without doing anything towards the sum total of production. The men who were engaged in fighting have returned to production. As the result of the application of their labour power, production has so developed that all the world over there is a surplus of goods. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) introduced the red herring of the tariff. Whether a country is freetrade or protectionist or revenue tariff, it still has this problem of unemployment.

If the problem could be mitigated by the abolition of protection and the substitution of freetrade, how is it that the problem confronts the statesmen of Britain now? It is only during the past 25 years that some of the Eastern States have had a policy of protection. The tariff has now been strengthened because of the large importation of goods into Australia. Something had to be done to adjust the position. It is no use railing against the tariff from that aspect. No matter whether a Nationalist Government or a Labour Government was in power, that policy would have to be adopted. In the past Victoria and New South Wales were not both protectionist. The former was protectionist, and the latter freetrade. To draw the fiscal red herring across the trail is merely to divert the minds of the people from the main issue. Unemployment is rampant and widespread in all countries, whether freetrade or protectionist, monarchical or republican or under a dictatorship. The whole problem turns on production for profit. Because of the fact that goods cannot be sold in this country we have this unemployment difficulty. Under present conditions, men and women, among them some of the best in the land, have to walk about unemployed in the midst of plenty, and must continue to do so until production becomes profitable. What a curse such a position is to the community! Surely it is possible for Governments to organise so that such a position can be avoided. If things are allowed to drift and the position becomes more acute, our people will be brought to the same pass as the people of other countries, where disorder has been rampant and even revolutions have occurred as the result of the degradation of the workers. In Italy and Germany dictatorships have come about because of the inherent rottenness of the existing system. The people were subjugated, they could not get the right to live. The same state of things obtained in South American Republics. The Russian situation, too, is due to the fact that those formerly in power subjugated the people. As a consequence the Russian Government was overthrown. I am not suggesting that in Australia the constitutional position is such that that would be attempted. The Premier has said that people out of work will be assisted, but he cannot say for how long. What will happen when sustenance can no longer be made available? If people see their children

starving owing to lack of sufficient nourishment, they will be forced to do things that they are not even thinking of at present. The problem of unemployment is the most important to which the Legislature can address itself. The Attorney General has raised the bogey that the question cannot be treated except from a non-party standpoint. I say the question has to be treated on its merits. It matters not whether Mr. Collier and Mr. Munsie associate themselves with the Government. In such a case I might lean to Mr. Latham and some other member might support Mr. Collier, and the House would be back in the present position. The line of cleavage is too sharp. The governing consideration is what one holds to be in the best interests of the people to whom one belongs. I have been a worker all my life, and have known what it is to be out of work. In 1921 I was walking about for nine months with nothing to do, although I have a trade; and the same thing applies to many who are workless to-day. In the Railway Department since July last about 750 men have been discharged. Some of the best mechanics in the land have been thrown on the streets because there is no employment to be found for them. The engineering establishments of this country are practically dormant, and mechanics cannot apply their labour anywhere. It is a rotten position in which the State finds itself. The Government should see, as far as they can, that the people are not allowed to go hungry. Alleviation should be given to those in difficult circumstances. In my opinion, the position points to the necessity for making credits available for the development of industry. In the Labour Caucus there has been a strenuous fight on the question of increasing the currency so as to create employment. It has been proposed that £20,000,000 of credit be made available. The proposition is now being discussed. If in 1913, before the war, it had been suggested that during the next four years over £400,000,000 would be raised in Australia for war purposes, the bankers and economists would have declared that such a suggestion was insane. But actually during that period £400,000,000 was made available for the purposes of destruction. In the present crisis, however, no attempt is made to treat the position from the aspect of national emergency. The position is such that the Government will be forced to take action to prevent the people from starving.

No fewer than 500,000 people are unemployed in Australia despite the fact that our production has never been greater, nor have food supplies ever been in greater abundance. It is a matter that merely requires organisation. The marketing position at the moment is such that the producers are not able to get any adequate return for the goods they produce. There are two or three points I wish to deal with regarding matters that have arisen in my electorate. I shall deal with the unemployment camp at Blackboy quite apart from party politics. In my opinion, the establishment of that camp assured unfortunate men who are out of work better food and better treatment than could possibly be provided under the old system of soup kitchens and open air sleeping. Under the conditions that prevailed, especially in the winter months, the necessity to sleep out endangered their health and, of course, the provision for feeding the men at the camp was a great advance on what they had been accustomed to formerly. A few complaints have been lodged against the camp methods. I did not visit the camp until some of the unemployed wrote inviting me to discuss matters with their welfare committee. I have visited the camp on two or three occasions, on each of which I met representatives from the huts and chatted over matters with them. On the first occasion the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) was with me, and the men submitted a few matters that they desired to have rectified. In turn those matters were submitted to the Minister and he later visited the camp and discussed the various points with the members of the committee. We were able to get a number of matters attended to satisfactorily. After a lapse of a couple of months the men again wrote to me and a few days later I went to the camp and asked the committee what the trouble was. They told me that there were some other matters that required rectification and that they desired to discuss them with the Minister. I suggested that they should select four or five representatives to discuss their problems and later on I went to the camp. Permission was secured to use one of the rooms, where 25 or 26 men attended to deal with the position. During the course of the discussion, they were very reasonable, and while some of the difficulties they raised were fixed up, it was not possible to give effect to all that was desired. The camp

commandant, Mr. Pilkington, was present during part of the proceedings. Subsequently I made representations to the Minister on the men's behalf. That was a fortnight ago, but I have not heard from him since. In the meantime, I have been told by some of the men in camp that when I went there to discuss matters with them, I was to be thrown out. I take exception to that sort of thing.

The Minister for Railways: Who said you would be thrown out?

Mr. HEGNEY: The members of the welfare committee.

The Minister for Railways: They have been thrown out since.

Mr. HEGNEY: The reason, they suggested, that I was to be thrown out of camp was because I sought to make political capital out of the situation. There is no truth in that at all; I have had no such intention. The men were quite justified in asking me to go there, and as member for the district I was entitled to do so. The chairman of the committee, Mr. Hart, was one of the men who was ejected from the camp. It was suggested that political speeches were made in connection with matters at Blackboy. I told the men to confine their requests to half a dozen at most and to select what they regarded as the most urgent for early attention. One of their requests was to increase the payment from 1½ days to two days. The object of getting the extra pay for the additional half-day was to enable them to buy clothes and to have a few extra shillings with which to enjoy themselves during the Christmas season. Another matter was in connection with the credits available. At the present time, credit is given to the extent of 15s., and the men pay that back at the rate of 3s. out of the 5s. they are paid each week. They can borrow 10s. and repay it at the rate of 2s. 6d. per week. The purpose of that is to get clothes. I submitted a statement to the Minister in which I urged him to increase the credit to £1, repayable at the rate of 2s. 6d. per week. It was suggested that the repayment should be at the rate of 3s. but if that had been enforced, the men would have had nothing at all after buying their tobacco and one or two other sundries. Another proposal dealt with the kitchen. I am convinced that better arrangements could obtain there, and if the Minister investigated the matter, I am sure an improvement would

follow. On my way home in my car, I have given many of the men at Blackboy a lift along the road. They did not know who I was and I took the opportunity to inquire from them regarding various phases of the camp life. Some told me the food was all right, while others said they got too much of one class of food. They also told me that the meat was often contaminated. They had sent back some of the meat to the kitchen, but it had been returned to them subsequently. That meat, they said, was fly-blown. The summer is approaching when the fly difficulty will be accentuated, and if something is not done to relieve the position, there will be ground for further complaints. I believe the position at the cook house could be considerably improved. At least three members of the welfare committee were expelled from the camp and most of the others walked out. The cook house job is a pretty hot one, and some of the men were anxious to get out of it and go back on to sustenance, and so they were making it difficult for the men in the camp, just in order to raise a protest. That is how the proposal was put up to me. Also the men seemed to think that efforts should have been made to raise the beds off the ground. Some of these suggestions might well be attended to. As for the welfare committee, on the one or two occasions I was up there visiting there was nothing of a revolutionary character mentioned. They put up certain proposals, but that was all. If I were located in the camp I would certainly support a welfare committee. I hope the Minister will deal with these questions. As to increasing the amount of credit available, I think that is the one problem that can be solved. But the general problem is of very grave importance, and I hope the Government instead of proroguing Parliament and going into recess will do what they can to solve the problem. I cannot see that the mere putting off of men is going to alleviate the position.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [11.32]: I would not have spoken but for the member for Guildford-Midland bringing me into the debate. If the unemployed think they are going to get anything from the discussion that has taken place they will be keenly disappointed, because the solution of the difficulty is not in the hands of the people of this State. If it were, we would be imme-

diately inundated with unemployed from other parts of Australia. The unemployment problem we have is not easy of solution, for, as the Leader of the Opposition said, unemployment is world-wide. It is not that there is no work in Australia; it is merely a question of getting the money. If it were possible to raise the money we would be only too glad to raise it and so see the end of the unemployment problem. There is plenty of useful work to be done, but no money with which to pay for it. Nobody would be better pleased to see Blackboy Camp disbanded than would the Minister be. I have watched legislation introduced during the present session with a view to bringing about a better distribution of the money available for the benefit of the unemployed, and I have been surprised at the opposition put up to it by members of the Labour Party. It is of no use the member for Kanowna decrying yellow gold, for yellow gold counts to-day.

Hon. T. Walker: Because of the old economic superstition that the true wealth is our gold.

The Minister for Railways: We have to pay for everything, either in gold or in goods.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I should not like to adopt the theory cherished by some of the unemployed—thank goodness, most of them are sensible men—that we should raise money by a loan issue in this State. It is impossible, because we have not the security.

Hon. T. Walker interjected.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member is aware that a little while ago this House ratified an agreement under which the State handed over its wealth to the Commonwealth.

Hon. P. Collier: What agreement was that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Financial Agreement. The Leader of the Opposition knows that our Treasurer could only sign bonds on behalf of the Commonwealth Government—and they are in the same hopeless position as we are. They are trying to raise £28,000,000 to meet debts falling due, and on top of that they have to find £23,000,000 for London. The member for Guildford-Midland referred to my attitude on the subject of a fixed price for wheat. I went to Canberra to try to get 4s. per bushel for the farmers.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You didn't say that at Bruce Rock.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There I was merely a private individual. This State would have to find half that money, which would mean 2½ millions. If we could raise 2½ millions, not only would we solve the problems of the wheatgrowers, but we would solve the problem of unemployment also.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Commonwealth Bank guaranteed a bonus.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Commonwealth Bank could not guarantee a bonus. That statement is not true. At that time, Mr. Theodore was Treasurer of Australia, and he definitely told us he could provide no solution unless the Commonwealth Bank would furnish the money for us. The Commonwealth Bank could no more furnish it then than it could to-day.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Money for the wheat marketing pool was guaranteed by the Commonwealth Bank.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Would the Commonwealth give the State 2½ millions when wheat was being sold at half the price? I listened to the hon. member when he was making a speech to the farmers. He said we should not grow any more wheat until we got the price up to a certain point. Will that solve the unemployment problem?

Mr. Sleeman: What did the farmers say about it? Did they care?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I wanted to know whether he connected himself with their views. They were anxious to abolish the Arbitration Court and the Workers' Compensation Act. He has to associate himself with that now, so far as I am concerned. The hon. member cannot choose what he desires.

Mr. Willcock: Do you hold those views?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not, but the member for Guildford-Midland is associating himself with people who do, and has convened a meeting to be held early in January. When that meeting is held, it will be very interesting to see whether similar motions are again carried.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you know that they repudiated that statement of yours?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am sorry that there is any necessity for this motion.

Mr. Willcock: So are all of us.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I much appreciate the manner in which the Leader of the Opposition submitted the motion. He is well aware of the difficulties. There was no need to move a motion in order to impress upon the Government the gravity of the situation and the necessity for helping the unemployed. Any money that is available or that we can make available to ease the lot of the people out of employment will be provided.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Get busy and organise food supplies. That is the only way.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Food supplies! Wheat is cheaper than it has ever been since I have lived in Australia and that is a good many years; meat is cheaper than I have known it to be for 25 years, vegetables are cheaper than I have ever known them to be. I do not think it is a question of food so much as of other necessities of life.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is food they are worrying about.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Speaking personally, and not on behalf of the Government, I am of the opinion that bread could be supplied more cheaply than the price for which it can be obtained from the shops or delivered. I want the House to realise there are problems we are facing that I for one do not wish to see brought within the realm of party politics. I refer to the position of the primary producer and the difficulties confronting people who are out of work. If the solving of the problem necessitates my withdrawing from the Government, I, like my colleague the Chief Secretary, will be only too pleased to do so. I shall feel that the personal sacrifice was made in a very worthy cause. When confronted with such a serious problem as unemployment has become we should be able to get together and speak heart to heart. We ought to close the Parliamentary galleries and exclude the public. We ought to exclude the Press. We ought to refrain the matter in a logical manner and refrain from playing to the gallery, to the "West Australian" or to any other newspaper.

Mr. Sleeman: You have never made a move in that direction.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member may have an opportunity to support such a move before long. The position is not improving; rather it is growing worse. If the public and the Press were excluded

from the gallery we might be able to get the best out of members for the good of those people we are desirous of helping.

MR. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [11.44]: I am sure the Leader of the Opposition must feel very pleased. It is no new thing for him to treat this issue as a non-party one. He adopted that attitude throughout the years when he was Leader of the Government; he did it right through the elections and he has been consistent in his views, but this is the first occasion on which I have known him to gain a few converts. For a long time he has been reiterating that unemployment should be a non-party question, but until to-night he has done it without much result. That this issue is a serious one cannot be denied and that unemployment is growing worse, as the Minister for Lands stated, is evidenced by the figures. In January last it cost the Government £2,000 for sustenance, and during the last few months the cost has been £40,000 a month. This discussion should be productive of good, and I think it should be followed by other discussions of the kind. I am sure the time we have devoted to considering the subject has been more profitably spent than the time we have given in the last few weeks to discussing the very trivial matters that have been placed before us. No more important matter than this one could be discussed, and it would have been well had we devoted more of our time this session to its consideration. The Chief Secretary agreed that the immediate necessity was money, but that until a solution of the problem was found, some palliative would have to be adopted; otherwise if the unemployed had to wait until a solution was found, with the numbers growing as they have been during the last three months, there would be serious trouble. My object in speaking is to make the point that in my judgment money can be found. I do not wish to make that statement without showing where I believe it could be found. I am not one who subscribes to a policy of unrestricted inflation; the trouble of the moment is not a fear of inflation but the deliberate deflation that has taken place. If we could revert to the position this country occupied a few years ago, we would be relieved of much of the difficulty that now confronts us. The figures show that in 1925 Australia had £55,140,000 of notes in cir-

ulation, while this year the value of notes in circulation is only £44,914,000. That is to say, the notes at present in circulation in Australia total £11,000,000 less than five years ago. Taking the note issue to population, in 1925 it was £9.2 whereas to-day it is only £6.9 per head of the population. Thus the note issue has decreased by 30 per cent. per head of the population. It is no advocacy of inflation to argue that the country could at least afford to revert to the position we occupied five years ago. Those figures illustrate the deflation that has taken place. It might be merely a coincidence, but it is nevertheless a fact that in 1925 unemployment in Australia totalled 8.8 per cent., whereas to-day it is 20 per cent. of the population. If we could get back to the position we occupied five years ago, it would mean that another £30,000,000 would be in circulation. I understand the object of the Commonwealth Government's conference with the directors of the Commonwealth Bank is to check deflation and get back to the position of five years ago. It is all a question of deflation and I consider it entirely wrong that the note issue, which has the backing not of the Commonwealth Bank, but of the nation, should have been so decreased. The credit of the people of this country is at stake. To hand the control over to a board, which can defy the Government and the nation, act as it likes, and deflate the currency in keeping with the desires of those who have private interests of their own to serve apart from the interests of the nation, is absolutely wrong. It is the nation, through the Government, that should be in control of the situation. The Government committed a grave error when it handed the control over to individuals. When the Premier goes to conferences in the other States he would do well to stand behind the Commonwealth Government in their request that this deflation should be stopped, to the end that we might revert to the period when it was right that we had a note issue equal to £9 2s. per head of the population. There is every reason why we should have at least that amount of note issue now.

Mr. Angelo: Do you know what the difference in the gold reserve is?

Mr. McCALLUM: It has to be about 40 per cent. of the note issue. That which matters is the amount of currency issued to the public. Is there any reason why our

currency should be restricted to the extent of £30,000,000 in five years, when there is the credit of the nation behind it just as was the case five years ago? All through the war, when we were fighting for our existence, and the whole of the assets of the country were possibly in danger of being taken by enemy nations, there was no argument against the note issue being in the hands of the Commonwealth. The Government controlled the position then, and they can do so now. All through these trying periods, when the assets of the nation were at stake, and the note issue was under Government control, there was no more inflation than was safe. And yet the nation came through as well as any other that was engaged in the war. Now, in other trying times, all Governments are looking for credit, and yet this is a time when the note issue, behind which the credit of the nation stands, is being restricted to the tune of £30,000,000 compared with the position five years ago. If there is a time when we can afford to inflate rather than deflate, it is now. I hope the Premier will stand behind the Commonwealth Government in their request. It is not a question of asking the Commonwealth Bank to be a party to any inflation, merely to put a stop to the deflation. If it is agreed that the figures of five years ago shall be reverted to, the commerce of Australia will have another £30,000,000 in circulation, and a tremendous advance will be made towards a settlement of the unemployment issue and the general relief of the position.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS
(Hon. J. Scaddan—Maylands) [11.55]: I join with other members who have spoken from this side of the House in complimenting the Leader of the Opposition upon his speech in moving this motion. He might easily have made a good deal of capital from the party point of view out of the situation, but he refrained from taking advantage of the opportunity. This served to bring to my mind the fact that for six years or so, whilst a humble citizen of the State, I saw many posters inviting the people to "Keep Collier Premier." I could never fathom the reason why this request was made so prominent. I am now satisfied that the reason for it was that in the ranks of Labour there was a fear that someone with less judgment than the Leader of the Opposition might become leader of the party, and

it was hoped that by the force of public opinion they might retain the services of one who had some judgment, and could use it in the right manner, rather than that they should have a leader who would use his position at every opportunity to serve his party, whether it was in the best interests of the State or not. Actually, it was necessary to urge the people to "Keep Collier Premier" so that "Johnson might not become Premier." If the public could get an idea of the utterances of different members, they would see that parties themselves can have serious differences of opinion on matters of State. With respect to the remarks of the Attorney General, there does not appear to be such a great difference of opinion on the question he referred to, or upon other questions that side of the House and this, as there appears to be between the Opposition benches in front of me and the cross Opposition benches. The question of unemployment did not arise overnight. To belabour each other from now until sunrise as to the causes of unemployment will not help us to meet the situation or solve the problem. I agree it is necessary and wise that we should discuss any matter of importance affecting any section of the entire community from time to time, but it is no use blinking the fact that the solution of the unemployment difficulties in this State does not rest with the Government or with this Parliament. True, we have something to do with the matter, but it is one that affects Australia as a whole. No one party can solve it of itself. In different parts of Australia we have different Governments in power. In Queensland, we have a Nationalist Government with no second Chamber.

The Minister for Agriculture: A coalition Government.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: There is no great difference between the parties in office there. In New South Wales there is a Labour Government who have just come into office on the strength of promises they will find it difficult to keep. In Victoria there is a Labour Government, in Tasmania a Government of Nationalists, in South Australia a Labour Government, and in Western Australia a coalition Government made up of representatives of the Nationalists and the Country Party. The solution of the problem of unemployment does not rest with any one of those States,

no matter what political party holds the reins of office. When picking up the "West Australian" this morning I was interested to notice in its columns remarks made by the member for Mt. Hawthorn (Mr. Millington). I congratulate him on the attitude he adopted on the question. He said he declined to make unemployment a political question, one out of which his party might obtain some political advantage.

Mr. Millington: That was because it was being made one in my electorate.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is most unwise that it should be made a party question.

Mr. Millington: I think so too.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The question is far too serious to warrant anyone trying to make political capital out of it in any part of the State. I may fall short in many direction, but, like other members of this Parliament, I am earnest in my proper appreciation of the position. I hope, from a natural realisation of those occurrences which arise from a great volume of unemployment, to do my best for those who are up against things to the extent that so many people are in Western Australia. But, after all, I am in exactly the same position as many others who are trying to solve the problem. I am confronted by demands of every description. On the face of them, some of these appear quite simple. For example, the member for Middle Swan (Mr. Hegney) suggested a number of things that might be done for everybody; and the member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) suggested a number of things that might be done for married men unemployed in the metropolitan area. But if I am asked to do something that will cost £5 and I have only £2 to do it with, there is no use in pressing the matter any further. And that, unfortunately, is the position with regard to unemployment in Western Australia to-day. Actually, no other Government in Australia, whether Labour, Nationalist, or coalition, is now doing so much to render assistance to the unemployed as is being done by the Government of this State. I shall not pursue the matter on party lines, but I am bound to state what the present Government have attempted and, I believe, have achieved, in order to prevent the misunderstandings that might arise out of the utterances of some hon. members. I would hate to imitate

the attitude of the member for Victoria Park, but I cannot allow one of his statements to pass without comment. The hon. member referred to the Lord Mayor's fund, and left the impression that the present Government have actually seized upon the moneys contributed to that fund by the public, and paid them into Consolidated Revenue in order to help to balance the Budget. As a matter of fact, although the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) has denied it in this Chamber, the Lord Mayor's fund was established by our predecessors. The conditions under which that fund was initiated and the methods by which it has been administered existed before the present Government took office; and there has been no change whatever in that respect.

Mr. Kenneally: The methods were not inaugurated by the previous Government at all. They were inaugurated by the Lord Mayor.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not wish to pursue the matter any further. The hon. member interjecting knows nothing about it.

Mr. Kenneally: I was there at the inauguration, and I remained.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Was not a Government officer there?

Mr. Kenneally: Everyone was invited who was prepared to assist.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I shall not pursue the subject. In reply to the member for Victoria Park I say again that the Lord Mayor's fund was established before the present Government took office, and that not one penny subscribed by the public to that fund has been used for other purposes than those which obtained before the present Government took office. To suggest that the present Government took the money contributed by the public to that fund and paid it into Consolidated Revenue is entirely wrong. The money has been used for the relief of the unemployed. When the present Government took office, the unemployed single man—I want the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) to hear this—was getting one meal a day and no bed. To-day unemployed single men are receiving two meals a day and a bed.

Mr. Sleeman: What are the Government doing in Fremantle?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member is looking after the Fremantle unemployed pretty well.

Mr. Raphael: It is being done by voluntary subscriptions, and not by funds obtained from the Government.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The member for Victoria Park again is full of wisdom.

Mr. Sleeman: Are you going to do the same in Fremantle as in Perth when the Fremantle funds are cut out?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I shall not take that fence before I get to it. The Government have done their part as well as they have been able to do it, notwithstanding all that has been stated by my friend who represents Fremantle at the moment. A good deal has been said about the scheme which the Government put into operation to enable local governing bodies to render some assistance to the unemployed. It is not fair to suggest that the Government have compelled the local governing bodies to do anything. As an actual fact, a conference was called of local governing bodies and of relief committees receiving subscriptions from the public. The conference met in the council chamber of the City of Perth, the Lord Mayor presiding.

Mr. Kenneally: Be careful! I was there, too.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I know the whole story. The member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) lit out as soon as he got the chance. At that conference an executive committee was formed. The members of that committee were asked to consider a report submitted at a subsequent meeting with a view to the rendering of some assistance to the Government in dealing with the unemployed. The report suggested, briefly, that the Government, instead of paying something in the nature of a dole for sustenance, should contribute the money to the local governing bodies, that the local governing bodies should supplement the amount to any extent they could, that the relief funds should further supplement it, and, finally, that the unemployed should do work equivalent to the amounts received by them. The desire was to meet the objection of the great body of men who were not amongst the regular unemployed, men who had lost their work because of conditions in the timber industry,

the pastoral industry, and the building trades; men who had never before looked to the Government for assistance or even applied to the Labor Bureau. They desired sufficient work to enable them to live, and they objected to a dole. No local governing body assisted the Government to the extent of even a threepenny bit. We paid sustenance through the local governing bodies in respect of every man employed, and the amount contributed by us was used by the local governing bodies. Those bodies supplemented the amount slightly, and the relief committees did likewise. The final result was that the local governing bodies obtained a return of 100 per cent. of the money they spent, the Government not receiving any return. Therefore to suggest, as has been suggested, that the Government used the local governing bodies to relieve them of some expenditure or obligation or responsibility, is to suggest what is not true. The Government might easily have said, "For the sustenance that we will provide, we shall require a return." But we did not say it. We recognised that the local governing bodies represented the people just as we did. In exactly the same way as Western Australia is part of the Commonwealth, the rate-payers are part of Western Australia, irrespective of the local governing body under which they may be. If the Government had said to the unemployed, "Here is money subscribed by the taxpayers; in return for it you can go and do some work for John Brown on his private property," there would have been objection, and rightly so. Therefore the plan was adopted of providing work through the local governing bodies. Some people have said, "If you could do that through the local governing bodies, why could you not put the men on Government work?" The answer is simple. The Government, in that case, would have had to find not only sustenance but an additional amount, since no man can work on mere Government sustenance. That is the point. To work, a man must have something extra. In the early stages of the scheme I had request after request from the local governing bodies to be allowed to put the men to work merely for the Government sustenance. My reply was that that was not a fair proposition when the sustenance was on the basis of enabling a man who was idle to keep body and soul together. To ask a man to go out and work

for the same amount would not have been fair. I said that I would not tolerate such a scheme unless the local governing bodies found some additional funds. Now, however, local governing bodies find themselves in the same position as the Government. Their revenues are shrinking just as our revenue is shrinking. Sooner or later the position must be faced from some other angle. We must realise that we are reaching a point at which the local governing bodies will be unable to carry on much further. They are finding themselves in the same position as the Government. The fact remains, however, that because of this scheme, the married men have received over £16,000 more than would have been possible without some such arrangement. If they do not get another penny so long as the unemployment trouble continues, it can at least be said that they received the benefit of that additional money. I do not wish to pursue the matter further except to say that on this particular question I want, not only the sympathy, but the support of each and every hon. member.

Mr. Sleeman: We will give you that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It does not matter which Government happened to be in office, the same problem would have to be solved. In the State and Federal arenas and, in various parts of the world as well, there are Governments representing different political factions. The same problem confronts each Administration. In this State, I ask the support of all members on this one question at any rate, irrespective of what we may receive at their hands on other matters we place before them. We want sympathy and support, not the waving of flags and heroics merely because there happen to be a few representatives of the unemployed in the galleries.

Mr. Kenneally: You are doing some of that now.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: All that I ask is that hon. members shall take seriously this one problem, above all others. Rather than indulge in heroics for the purpose of creating an impression on those in the gallery, let them tell the people the true position. Let them show a willingness to assist in the solution of the problem. As the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) knows, many of the men at Blackboy are just as good as any to be found outside the camp.

There are among the unmarried unemployed men in the metropolitan area just as fine types as are to be found anywhere throughout the State. Notwithstanding that, however, there is here, just as there is elsewhere throughout the Commonwealth, a few who are definitely and wilfully setting themselves out to cause discontent and strife amongst the unemployed. Nothing that any Government or any Parliament could do would satisfy those men. Hon. members opposite know that just as well as I do. Would they suggest that I, or any other man in a position of authority, should sit idly by and permit men of that type to take the law into their own hands?

Mr. Sleeman: What law?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member knows quite well what I refer to.

Mr. Sleeman: Municipal by-laws.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is not a question of municipal by-laws, but of the proper recognition of established authority. The hon. member cannot level any charge under this heading against me more than can be levelled against any other Government, including the Labour Government that preceded the present Administration. I have copies of resolutions carried by many unions, including the A.W.U. and the Timber Workers' Union, complaining most bitterly against the action taken by our predecessors in office in using the services of the police to enforce law and order.

Mr. Sleeman: And you follow their example

Mr. Raphael: Why follow in such bad footsteps?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not suggest for one moment that the Labour Government were wrong in the attitude they adopted.

Mr. Raphael: But you are.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The streets belong to the community as a whole, and no one section has any right to set aside the by-laws and act in accordance with its own desires. The member for Fremantle made reference to what happened within the last day or two. He knows just as well as I do that it was the simplest thing in the world to ask permission for a procession through the streets, and the request would have been granted.

Mr. Sleeman: Would it?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The men could have marched to Parliament House or anywhere else. We have seen them in front of Parliament House within the last few days. On the other hand, we cannot allow a few men to say deliberately that they will do what they like in defiance of authority. It is not a question of the defiance apparent on a minor point, so much as what it will lead to.

Mr. Sleeman: Are you not aware that permission was refused when an application was made by these men?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I know that permission has been refused on more than one occasion to permit demonstrations in certain streets. That was done by our predecessors in office, and it has still to be done. I was in the city on one occasion when the unemployed marched in a body down Barrack-street and into St. George's-terrace. They wanted permission to march down Barrack-street on to the Esplanade. They were able to get that permission, but they were not satisfied and said, "No, we will march down Barrack-street and down Hay-street through the heart of the traffic." For what reason? To what end? The intention of the leaders of the unemployed at that time was not to bring under the notice of the public some grievance that they had, but was merely for the purpose of doing what they chose to do, irrespective of established authority. It is not the seriousness of any particular action taken by these individuals that counts. The trouble arises because of the possibility of what will happen if we allow these occurrences to go unchecked.

Mr. Sleeman: Possibly the police may have had something to do with it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have heard that story too. It does not arise. I do not suppose I am more perfect than any other member here. I am not nervous when I see a policeman.

Mr. Raphael: You are so big.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Only men who set themselves out to commit breaches of the law are frightened of the police.

Mr. McCallum: Perhaps you are more accustomed to them.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I may be on friendly terms with them, but I certainly do not have to avoid them. The

point I want to make is that the position regarding unemployment is serious enough without inflaming a few individuals or, if hon. members like, many individuals, by indulging in heroics and flag-waving.

Mr. Sleeman: Is not that what you are doing?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member knows the position quite well. Reference was made during the debate to three men having been turned out of Black-boy because they were causing trouble and strife. All the time they were endeavouring to create discontent. Hon. members can judge what the position was when I say that when those three men were ejected, 13 others of the thousand men at the camp followed them out. Those individuals came to Perth and have been making a lot of noise. They are the men who, in conjunction with a few others, have been saying, "Come on, boys! Notwithstanding what they may say, let us march to Parliament House and tell these wags what we think of them." It does not matter to men of that type what they do, but they must be made to realise that a duty devolves upon us to at least see that the laws of the country, passed by the free will of the people, are given effect to and are observed by them. That is the point. All the demonstrations in the world will not help them in the slightest degree. No one was more anxious than the present Leader of the Opposition when he was Premier to do everything possible to relieve the unemployment difficulty.

Mr. Kenneally: Your leader did not say so. Why this new-found faith?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not care what the member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) thinks; what I do care about is the difficulty and trouble that confront us now. What has happened in the past will not help. I ask those members generally, and especially those few who may not feel inclined to do so, to take a leaf out of the book of the Leader of the Opposition and also out of that of the member for Mount Hawthorn (Mr. Millington) and on this question at any rate, to leave party considerations on one side. Let them help us solve the problem that means so much to the well-being of the community as a whole. That problem will not be solved easily, but it will be solved more quickly and permanently if they do so.

MR. KENNEALLY (East Perth [12.18]): We have listened to a forceful, lucid dissertation from the Minister for Railways on the necessity for dealing with the unemployment problem on a non-party basis. During the course of his speech, I found occasion to interject to the effect that it was a new-found faith for him to propound. That applied also to other members on the Government side of the House. When present Ministerialists were in opposition, the question of unemployment was made a party question. It was that on which members opposite sought to belabour the Collier Government on the hustings. They stressed the point that the Labour Government of the day had not solved the unemployment difficulty. They undertook to do so themselves if elected, but they have not done so. The unemployment difficulty has not developed in a rapid manner, and the definite undertaking of the present Government members was they would solve it if returned to power. Now we have them saying it should never be treated as a party matter. They used it for jumping into power, and having done that they discover they cannot do the job they undertook, and now they ask that it be treated as a non-party matter. I want to show what the Premier said. This is his message to the people in a non-party spirit. Here is a document headed, "Sir James Mitchell's message to the people." It reads as follows:—

Unemployment has not overtaken us in a night. It has been growing year by year and the Collier Government has been and still is bankrupt of ideas as to how to deal with it. The greatest waste of all is that occasioned by men out of work, for they are consumers of wealth without creating an equivalent asset. If returned to power, I have promised to find work for everybody in the State. This is no extravagant statement. What I have undertaken to do, I know I can do. I have had three terms of office, one of them as Premier for five years. On each of the three occasions my party were returned to clean up the muddles caused by Labour Governments, and were invariably successful. But never before has the State reached the shocking plight to which the last six years of Labour mismanagement has reduced it.

The people accepted the idea. This is purely a non-party document, issued during the elections. It had the result, that the hon. member went into power. So it is up to the Premier to carry out his promises, instead of which he says this problem of unemployment should be approached in a non-party

spirit. I have heard the Premier make observations very different from that. Whenever the party spirit has been brought into the question of unemployment, it was not led by this party but by members of the present Government when in Opposition, and it was introduced for party purposes and its object was achieved. The Premier and his Ministers are charged with the responsibility of giving effect to the promises he made at the elections.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Do you think you could do it any better?

Mr. KENNEALLY: If I could not do it any better, at all events there would be no need to ask the member for Perth to try, because there would be no chance of his being successful. The proposals of the Government to provide part work for some of the people should not appeal to the community. Do we think to work a married man with six or eight children, to send him to Waroona on drainage work and pay him only £3 a week to keep his wife and children—do the Government think this country has come down to that? This rationing system is not to the benefit of the people. The Government, when in Opposition, undertook that if returned they would find work for all.

The Minister for Lands: We can find the work, but not the money.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Because the previous Government could not find either the money or the work we are told in this pamphlet that it was the greatest muddling Government ever in office. Now the present Government desire that unemployment shall be dealt with in a non-party spirit. That is because they undertook to do certain things, and have failed to carry out that undertaking. Having ousted the previous Government on the cry of "work for all" they now want to get in out of the wet by pleading to have the question dealt with in a purely non-party spirit. The Minister for Railways suggested that possibly the reason why this side adopted the election slogan "Keep Collier Premier" was that we wanted to keep Johnson from being Premier. That was not so. I happened to be associated with the slogan "Keep Collier Premier." Its object was to keep Mitchell out and Scaddan out, not to keep Johnson out. It was because we knew from past experience what the present Premier would do if returned to power that we got that slogan going in the hope of saving the country from the

muddle into which the present Premier has already got it.

The Premier: Nonsense!

Mr. KENNEALLY: Of course the hon. member's deficit of £6,000,000 is all nonsense. We did not want a repetition of that disaster. The Minister for Railways to-night pointed out that we cannot expect men to work for sustenance alone. When the Greenmount deviation was under consideration the first proposal was to use the unemployed, the sustenance men on the lines suggested by the Minister, namely, that it was not right to ask men to work for sustenance only. So it was agreed that each man would be able to earn sustenance and rent and fares to and from Greenmount and sufficient money to take him to the next payday. Then the Minister for Railways, assisted by those on the Government side, reduced the conditions of those men working at Greenmount till they were getting only a few shillings above sustenance. Yet this is the Minister who says it is not enough to keep people in strength and able to work. When they got a small amount out of the sustenance, the landlord, knowing they were working, wanted some consideration. What happened was that men receiving very little more in money than the equivalent of the sustenance they would otherwise have got, endeavoured to pay some of it to the landlord, and thus deprived wives and children of some of the food they required to keep body and soul together. The Minister was particularly severe on local governing bodies. His pet aversion seems to be the City Council. In the Press and on the platform he has busied himself slating the gentleman who recently vacated the office of Lord Mayor of Perth. I was present at the meeting held to deal with the aspects of the question he raised. He said that I attended and slid out, but that he stayed. If he looks at the file, he will find that that statement was incorrect. I was there before he arrived, and I remained after he left. He attended only one meeting whereas I, with others, attended numerous meetings in the hope of being able to link up the local governing bodies so that further money might be obtained to help the unemployed. It ill-becomes this Minister, who does not play to the gallery, and who thinks it wrong to try to influence the people in the gallery, to make a statement that he knows to be absolutely incorrect.

The Government are not endeavouring to improve the lot of the worker who succeeds in obtaining a little temporary employment. A man with a wife and four children would be entitled to receive £2 2s. a week. The Government say, in effect, to the local governing bodies, "The money that we as a Government would have to provide as sustenance will be passed over to you, but we shall not give you one cent. more. You find the money for the material upon which the men are to work, and for additional wages." Is that a fair proposition to put to the local bodies? When members now supporting the Government were sitting in Opposition, they did not say to the electors, "If you return us to power, we will make the local governing bodies find the work and will pay the sustenance money to them." No. They said they would find work for all, and would rectify the muddling of which they alleged the Labour Government had been guilty, the worst muddlers they said, who had ever held office. This is the sorry plight in which the Government now find themselves.

The Premier: Do you collect union fees from those people?

Mr. KENNEALLY: The Government are in a hopeless and helpless plight, and their latest S.O.S. is, "Please treat this question in a non-party spirit; please forget that the documents we issued were not non-party."

The Premier: Who asked for the non-party spirit?

Mr. KENNEALLY: Three Ministers, and I also heard the Premier make an appeal in that direction. This is purely an after-thought on the part of those who, on their own statements, secured the Treasury benches by surreptitious means. Either they knew that they could not give effect to their undertaking, or they had no intention of doing so.

Mr. Willcock: Surely the Premier does not want to make it a party question.

The Premier: No.

Mr. Willcock: You are not dissociating yourself from the Ministers who do not want to make it a non-party question?

The Premier: No.

Mr. KENNEALLY: There is another direction in which we are not doing the right thing by the unemployed. We are undermining their manhood. Before they are con-

sidered as applicants for work, they must apply for sustenance. If a man loses his work, has a few shillings behind him and has too much spirit to ask for sustenance, he cannot be considered for work.

Mr. H. W. Mann: That has been going on for six years, and I say it is not right.

Mr. KENNEALLY: It has not been going on for six years.

Mr. H. W. Mann: It has.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The hon. member has made so many mis-statements that he ought to be careful. On the hustings he could lead the unemployed and use them for his own purposes, but he cannot do it here. His utterances in this House are recorded, and have to be substantiated. A man who does not apply for sustenance is not considered for work. That is an innovation.

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

Mr. H. W. Mann: It is not.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The hon. member is not awake. He is trying to bolster up the position of the Government he so dumbly supports. When we say that a man shall not be considered as an applicant for work until he claims Government sustenance, we are intentionally or unintentionally undermining his manhood. Frequently men have come to me seeking work, men too proud to ask for sustenance until their last shilling had gone, but they would not be considered for work until they were in poverty-street. They had first to apply for sustenance.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Your party did worse. Unless the unemployed had an A.W.U. ticket and were financial, they could not get work.

Mr. KENNEALLY: That statement is as incorrect as the previous one he made, so the hon. member is quite hopeless. It might be better for the Government if the hon. member maintained his usual silence. I do not approve of the system adopted by the Government. If a man has sufficient sense of decency not to ask the Government for sustenance until he is financially compelled to do so, he should be honoured. If any work is offering, he should be considered an applicant, the same as the man who is receiving sustenance. Otherwise the system will undermine the manhood of the community. Anyone who has sufficient manliness not to ask for sustenance while he can possibly

scrape along should be considered. This new system has been introduced by the present Government.

Mr. H. W. Mann: That is not true.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I wish to ask the Premier what has become of those little men who ambled their way through the columns of the "West Australian" shortly after he took office? In those days, the "West Australian" was crowded with a lot of little men showing where the wealth of the country lay. It was designed to prove that if a man had £1 and spent 2s., he would have 18s. left. Members will recollect the illuminating information that was thus conveyed to the public.

The Premier: It was not intended to appeal to your superior brain.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Apparently not. I do not think the Premier will have been disappointed in that respect. The position arose that these little men who ambled their way through the columns of the "West Australian" also had to look for work, but could not get it. They have a constant job looking for it. Probably the Premier promised to find them work, but the only job they have now is that of looking for work.

The Premier: These people have kept you in a job for a long time.

Mr. KENNEALLY: If they have kept the one, they have kept the other. Comparatively recently, the Federal executive of the body with which I am associated gave attention to the unemployed, and issued a statement showing the method by which it was possible to deal with it. The burden of the complaint from members opposite is that no suggestion has been made from this side to overcome the difficulty. As the result of interstate conferences amongst members of the Federal executive, the A.L.P. put forward a definite proposition to overcome the difficulty. They said that inflation to the extent of £20,000,000 should be instituted. This met with hearty opposition from members opposite. We were told what a £1 note would be worth, and that we were following along the lines of Russia. It was said we were inviting the same difficulties in currency that have been experienced by other Continental countries. To-night the Premier has shown us he realises that partial inflation must occur if we are to get over this crisis.

The Premier: I did not say anything about it.

Mr. KENNEALLY: He said he was waiting to get word of the result of the negotiations between the Federal Government and the Commonwealth Bank, and he hoped they would be successful. These negotiations are with respect to note inflation. He has therefore altered his ideas of the method by which the difficulty can be overcome. In this crisis there is no reason why we should not utilise our credit for relief purposes, and issue additional notes to overcome the difficulty. If we keep on saying the difficulties are insurmountable, and make no effort to overcome them, we shall not get very far. Unfortunately, nothing that comes from the Federal Labour Party is any good.

The Premier: We will ask them for the cash instead.

Mr. KENNEALLY: No doubt the Premier will take the cash, because the Federal Government know we must utilise the credit of the nation in this time of need, and use the money in the interests of members of the community as a whole rather than of private individuals. The member for Swan said the trouble arose because of the protectionist tariff. He was asked what he thought of freetrade in England, where there are now 3,000,000 persons out of employment. We are told that the big difficulty in Australia is the tariff. In England where they have freetrade or a revenue tariff, unemployment is rife. The tariff argument is advanced in Australia because there are many people here who desire to import the goods we use rather than have them made in Australia with consequent employment to our citizens. I hope the time will not arrive when we shall adopt a freetrade policy. The Government are rationing work and are applying for an extension of the hours of work for those people they are rationing. Is that a satisfactory attempt to solve the unemployment problem? Ordinarily, men work 44 hours a week, but if the Government have their way, their hours per week are to be increased. In some cases, instead of the men working six days a week, they work only five, and in other cases they are called upon to stand aside one week in ten. This week is called "Mitchell's dream." When we tell men they will get only five weeks' work out of six, and then apply to the court to force those who are at work to work for longer hours for the same money, it is suggested we are providing a solution of the difficulty. Every time the number of

hours worked per person is increased, further unemployment is created. The longer hours mean that there is less work to do for those who are out of employment. It is late in the day for the Government to suggest dealing with the matter from a non-party point of view. All members opposite have not subscribed to that idea to-night. Documents such as those I have produced show how we stand. I hope the attitude adopted by the Government will not be maintained any longer. Men who are out of work are entitled to a reasonable working week at the hands of the Government. As things are, the Government enable some of them to receive £3 a week, though they have earned far more, and expect them to live on that and keep two homes going. Alternatively, they allow these men to take their wives with them and live in a tent. It is a policy which should no longer be tolerated. I hope the Government will get on with the job as they promised to do, and find work for all. They claimed that they were going to put right the muddle which has occurred during the regime of the Labour Government, and see that there was a job for everyone. If they do that, their appeals for consideration from the non-party point of view will fall upon better ground.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [12.50]: I ask leave to withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

QUESTION—GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, IMPORTED MATERIAL.

Mr. CORBOY asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has the use of an imported material been specified during recent months in connection with school or other Government buildings? 2, If so, what is the nature of the material, and the country of origin? 3, Is it not a fact that an eminently suitable material of entirely local manufacture is available for the purpose? 4, If the answer to No. 3 is in the affirmative, why was the money available not used to employ our own people?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes, in connection with three small portable country schools. 2, A fibre board made from denatured sugar-cane residue by hydraulic pressure — manufactured in U.S.A. and known as "Celotex." 3, No, nor

is an approximately similar material manufactured anywhere in Australia. 4, See answer to Question 3.

QUESTION—BUS ROUTE, CANCELLATION.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Railways: Was motor bus Route 50 cancelled solely because of its interference with Government tramway earnings?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Yes.

QUESTION—RAILWAY WORKSHOPS, DISMISSALS.

Mr. HEGNEY asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Does he intend to instruct the Commissioner of Railways to suspend the notices of dismissal that have been issued to the workers at the Railway Workshops until after the Christmas holidays? 2, Will he inform the House when this policy of retrenchment in the Railway Department is going to cease?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. In any case this matter rests within the discretion of the Commissioner of Railways. 2, The Commissioner advises that with the last batch of notices given, the workshops staff may be regarded as practically at the minimum required for maintenance purposes, hence further retrenchment of any magnitude is not likely.

COST OF LIVING—SELECT COMMITTEE.

Report Presented.

Mr. Millington brought up the report of the select committee.

Report received and ordered to be printed, and to be considered at the next sitting of the House.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Premier, and read a first time.

BILL—SALARIES TAX.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall) [12.55]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [12.56]: In case there is a lingering doubt in the mind of any hon. member as to my attitude, I wish to state that I am opposed to the third reading of this Bill. In my opinion it will be a grave error if the measure is read a third time. Particularly in view of the discussion which took place earlier in the sitting, I am positive that the Bill will intensify the unemployment problem. Its effect will be to take money out of the hands of many thousands and put it into the hands of a very few. It will take money out of general circulation, create additional unemployment, and render additional funds available for possible expenditure on luxuries and enjoyment. I objected to the Bill at the first reading, and I object to it at its final stage. It is a complete mistake, and will do grave injustice to a most deserving section of the community. It will take money away from the people just when they are starting to get a little back. Employees have suffered for 20 years because the cost of living has been against them. They have been receiving less than the cost of living figures showed them to be entitled to receive. That aspect is smothered up; it is never mentioned. Now that the cost of living is coming down, the people affected are denied the opportunity of obtaining some recompense for the period during which they suffered so much. On that aspect I gave the Premier some figures when the Bill was introduced. Now I want to point out to him exactly what the measure means in some directions. In to-day's "West Australian" appears a letter from the Secretary of the Railway Officers' Union, showing how the efforts of the Government are reducing the wages and the standard of one section of the community. That has been repeatedly denied; the Minister for Lands again denied it this evening. However, here are figures showing the effect upon a railway employee who is working at Meekatharra on a salary of £400. To begin with, if the

Government get their way in the Arbitration Court, that employee will lose his district allowance of £60. The salaries tax will take from him £21 8s. 9d. If the figures given by the Minister for Works as to the basic wage are correct, the employee will come down a further £14. He will have to pay a hospital tax of £2 2s. 10d. In all he will lose £97 11s. 7d. Just on £100 will he lose if all the efforts of the Government are successful. An officer on that range will have to sacrifice nearly £2 per week. We were told the Government were not out to interfere with industrial conditions to lower wages or to reduce standards. Is there any other section of the Government service that has suffered to such an extent as those to whom I have been referring? Certainly no other section has suffered to the extent of a reduction of £2 per week. I gave the figures to the House to show what the collections would represent when the Salaries Tax Bill was before the House. My figures did not come to anything like £90 a year, yet that is what the secretary of the union has estimated as the deduction to be made. I emphatically protest against the Bill. It is an iniquitous proposition to reduce the standard of wages paid to a section of the community that has suffered so much during the past 20 years. I have no doubt that the outcome of the legislation will be that many more men will be thrown out of work. I cannot follow those who say that because men will have their wages reduced, an increased number will secure employment. If we were to follow that line of argument to its logical conclusion, then if men worked for nothing there would be a lot more employment. Hon. members know that that would not be the position. Money that is paid away as wages is spent on the purchase of foodstuffs and requirements generally, so that the funds are circulated throughout industry and must necessarily promote employment. When money is largely concentrated in the hands of a few, there is always the possibility of its being diverted to channels that will not be of the greatest advantage to the community as a whole. There is no fear of that when it comes to a matter of wages paid to the workers. They spend every shilling they get in providing for the requirements of their homes and living in a decent standard of comfort. Naturally that creates more employment within our own boundaries, and assists our local industries. I want to make my position definite and clear. If

I am spared to hold Ministerial office again. I will take the earliest possible steps to redress the grievous wrong done to the workers of this country. I will not be on the Treasury bench for long before I shall take the necessary action to remove this iniquitous piece of legislation from the statute-book. I presume the Legislative Council will not take long to pass the Bill because they seem to desire to get money into the hands of the fewest number of people possible. From that standpoint, the Bill will be accepted with open arms. I will remedy the position when I have the opportunity.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	22
Noes	..	..	..	..	18

Majority for 4

AYES.

Mr. Barnard	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Brown	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Davy	Mr. Parker
Mr. Doney	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Latham	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Thorn
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. Wells
Mr. J. I. Mann	Mr. North

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Collier	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munste
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Panton
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Wausbrough
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Withers
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Raphael

(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES
Mr. J. M. Smith	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Angelo	Mr. Coverley
Mr. J. H. Smith	Mr. Troy

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—PREMIUM BONDS.

Received from the Council and on motion by Mr. H. W. Mann read a first time.

BILL—EAST PERTH PUBLIC HALL.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 1.14 a.m. (Friday).

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 9th December, 1930.

	PAGE
Question: Railways, coal tests	2357
Local Courts Act Amendment Bill Select Committee, Report presented	2358
Bills: Hospital Fund, 3r.	2358
Hospital Fund (Contributions), 3r.	2358
Totalisator Duty Act Amendment, 3r.	2358
Entertainments Tax Assessment Act Amendment, 3r.	2358
Friendly Societies Act Amendment, report	2358
Entertainments Tax Act Amendment, 2r., Com. report	2358
Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment, 1r., Standing Orders Suspension, 2r.	2360
East Perth Public Hall, 1r.	2363
Salaries Tax, 1r., 2r.	2363
Appropriation, 2r.	2365
Land and Income Tax Assessment Act Amendment, 1r.	2372
Loan, £2,335,000, 2r.	2372
Stamp Act Amendment, (No. 2), 2r. defeated...	2374
Forests Act Amendment, 2r., Com., report	2378
University Buildings, 2r., Amendment (6 months) defeated, Com.	2391

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

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, COAL TESTS.

Hon. E. ROSE asked the Minister for Country Water Supplies: 1, Do the Railway Department make weekly or monthly tests of the quality of coal supplied by the various Collie mines to the department? 2, If so, will the Minister lay on the Table the results of such tests taken for the six months ended 30th November last?

The MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, Yes, monthly. 2, Yes.

The Minister for Country Water Supplies laid the paper on the Table.