

each of the blocks is about the same, namely, a little over three acres. At the same time this Bill provides for the closure of that portion of the Government road fronting Lot 127, in order that this new approach may be made. Lot 132 referred to will then be excised from the Board's reserve and handed over to the University, and that section of the Government road fronting Lot 127, at present owned by the University, will be included in the King's Park Board reserve. When this necessary exchange of ground has been effected the construction of a new drive and a new entrance to the park will be a matter for the King's Park Board. The proposed exchange has been considered by both the University authorities and the King's Park Board, and both are anxious that it should be effected. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

*House adjourned at 8.34 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 31st July, 1917.*

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

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Speaker: Report of Auditor General for the year ended 30th June, 1916.

By the Premier: 1, Royal Commission on the Agricultural Industry, interim report. 2, Returned Soldiers and Sailors' Settlement Scheme.

By the Minister for Works: By-laws relating to motor and vehicular traffic of the municipalities of Perth, Claremont, and Fremantle.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY—PRESENTATION.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to inform the House that I have to-day presented the Address-in-reply to His Excellency the Governor, and that I have received the following—

Mr. Speaker and hon. members of the Legislative Assembly: In the name and on behalf of His Most Gracious Majesty the King, I thank you for your address. Signed, William Grey Ellison-Macartney, Governor.

## ELECTORAL—YILGARN.

Mr. SPEAKER [4.35]: I have received the following letter from the Attorney General—

To the Honourable George Taylor, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.—I beg to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint Mr. Charles Arthur Hudson to one of the principal executive offices of the Government liable to be vacated on political grounds, namely, Minister for Mines and Railways. Dated the 27th day of July, 1917. R. T. Robinson, Attorney General.

## QUESTION—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, ESPERANCE NORTHWARDS.

Mr. GREEN (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: Are the Government prepared to resume the construction of the Esperance Northwards railway within a fortnight of the furnishing of a favourable report by the Royal Commission on Esperance Lands, in accordance with the promise given by the Minister for Works to the member for the district, Mr. Walker?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I should prefer the hon. member to give notice of a question of that nature. At all events, he might have informed me privately this morning of his intention to ask the question, which is one requiring considerable thought before an answer can be given.

Mr. GREEN: I give notice of my intention to ask the question at the next sitting of the House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have no desire to fence with the question at all. I have informed the hon. member of the reasons I have in view.

## QUESTION—PERTH TRAMWAYS.

*New Power-house, and Workers' Tickets.*

Mr. SMITH asked the Premier: 1, When will the new power-house be in a position to supply current at a lesser rate than is now charged, and what additional rolling stock for the trams is required, and when will

same be available? 2, What was the amount of the loss incurred through the issue of workers' tram tickets between 8 a.m. and 8.30 a.m.? 3, By what method did the department ascertain the loss?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The current is costing more now than the maximum amount which can be charged to the Perth City Council. The amount charged to the council does not cover the cost; in consequence, the trams and Government supplies are charged at a higher rate to avoid loss. The reduction in the price of current can only be considered when the total output of electric current approaches the capacity for which the plant was designed. It is estimated that 30 additional cars will be required—the 10 bogie cars now under construction should be in service by the middle of October, and provision will be made on the Loan Estimates for a further 10 four-wheel cars. Owing to the difficulty in obtaining material under the existing conditions, it cannot be stated when the latter will be available. Further, extra shed accommodation will be required to house these cars. 2, The loss is estimated at approximately £6,000 per annum. 3, By comparing the number of workers' tickets issued during a given period between and after the granting of the concession, plus cost of running the additional cars, due allowance being made for new traffic resulting from the cheaper fares.

Mr. Smith: In other words, the Tramways management are repudiating their promises.

## QUESTION—RAILWAYS, IMPROVEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL LINES.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Premier: 1, What amount of money was expended by the Commissioner of Railways on improving the standard of agricultural railways, such as ballasting, re-sleepering, and generally strengthening permanent way, and improving conveniences during the period 1907-1911, and for the period 1911-1915? 2, The names of railways on which such expenditure was incurred?

The PREMIER replied:

**STANDARD AGRICULTURAL RAILWAYS—EXPENDITURE ON IMPROVEMENTS.**

Railway.	1907-1911.		1912-1915.	
	Capital.	Working Expenses.	Capital.	Working Expenses.
Boyup-Kojonup-Katanning	£ 834	£ 28	£ 1,572	£ 63
Wagin-Kokerin	1,182	12	7,665	3,228
Greenhills - Quairading - Bruce Rock	2,029	98	1,855	128
Goomalling - Dowerin - Merredin	1,007	178	21,103	1,863
Narrogin-Wickepin-Merredin	423	25	43,242	13,056
Wonnerup-Jarrahwood - Nannup	2,738	2,619	2,864	5
Toodyay-Bolgart	591	..	540	21
Bridgetown-Jarrahwood	..	..	4,728	280
Goomalling - Wongan Hills-Mullewa	..	..	8,027	*1,071
Tambellup-Ongerup	..	..	1,020	103
Upper Chapman	..	..	327	50
Northampton-Ajana	..	..	72	20
Brookton-Corrigin	..	..	..	..
Yillaminant - Kondinin	..	..	..	..
	£8,894	2,958	93,015	19,893

\* Of this sum £900 was subsequently transferred to Account in Financial Year 1915-16.

**QUESTION—ELECTORAL ACT.**

*Trans-Australian Railway Workers.*

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Attorney General: 1, Is there any provision in the Electoral Act whereby regulations could be made to enable persons who are enrolled as electors on the State roll and domiciled in Western Australia, but temporarily absent, being employed on the national work, the construction of the trans-Australian railway, which has now passed the border line of the State, and who are now in South Australian territory, to vote at the forthcoming general election? 2, If so, will the Government make such regulations to give an opportunity to enable such persons to vote in South Australian territory? 3, If not, will the Government introduce a short Bill to enable such regulations to be made, entitling such persons to vote?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, No. 2, There is no power to do so. 3, Any facilities of such a nature should apply to all individuals absent from the State on business, and not to a section of the community. It is impossible to take steps in this direction.

**QUESTION—WATER SUPPLY AND PERTH TRAMWAYS.**

Mr. VERYARD asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government to carry out the policy enunciated by the late Government in relation to (a) the transfer of the Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Department to a board; (b) the transfer of the Perth tramway system to the Perth City Council or a board?

The PREMIER replied: The Government have not yet had an opportunity of considering these important questions, but will do so at an early date.

**QUESTION—GOLD-MINING INDUSTRY, TO ASSIST.**

Mr. GREEN asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. C. A. Hudson): In view of the steadily decreasing fall in the gold yield of this State, and in view of the Premier's announcement in his policy speech at Moora, that the Government would concern themselves with the revival of the mining industry, will his Government, in pursuance of that policy, take immediate steps to inaugurate (a) deep boring in the vicinity of the Golden Mile, at the north end of the field; (b) immediate reduction in the freight on mining requisites to the goldfields, and so place this industry on a parity of treatment with agriculture, in the cheap carriage of products (such as super) for the farming industry?

The PREMIER, for the Honorary Minister, replied: (a) The most careful attention will be given to the question of deep boring in the vicinity of the Golden Mile, but no definite decision can be arrived at immediately. (b) No reduction in freight can be promised at the present time. If anomalies are found to exist, steps will be taken to remedy them.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE.**

On motion by the PREMIER, leave of absence until the end of the present session granted to the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Gilchrist), the member for Albany (Mr. Price), the member for Subiaco (Mr. B. J. Stubbs), the member for South Fremantle

(Mr. Bolton), the member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom), and the member for Collie (Mr. A. A. Wilson) on the ground that they are on active service in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth.

On motion by the MINISTER FOR WORKS, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) on the ground of urgent private business.

On motion by Mr. O'LOGHLEN, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) on the ground of urgent private business.

### STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore): I move without notice—

*That for the remainder of the session the Standing Orders be suspended so far as to enable Bills to be passed through all stages in one day and Messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the day on which they are received.*

In moving this motion I should inform hon. members that it is done, not with a view to restrict discussion in any way, but simply to facilitate the passage of Bills. We have certain measures on the Notice Paper and the carrying of the motion will enable the House to deal with them forthwith instead of following the usual course.

Hon. P. Collier: They are all of great national importance.

The PREMIER: I think hon. members desire to close the session as early as possible.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.47]: I do not propose to offer any opposition to the motion. I take it we have arrived at that stage in the session when we expect every day to close, and in order to facilitate the passage of Bills from one House to the other, it will be necessary to suspend the Standing Orders. But I should like the Premier to give us some information as to when he really expects the session to close. In respect of this House, if there are no other Bills to come down, the end of the session is in sight, but I do not know what may be

going on in another place. I should like the Premier to inform us as to when we are likely to close.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.48]: I am not going to oppose the motion. However it is clear that the tendency is to close Parliament with the intention of having the general elections early. That is the common impression. If such is the case it will be necessary to suspend the Standing Orders for that purpose. But why should we be putting the country to additional expense in having so many by-elections at the present time?

Mr. Troy: That is all right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not all right, for the Treasurer tells us that he wants all the money he can get hold of. I merely rose to call attention to what I consider a waste of public money in having all these by-elections.

The Honorary Minister (Hon. W. L. Thomas): You can get over that by giving us a walk-over.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member knows that it is not in my power to give his party a walk-over. It depends entirely on the electors in the district. However, if, as somebody has said, there are not going to be any further by-elections, I shall not say any more.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford) [4.50]: I do not wish to oppose the motion. I am never very enthusiastic about these motions, because as a general rule when one can see no reason for them, they are the most loaded. Therefore, as I see no particular reason for this, it makes me a little suspicious that possibly there is some very good reason for it. Another thing, there is a tendency at the present time to burk discussion. We are not getting that criticism and that expression of opinion on important questions which we should have. Already we have noticed that there has been what we might call a hesitancy on the part of Ministers to express opinions, and consequently in face of the silence of Ministers on other subjects, a motion of this sort makes one feel that we should not be too hasty. Again, there is also in evidence a move to prevent the public in remote parts of the State from getting a true account of what Parliament is doing. For years

and years past, copies of *Hansard* have been distributed in outlying districts. I myself have distributed *Hansard* in this way. Every member is entitled to six copies, and I claim that no one has a right to cancel the distribution of *Hansard*, to interfere with privileges that hon. members have enjoyed in the past, except it be with the consent of Parliament itself. I find that *Hansard* is not being distributed. And not only that, if any of one's constituents is sufficiently interested in any particular subject and is not prepared to accept the daily Press as an altogether authentic source of information, if such a one desires to get the correct attitude of members on this or that question and asks for a copy of *Hansard*, there is none available. Only the other day I had a request from some of my constituents for a copy of *Hansard*. I made inquiries and found that there was none available, and so I had to send my own spare copy along. I find that *Hansard* has been reduced to that, and I want to enter a protest. I want Ministers to realise that there are at the outposts of the State men who take a keen and active interest in the welfare of their country. If we deny to those men the right of having an occasional copy of *Hansard* their position, from the political point of view, will have been rendered hopeless, because they have no other means of getting the authentic information. They cannot be expected to seek their information as to the attitude of members in the columns of the Press, because we know that that is the biased source from which we cannot expect to get the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. However, I trust that this desire on the part of Ministers—

The Colonial Treasurer: Do not blame Ministers, blame the Treasurer.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Well, this desire on the part of the Treasurer to reduce expenditure—for goodness' sake do not carry it to the extent of closing down discussion or interfering with the distribution of *Hansard*. People in the metropolitan area are to some extent independent of *Hansard*, because they can come to the galleries, but to the men in the outback parts *Hansard* should be open when those men take sufficient interest in political affairs to

approach members with a view to obtaining a copy of *Hansard*. Therefore I trust the Treasurer will just reinstate the full distribution of *Hansard*. It means only a copy or two extra.

The Colonial Treasurer: If you saw the list you would not say it was only a copy or two.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Still, I am speaking of individual members, each of whom gets six copies. For this session let us distribute those, and before the Treasurer interferes next session—well, we might even have a new Treasurer who will take a different view of things.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [4.53]: I only intend to ask the Premier if he proposes before closing the session to allow members an opportunity of discussing the motions of which notice has been given?

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [4.55]: In reply to the leader of the Opposition as to when it is expected the session will close, I may say I am hopeful of bringing the session to a close to-morrow. However, this to a large extent depends on hon. members. I have no desire to prevent hon. members from discussing what is on the Notice Paper. It also depends on the business in another place. A motion similar to the one under discussion will be moved in another place to-day, so that members there will be able to proceed with their work more expeditiously than they would in the ordinary procedure. I am hopeful that hon. members will fall in with this view and that we shall be able to close the session to-morrow. At the same time I should like to inform hon. members that this motion has not been introduced for any other purpose than simply to assist hon. members themselves. The Government have no object in moving this motion except to meet the convenience of the House. I am sure hon. members are not desirous that they should meet here for half an hour to-day, half an hour to-morrow, and half an hour the next day simply in order to carry out the ordinary procedure of the House. We have just a few Bills of not very great importance, non-controversial measures, on the Notice Paper, and we should have the power to put these Bills through immediately without being obliged to leave them open for a

day or two. This is the only object I had in moving the motion. In reply to the member for Mt. Magnet, I wish to say that every opportunity will be given to hon. members to discuss the motions on the Notice Paper.

Mr. TROY: And those of which notice has been given this afternoon.

The PREMIER: Certainly, every opportunity will be given hon. members to discuss the motions already on the Notice Paper and those given notice of to-day. At the same time I ask hon. members not to give notice of any more, because I think there is no need to put the country to the expense of keeping Parliament open when we have no business to transact. Simply for that reason I desire to bring the session to a close as soon as possible.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House, and I find there are 26 members present.

Question put and passed.

#### BILL—SUPPLY (£2,226,000).

Returned from the Council without amendment.

#### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, University Act Amendment Bill.

2, Melville Tramways Act Amendment Bill.

Transmitted to the Council.

#### BILL—WAR COUNCIL ACT AMENDMENT.

*In Committee, etcetera.*

Resumed from the 26th July; Mr. Holman in the Chair; the Colonial Treasurer in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 3 of Act No. 59 of 1915:

Hon. P. COLLIER: When the Bill was before the Committee on a previous occasion objection was taken to paragraph (f), as conferring wider powers than was intended, or necessary. I understand the Treasurer agrees to the striking out of paragraph (f) as he has all the power he requires in Clause 3. I move an amendment—

*That paragraph (f) be struck out.*

The CHAIRMAN: It would be better to vote against the clause.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### BILL—CITY OF PERTH ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [5.5] in moving the second reading said: This is a short measure to enable the Victoria Park municipality to be amalgamated with the City of Perth municipality. It also deals with other municipalities and is of local importance. It has been agreed to by the bodies concerned. If further explanation is needed I shall be happy to give it in Committee. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etcetera.*

Mr. Holman in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Effect of union on Victoria Park Council:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is a different number of votes for the election of a councillor than for the election of mayor, what is the reason?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If there is an election for mayor for the city of Perth, the Victoria Park roll will be added to the City Council roll.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: On the 1st September a new roll is always made.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is only for the interim; there must be a mayoral roll.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5, 6, 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Power to unite other municipalities with the City of Perth:

Hon. P. COLLIER: This provision apparently is made to avoid similar legislation being introduced in the future. I understand that provision will be made by proclamation in the event of other municipalities joining the City of Perth at a future time.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is the third Bill of the kind which we have had. First there was the amalgamation of Leederville, then North Perth, and now Victoria Park, and it is suggested that we should make provision so that there will be no need to introduce these small Bills in the future.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The amalgamation can only take place by the consent of the ratepayers, and then a proclamation will be issued.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The clause is worded, "May on a petition under the common seal of the City of Perth or of any other municipality." A petition is presented if it be the petition of a majority of the ratepayers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not sure as to the necessity for the clause. Perhaps it would be better, in the interests of any municipality, that a Bill should be introduced to bring about the amalgamation, and then ample opportunity would be afforded for all concerned of raising any objection that may be deemed necessary. Under this clause the ratepayers may wake up and find themselves joined or associated with the City of Perth, whereas there may be some objection on the part of many of them. Why is the Minister taking power to do something which it was not found necessary to take when the former Bill was before us?

The Minister for Works: There has been more experience since then. After taking a pot shot it is found that something better can be done.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We are taking a risk of something being sprung upon the ratepayers of some municipality without their having an opportunity of raising their voices in protest.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am speaking of the experience of those by whom the Act now in force was required. Having

made that first initial attempt at amalgamating, they find it is desirable to shorten the process. I can see no danger in the clause. The reason why it was put in the Bill, I should say, is that the local authorities wish to avoid delay. It is just as well to give municipalities an opportunity of doing their work without too much stress. If, however, the hon. member is nervous about the clause the Government have no particular desire to retain it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I shall vote against the clause. There is no provision here whereby the local authority is compelled to take a poll of its ratepayers before a petition is presented. Before Parliament gives power to a local authority to decide whether it should unite with any other body, there should be some provision whereby the ratepayers should have power to say whether this should be done or not.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Some time ago, I think after the passage of the last Act to join in Leederville, the municipal association approached me with a view to having a clause of this sort placed in the next Bill, to save the trouble of coming before the House on every occasion. I was and still am opposed to that for the reasons given by the leader of the Opposition. It seems to me that there is not sufficient protection in the municipal statutes, coupled with this one, to the ratepayers to prevent a municipality rushing into this sort of thing without proper consideration. It is one of those steps in municipal and roads board life which, when taken, it is practically impossible to remedy. Frequently a number of ratepayers, without thinking, or following some leader who has not definitely explained certain positions, has agreed to join some other municipality, thinking it would be to their advantage to do so. It is only when they get into that position that they realise for the first time the difficulties and dangers besetting them. If we exercise this clause, and I am in favour of doing that, it leaves matters in this way, that this House will not on the mere motion of a council or roads board allow a municipality or roads board to be joined to Perth or any other municipality. We would want evidence of a substantial nature that the people wanted it before doing

such a thing. If a special Bill is brought down in each case it would be very little cost to the country, of no cost to the local authority, and be a great protection to those interested in municipal life. Not only shall I vote against the clause, but I think, for the reasons given, the Committee should reject it.

Mr. FOLEY: I move an amendment—

*That in Subclause 1, line 2, after the word "municipality," the following words be added:—"After such municipality has decided in the affirmative by a referendum of ratepayers."*

I do not agree with the Attorney General. In a Bill of this description we want to make it definite that the ratepayers shall be consulted. I think the clause can remain with good effect with the amendment I have proposed. Further, this amendment would save the Committee from putting through any Bill at some other time.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not think it wise for the Minister to accept the amendment. If we do accept it, would it not be necessary to provide some machinery for taking a referendum? It would also be necessary to re-draft the measure for that purpose. It would be much safer to stand by the old principle of introducing a short Bill, which would not cause much delay.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I ask the hon. member not to press the amendment and I think it would be better to strike the clause out.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment, and the report adopted.

## BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT ACT CONTINUANCE.

### *Second Reading.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [4.30] in moving the second reading said: The object of this measure is to continue the operation of the Licensing Act Amendment Act, 1914. That Act, hon. members will remember, is one which gives power to restrict or pro-

hibit the sale of liquor in certain cases of emergency, in certain times of stress, and, as phrased by the previous Administration, in times of riot. The measure has frequently been renewed by another Act, and also by resolution. A resolution of the House can take effect only once after the passage of the measure. It will be remembered that last year a resolution was carried extending the terms of the Act, and on that account it is impossible to adopt the same procedure again this year. The Act will expire on the 30th September, and as it is considered desirable that its operation should continue for another year, I therefore move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etcetera.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

## MOTION—EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, COMPULSORY SERVICE.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.36]: I move—

*That having regard to the overwhelming majority cast in this State in favour of conscription on the 28th October, 1916, this House is of opinion that it is the wish of the people of Western Australia that the Commonwealth Government should again submit to the people the question of compulsory military service, in order to meet the urgent need for recruits to reinforce our units at the front.*

In placing this motion before the House, I desire to say that I look upon it as a purely formal matter. As the motion sets out, the question, after having been submitted to the people, was carried in this State by an overwhelming majority. There were 94,069 votes recorded in its favour, and 40,884 against it. While admitting that the present scheme must have every assistance which public men can give it, one cannot help



thinking that there is only one way to deal with the foe, and that is by organisation. Unfortunately, under our present system, that is too costly to the State, and moreover, it does not tend towards organisation. We are at the present time opposed to the most scientific race the world has ever known, and up to date, as has often been said, we have only muddled along. I am not going into the pros and cons of compulsory national service, but it has been repeatedly asked outside what the public men are doing. The object I have in submitting the motion to the House is to assist the Federal Government to come to a decision. Personally, I regret having to ask the House to agree to a motion favouring the submission of the question to the people once more. I am firmly convinced that the Federal Parliament should accept that responsibility. But in view of the promise made by the Prime Minister, I am reluctantly compelled to ask that the matter should again be referred to the people. If it had been possible, I would have liked to ask the Commonwealth Government to introduce compulsory national military service in the State of Western Australia. That of course is out of the question. It is impossible for the Federal Government to introduce a law which would deal with only one section of the people. I am not going to say any more. I look upon this as a purely formal matter, and the object I have in view is to assist the Federal Government. I am convinced that in submitting the motion I am voicing the opinion of the majority of the people of this State, which opinion was given expression to on the occasion of the referendum taken on the 28th October last, and endorsed at the more recent elections.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) [5.40]: I think it is a matter of regret that an hon. member of this Assembly should submit a motion of this character in a session such as the one we are just about to terminate. Most of us are as anxious as the hon. member to see this terrible war, which is an outrage on civilisation, brought to an end victoriously for the Allies, but the people of the Commonwealth have decided the subject matter of the motion by referendum, and when an hon. member brings the subject up in the form that the member for Katanning

(Mr. Thomson) has done, it seems to me it is prostituting patriotism and dragging it through the mire. We in Western Australia put up our fight for compulsory service, and we were quite satisfied with the result which was achieved. We are also satisfied to-day that the people in this State have done their duty nobly. We have sent 10 per cent. of our population to the front and in some parts of the State, 20 per cent. of the population of those centres has gone to assist in this dreadful struggle. Before an hon. member submits a question like this to Parliament, I think he himself should, if he is fit and well enough to go forward, offer his own services, instead of trying to force others to go. We have members here who are able and strong enough to go to the front, yet they make no effort in that direction. They prefer to submit a motion of the character we have before us now, dealing with a question which has already been decided, and which they know cannot do any good. If the motion would do any good, if it would assist in any way to win the war, there would be some excuse for it, but it is absolute nonsense to bring it forward, and it is only in keeping with many other actions of the member for Katanning. Why does not the hon. member himself enlist? Why does he not show that he is prepared to do what he is asking others to do? I am speaking as one of the strongest conscriptionists in the country, but we put up our fight in October last, and now we should abide by the decision of the majority. If we in Western Australia were not doing our duty, there would be occasion for the hon. member to submit his motion, but we have done our duty to a great extent, though perhaps not so much as we would do if we were called upon. The reason why the motion was brought forward, the hon. member says, is to assist the Federal Government. I contend it will not assist them in the slightest degree, nor will it help to bring about what he desires. The motion has been moved with one purpose in view only, and that is to indulge in a little flag waving before the elections, and when there is no necessity for it. Moreover, if every fit individual in Western Australia were to enlist, that would not have the effect of turning the tide of the battle. We can only do our level best, and

we should pause before considering seriously a motion such as the one we have before us. I do not know whether the hon. member has ever tried to enlist himself. If he has not, he should have done so. He is young and able-bodied, and it would be more honourable and more becoming for any man desirous of upholding the honour of his country, if, before submitting an empty motion such as this, he offered his own services for the front. We have heard a great deal from those on the platform who are desirous that others should go to the war but who, for many reasons, are themselves not fit to enlist. I contend that it would be the manly part for anyone, before asking other people to go to the war, to make an effort to go himself. I think the motion has been brought forward by the hon. member from motives of flag waving, for the purpose of trying to induce certain influences at the forthcoming election. So far as assistance to the Commonwealth Government is concerned, or assistance in the recruiting campaign, or towards bringing about a speedy conclusion to the war, I do not think the passing of the motion by this House would do any good in any one of those directions. The motion serves to show the class of people we have in this community who, instead of going themselves to the recruiting office, prefer to bring forward empty motions on the eve of a general election.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.46]: One is inclined to doubt the sincerity of the hon. member in bringing forward a motion of this nature for discussion on the eve of a general election. I would remind the House that the Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, caused to be summoned a special session of the Federal Parliament to discuss this question, and the decision of that special session was that the time had not arrived for conscription to be introduced. That was the opinion expressed by the Federal Parliament, and Mr. Hughes then said that on the question of conscription he was prepared to let bygones be bygones. The Director of Recruiting also declared that the conscription issue was not to be dealt with by his officials on the public platform. Mr. Hughes also stated that the time had not arrived to bring forward conscription in accordance with his promise

prior to the Federal election. By whom are we to be advised—the member for Kataning or the Prime Minister, who should be in a position to know best? In view of these facts, one is inclined to suspect the possibility that it was with some other object that the hon. member has introduced his motion. We have been told that the members on this (Opposition) side of the House are opposed to recruiting, but I want to say this, that there is no member of this Chamber who has done more for recruiting than those sitting on this side. With reference to members opposite—of course there has recently been a shuffle—but there was at one time a request preferred to members opposite to go on to the platform and speak in favour of recruiting, and on that occasion not one member could be found to do so. The true position is that every section of the community of this State has done its utmost to assist recruiting, and it is impossible for any one to define those who have assisted and those who have not. How could they be defined? But we have it on the authority of Mr. Hughes that if everyone does his best to assist the voluntary effort it will be sufficient for the time being. To me it is clear that the object behind this motion is more political than patriotic. And I want to express my opinion here that the passing of the motion will not be of any great assistance to the Federal Government. Rather I am inclined to think that it will do more injury than good and that it will make the work of recruiting harder.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [5.52]: I regret that the hon. member has seen fit to introduce a motion of this character at the present time. I think it is well known to the Commonwealth Government that the people of Western Australia are in favour of conscription; they expressed that opinion during the referendum. That is well known and I do not see that the mere passing by this Parliament of this motion will be of any great assistance to the Federal Government. They have already had an expression of opinion from the people of Western Australia. To my mind it is not desirable to discuss controversial matters of this character during the present short session of Parliament.

There is really no need for the motion at the present time. Nor do I consider it expedient to allow a matter of this nature to go to the vote. Parliament was called together for the simple purpose of voting supplies and to go into the question of any necessary legislation. At the same time I cannot agree to the suggestion that the object of the hon. member in introducing the motion was to make this question an election cry. Western Australia has undoubtedly responded well to the call of voluntarism, but probably there are still some hundreds here who might still be able to go to the war. At the same time, in my opinion, many have gone who should not have gone. I am expressing only my own opinion in regard to this motion, but I do not think it right to suggest that even those who oppose conscription are necessarily disloyal. I really cannot feel that any expression of opinion on this question is required at the present juncture, and I do not think any good will be done by our passing the motion.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [6.1]: I move—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

Motion put and negatived.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning—in reply) [6.2]: I did not take this step without a good deal of thought or without consulting a good many people. I yield to no man in this State in my desire to see the war won. In reply to the member for Murchison (Mr. Holman), who has taxed me with kite flying—

Mr. Holman: It is a fact.

Mr. THOMSON: I have no reason to be afraid of my position in my constituency on this question. I did my part on the 23rd October last, and am proud of the result. Therefore I hope the hon. member will disabuse his mind of the idea that I was endeavouring to do any kite flying. He says the motion is an empty one, and he wants to know why I do not enlist. He has no right to ask me such a question. During the whole course of the war I have never said to any man, "Why do not you enlist?" In all earnestness I say there are thousands of men who would welcome the deciding of this question by the military authorities. I refer to men

who, by reason of having heavy responsibilities, are unable to come to a decision. When the member for Murchison accused me of kite flying, I think he must, to use a phrase of another hon. member opposite, have had his tongue in his cheek. In my electorate I know of cases of married men with seven and eight children enlisting. I will not say they should not enlist. A married man has as much right as a single man to fight for his country. But it is not economically sound, it is not in the interests of the country, that married men with large families should go to fight while eligible single men are apparently available. I desire to see the country organised. Men are leaving the primary industries, not only farming, but also gold mining. Under proper organisation the men to go to the Front would be elected from the spheres in which they could best be spared. I shall not deal at length with the arguments of the member for Murchison. He said that we have sent away 10 per cent. of our population. I yield to no man in my appreciation of what Western Australia has done in this war. But we, as a Commonwealth, have pledged Australia to the last man and the last shilling, and, if needs be, we must carry out that pledge. In reply to the hon. member's argument that it is time to pause, I say we shall not be able to pause in this struggle until victory has been won. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) says I claim to have more knowledge than Mr. Hughes. I claim nothing of the kind, but I do know that this State is sending, proportionately, more men than any other State of the Commonwealth, and I know that the units of other States have been reinforced by Western Australian soldiers. Having visited the Eastern States, I know there are thousands of men there apparently eligible. If those eligible and fit men will not go of their own free will, is the present position fair to our men? The member for Murchison said that we have sent away 10 per cent. of our population. We have not sent one man away. Every man who has gone from Western Australia up to date has gone of his own free will. There are thousands of men who will welcome national service, well knowing that when the military authorities send for them they will be wanted. But the question

is a most difficult one for any man to decide for himself. I wish to disabuse the mind of the House of the idea that I had any intention of kite flying. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green) may well laugh. Over 6,000 men have gone to the front from Kalgoorlie. The hon. member has reason to be proud. It ill becomes him to sneer when a motion is before the House asking for men.

Mr. Green: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member has stated that I have sneered. I take exception to that term, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Kalgoorlie takes exception to the word "sneer."

Mr. THOMSON: I withdraw the observation that the hon. member sneered. I will say that he sniggered.

Mr. Green: This is the cheapest thing that has ever been put up in this Chamber. It is childish, it is kite flying, it is waste of time. We have heard ten thousand speeches like this one.

Hon. P. Collier: I ask that the member for Katanning make an unqualified withdrawal. He withdrew the word "sneer" and substituted "snigger."

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the member for Katanning to withdraw unreservedly.

Mr. THOMSON: I withdraw unconditionally, well knowing that, despite the opposition of hon. members on the other side of the House, the people of Western Australia will welcome such a motion as this.

Hon. P. Collier: You would not move it unless you thought it was popular.

Mr. THOMSON: I have no desire for popularity. I am doing what I deem to be my duty. I have moved the motion in all sincerity, and leave it in the hands of the House, earnestly trusting that it will be carried.

Question put and passed.

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

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [6.10]: I move—

*That all papers referring to the allegation of Workmen's Inspector of Mines Crocker, at Kalgoorlie, being a member of the I.W.W. be laid upon the Table of the House.*

I am taking this action because I have been unable to obtain the information from the Attorney General by way of question. Some two or three months ago, I understand, the then Minister for Mines received a letter from some person in Kalgoorlie—I do not know from whom—alleging that Inspector Crocker was a member of the I.W.W. In the first place, I think the House should express its resentment of the practice, which apparently has grown up recently, of anonymous letter writers being permitted to make charges against members of the public service without those members having an opportunity of knowing who it is that makes the charge, and so of adequately defending themselves. I do not know the contents of the letter in this case, but, at any rate, the letter was of such a character as to induce the then Minister for Mines to communicate with the Kalgoorlie warden; and as a result of that communication the warden called up Inspector Crocker and questioned him as to whether the charge was correct or not. I take exception to that. I am not a lawyer, but I have always understood it to be one of the first principles of British justice that no man shall be called upon to answer a charge unless he is confronted with his accuser. As a result of the letter, Inspector Crocker appeared before the warden under circumstances recalling the Star Chamber, and the warden cross-examined or questioned him, in order to satisfy himself whether or not the charge was well founded. I gather that the warden's report to the Minister was favourable to Inspector Crocker, because the Minister allowed the matter to drop. Nevertheless I contend that no Minister is justified in calling upon any public servant to make a defence against any allegation or charge unless that officer is confronted with his accuser. Even if an individual writes a letter to the Minister making a charge and marks the letter confidential, action should not be taken. The person making the charge must be prepared to come out in the open and disclose his identity; otherwise the letter and the charge should be ignored. If the individual who accused Inspector Crocker was not prepared to come out in the open with a definite charge, the Minister should have ignored the letter, without

calling upon Inspector Crocker for any defence whatever. It seems to me that the practice adopted by the Minister amounts to what detectives call "the third degree."

The Attorney General: You do not appreciate courtesy, evidently, when you talk about "the third degree."

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am endeavouring to appreciate the position in which Inspector Crocker found himself.

The Attorney General: There is no use in shouting these things from the house tops.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not doing so.

The Attorney General: No; but he shouted it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He was justified in doing so. He was brought before the warden of the district—

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then, how did he appear before the warden?

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

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have very little more to say. Perhaps I shall be better able to judge of the merits of the case when I have heard the Attorney General in explanation, because I have been speaking largely in the dark, not knowing either the contents of the letter to which I have referred, or the name of the writer. I recognise that a letter forwarded to the Attorney General's office and marked "Confidential" places an embargo on the Minister's giving the name of the writer, but I am asking for justice for the man who has been accused. I think it is wrong that any person should have an allegation of this kind made against him without having an opportunity of knowing who it was who made the charge to the department, and of meeting him face to face. I will content myself with moving the motion.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [7.34]: I hope the leader of the Opposition will not press his motion when he has heard the explanation. While I was acting as Minister for Mines a letter came in marked "Confidential" and stating that a certain officer at Kalgoorlie was rumoured to belong to the I.W.W. This letter said it was thought desirable to draw the attention of the Minister to this

rumour, so that he might make inquiries. You can readily imagine the Minister for Mines might have made his inquiries in an objectionable way. He might, for instance, on receiving that information, have placed it in the hands of the investigation branch of the Police Department. He might have done several things which would call for censure from the leader of the Opposition. But what he did do was this: I was Minister at the time, and I caused, not the letter, but a letter, to be sent to the warden, the principal officer of the Mines Department at Kalgoorlie, asking him to be good enough to interview this inspector and tell him what had been said about him, and ask him for an assurance to the department that he was in no way implicated in the workings of the I.W.W. That officer was sent for, not summoned, to call at the warden's office. He did so. The warden read to him the letter he had received from my department, and the inspector gave the warden his assurance that he had nothing whatever to do with the I.W.W., and said he rather resented the imputation that had been cast on his character. As Minister I was satisfied to take the word of this officer. I did not even put him on oath or ask him to make a declaration. He merely said he was not a member of the I.W.W., and I took his word for it, and no one in the wide world would have known anything about it had not this officer himself started talking about it in Kalgoorlie. He went to the leader of the Opposition, who in turn came to me when I was in Kalgoorlie, and asked the same question he is asking now. I told him then that no charges had been laid against this officer. Still, he was anxious to find this unknown person who had communicated the information to the Minister. I can only say that information was given to the Minister in confidence, and I am glad to know the leader of the Opposition realises that therefore my tongue is tied in connection with the letter. It is a good thing, I think, that that should be so. Someone interjected that there was a Star Chamber inquiry. There was no inquiry of any kind. The warden acted as my deputy. Had I been in Kalgoorlie at the time I would have sent for that inspector and said, "Look here, someone is saying that you are connected

with the I.W.W. Tell me is it right or wrong." And the officer would have assured me that it was not so, and I would have been satisfied. No more than that took place, and I hold that no man could have treated another more honourably or more courteously than I treated this inspector. Nothing need have been said about it, but he went and bruted about Kalgoorlie that these charges were laid against him by some unknown person, and he informed the leader of the Opposition that someone had laid a charge against him. Nobody laid a charge against him, and I as Minister bore him no illwill, and there is not smudge on his character. Having told all that previously to the leader of the Opposition, I was rather surprised to-night when the motion was brought forward. I do not know the object of it, but it cannot possibly extract from me the name of the person who made the communication. I may say that when I was in Kalgoorlie the leader of the Opposition told me that the inspector wanted the information solely that he might attack his accuser. Well, nobody has accused him, and it can serve no good purpose to start a row between other persons and this inspector. It is sufficient to know that I as Minister was satisfied that he did not belong to the I.W.W., and to know also that there is no stain left on his character. In view of that explanation it is for the leader of the Opposition to say whether he thinks he should carry the matter any further.

Mr. LUTEY (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [7.40]: I support the motion. I do this, having known Mr. Crocker for many years, and recognising that he is an honourable man. He is thought a great deal of by the whole of the community of Boulder and Kalgoorlie. Personally I think that by the very speech the Attorney General has made, he has put on the House the onus of relieving him. We know that, as the information was confidential, the Minister did not divulge it, but I think the House, if it wishes to do justice to an honourable man, should declare that the papers must be produced, and so let people who use tactics of the kind resorted to by the writer of the letter know that they must be more careful than to accuse men of the character of Mr. Crocker.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [7.41]: In justice to the leader of the Opposition I must say I do not think that any action was taken until this matter became public property. Even Mr. Crocker did not take exception to it in its initial stages; but by some means it became public property, and then Mr. Crocker had the right to demand a full explanation. It is peculiar that this letter should have been marked "Confidential," and it has been suggested at Kalgoorlie that if it came from an organisation or body or from a member of that organisation or body, it should not have been marked "Confidential." If a person was interested in attacking Mr. Crocker he should have attacked him in a very different manner from the way he did. It is to be hoped the Minister can give us an assurance that the letter was not sent by an organisation or body to which, in a certain sense, Mr. Crocker is regarded as being hostile. As for the leader of the Opposition having brought this matter forward, Mr. Crocker, I think, did not approach the leader of the Opposition until the information became public property. Therefore Mr. Collier is quite justified in the action he has taken.

Mr. GREEN (Kalgoorlie) [7.42]: I have pleasure in regarding it a duty to support the leader of the Opposition in asking that these papers be laid on the Table of the House. We readily acquit the Minister of any unfair tactics whatever, but we want to stress the fact that an anonymous letter—

The Attorney General: It was not anonymous.

Mr. GREEN: So far as Mr. Crocker is concerned it was anonymous, because it was marked "Confidential." If we are to allow letters of that kind about public servants to carry weight in the departments, we shall be establishing a bad precedent. There is no saying where it will end. It is a danger to every public servant. It is also placing a premium upon cowardice to allow an investigation—call it what you will—to allow a man to be haled before the warden to answer a charge made against him on the letter of some irresponsible busybody. Talk about the I.W.W. tactics! I think the writer of the letter has adopted the policy of the I.W.W., known as sabotage. His idea was to sabotage Mr. Crocker without stand-

ing up to the responsibility of fathering the charge. Where I think the Mines Department was at fault, was in making an investigation at all upon a letter the writer of which was not prepared to have his name divulged. I think if the gentleman had been written to and told that the department were prepared to go into the matter if the accuser was also prepared to allow his name to be made public, the accuser could have shown that he had taken up this position from a sense of public duty and that he was prepared to face the consequences after having made the charge. I know Mr. Crocker personally. He is an estimable officer and, as has been said by a previous speaker, the fact that his accuser's name has not been made public has reflected to a certain extent upon his character. If the accuser's name is made public, which could be done by placing these papers on the Table of the House, I feel sure that it will carry no weight, and that it will clear Mr. Crocker from the suspicion that he is connected with an association of this kind. Otherwise the matter cannot be cleared up. It would also be a note of warning that gentlemen cannot in this country start this sort of thing with impunity. The term "gentleman" has been queried by some hon. members. If this accuser's name is divulged it will show him that he cannot make reckless charges against members of the public service without taking the responsibility of standing to the charge and having his name made public. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Question put and negatived.

#### MOTION — REPATRIATION, DIRECT MINISTERIAL CONTROL.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [7.47]: I move—

*That in order to more effectively safeguard the interests of returned soldiers, this House is of opinion that a special department, under the direct control of a Minister for Repatriation, should be established, having the management of all things necessary to restore our soldiers to the various industries of the State.*

The wording of this motion makes my intentions pretty clear, and it is unnecessary for

me to speak upon it at any great length. So far as the repatriation of our soldiers is concerned, the State will have very considerable functions to undertake, and I feel that they can be best and most effectively undertaken for all those interested if we have a special department under the direct control of a Minister, who in turn would be directly responsible to Parliament. No doubt when this unfortunate war is over we shall have launched a comprehensive scheme of land settlement, and possibly as time goes on other spheres of commercial and industrial activities which we desire our soldiers to take part in on their return. The fact of the repatriation of our soldiers being left to the various departments or to Ministers, such as the Minister for Industries or any other Minister, makes the position very conflicting and complex. My desire is to try and get an expression of opinion from this House as to the necessity for the scheme I have proposed. The duties in connection with this work can quite well be undertaken by one of the present Ministers, whether he be a Minister with a portfolio or one of the Honorary Ministers. As time goes on and this scheme of repatriation is enlarged in scope and activities, the department formed will grow with it. At the present time if one meets a soldier and is speaking to him about going on the land or getting some assistance in connection with that project, he will say, "Whom can I go to"? I cannot tell him to whom to apply. Whilst I know the Minister for Industries will be only too pleased to welcome home the men who will be returning, at the present time there are many who are wandering about the streets, some of them desirous of going on the land, but they do not know what Minister to apply to or to what department. I hope hon. members will support my motion. I believe by the creation of a department under direct control of a Minister a lot of good will be done. Such a Minister will be directly responsible to Parliament, and Parliament would have a better supervision and a better appreciation of the duties required to be performed. I regard it as a very important duty on the part of this House to pass this motion. In some of the other States at the present time there are Ministers for Repatriation. I understand we have been expecting for some

time a considerable sum of money for a large land settlement scheme in connection with our returned soldiers, and that all the expenditure involved would come directly under the control of the Minister for Lands. Still it should be the special duty of the Minister for Repatriation to see, irrespective of any other duties that may be carried out by any other department or Minister, that these soldiers are justly treated and that everything possible is done for them. The Minister could be directly responsible to Parliament for the repatriation or settlement of the soldiers or sailors as the case may be. I understand that the Attorney General has a draft of a Bill that it is proposed by the Federal Parliament to introduce. I do not know whether the Attorney General has gone through its provisions, but I myself am not aware of what they are. Irrespective, however, of anything the Federal Parliament may do, I believe that a strict duty devolves upon the State Parliament in respect to this matter. That is shown by the fact that the Federal Parliament have already allocated, I understand, a considerable sum of money to be expended on land settlement, and possibly the more detailed functions of actually settling our soldiers or sailors on the land may later on, when this unfortunate war ceases, devolve upon State Ministers and State departments. We should, therefore, create a department and have a Minister appointed directly responsible for that department under the name of Minister for Repatriation. I have great pleasure in moving the motion standing in my name.

MR. GRIFFITHS (York) [7.53]: I desire to second this motion. The time is opportune for something to be done in a definite manner. I hope that something at all events will be evolved out of the multiplicity of schemes which we so often see in the various journals of this State. The feeling is abroad that a lot of these schemes are so much hot air. There seems to be nothing tangible that one can lay one's hands on, and nothing to show what is being done or likely to be done for our returned soldiers. The motion may perhaps bring forth some information from the Minister concerned as to what is being done. The public are very anxious to know, and I am sure that hon.

members are equally anxious. More than that, we want information and more light on the subject. It is a very important matter, and I think hon. members know I have been intensely interested in the problem and have been waiting to see what will be brought forward of a businesslike and practical nature. We find in the North American Continent that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company have already prepared 1,000 farms for returned soldiers. There are also various other avenues of employment being arranged for where men can be absorbed in considerable numbers.

HON. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister—Nelson) [7.56]: I cannot allow this opportunity to go by without defending the actions of myself and other members of the War Council Settlement Committee. The remarks of the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) would create the impression that nothing had been done in the past at all for soldiers returning to this country who were anxious to go on the land, and who ought to be helped in other ways but did not know to whom to apply. I wish to remove that impression. Every boat was met, and these men were handed cards on which they were asked to write what line of employment or what line of life they had followed before going to the war, and what they wanted to take up on returning. They were then requested to hand these cards in either to the officer meeting them, or to the War Council Office in Barrack-street. Many hundreds of cards have been handed in. If a man followed up his card he could go along to the committee, and the first thing we did was to send him up to a board of doctors to be examined to ascertain whether he was physically fit for the life that he proposed to take up. That examination was made free of charge. He again came before the committee, and if proved by the doctors' recommendation that he was fit for the life on the land, which those of us who have lived on the land know is fairly arduous, he was further questioned as to his past experience and then as to his wishes in the future. Men have come along while I have sat on that committee who knew nothing whatever about farming. Hon. members will agree that it is very dangerous indeed to put a man of that description on



the land, unless at least he is strong and robust, and a man who in the opinion of the committee is fit and capable of making a success on the land. We have put men on the land, and to-day they are doing well.

Hon. P. Collier: How many returned men?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister): Not many. In fact, very few have been put on the land, but all those who have come along. I am referring only to the one committee, the War Settlement Committee, and not to the Industries Assistance Board.

Mr. Lambert: That is irrelevant to the question.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister): Not at all. Certain statements were made by the member for Coolgardie and I am replying to them. Steps have been taken in the past. When these men come along they are, if necessary, handed over to the secretary who has been dealing with this particular work. From him a man is passed, if necessary, either to the Agricultural Bank or some other department concerned, from which he will get all the other information he requires. There is a fund of information obtainable, and it is very much better in my opinion that a man should get information from the fountain head than through the ordinary channels in the Lands Department. By going to the War Council, or to Mr. Morris, he can obtain that information in a very much quicker and better way than in the ordinary channels that laymen would have to go through, namely, the public counter of the Lands Department. It must also not be forgotten, on this question of bringing this matter under a Minister for Repatriation, that there are many other departments involved. I hope the hon. member has considered that question. His scheme would mean a new department, and I very much doubt if the result would justify the expenditure. I only rose to point out that something had been done in the past and that men have had an opportunity of applying to the council for information, and that everything the War Council could do in that respect has been done.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [8.0]: I would like to point out

that there are various methods of dealing with the repatriation question. It does not mean only the establishment of men on the land, but it means assisting a man to obtain employment in other industries of the State. A large majority of the men who have returned will not desire to go on the land at all, and it is those men we have to be careful about in our efforts to assist them. With regard to the question of settlement on the land of soldiers and sailors, it has been definitely laid down that a certain amount shall be provided to each State by the Federal Government. That money will be advanced, as hon. members know, on certain terms.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, we do not know.

The PREMIER: Then comes the question of settling men in other avocations of life. That is a matter that the Federal Government have taken in hand, and a Repatriation Bill is now going through the Federal Parliament. That Bill provides, amongst other things, for the appointment of a Repatriation Board in each State, to consist of seven members. These boards will deal with the question of settling the men in other avocations in life outside that of agriculture. It appears to me that this question is taken out of the hands of the State Government altogether. If the State Government took up the matter, the work would clash with that of the board to be appointed by the Federal Government. The board which is to be appointed will be directly responsible to the Federal board in Melbourne. That board will consist of men who are likely to make a success of the matter and funds will be provided by the Commonwealth Government. Until the measure now before the Federal Parliament is passed, and until we know what the regulations are likely to be, and also until we know something of the whole scheme, it will be a difficult thing to determine exactly where we are in regard to the matter. We will, however, be in a position shortly to give members all information in regard to the subject and then we will be able to take the matter in hand. We have heard very little in the past, except the question of settling returned men on the land. Some people seem to think that the only work

these men will be ready to take up will be that of farming. Of course, if they would all go on the land and make a success of it, it would be a good thing for Western Australia, but I think only a small percentage of the men who return will desire to go on the land. When men have been desirous of going on the land every facility has been given to them. The matter is in the hands of the Lands Department, the Industries Assistance Board and, of course, the Agricultural Bank. Some men have already claimed land through the Agricultural Bank, that is to say, land which has been forfeited or has been given up by some of those who have had assistance from the Bank. I understand from the Minister for Industries that some £8,000 has already been spent by the Agricultural Bank in establishing men on the land through that institution.

Hon. P. Collier: On farms that have been forfeited?

The PREMIER: I think all those who have been settled directly through the bank, without reference to the Lands Department, have taken up land which has fallen into the hands of the Agricultural Bank, and there are many good properties which have been taken over by the bank.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not a very good beginning to take over such properties.

The PREMIER: Very often the man who comes in after the initial work has been done makes a success of the farm.

Mr. Lambert: It is a poor policy when the Government does not put someone else on to those farms to keep them going.

The PREMIER: Some men too have been re-established on their own farms. At the same time, men who apply for land are given every possible assistance. It will be seen, therefore, that the Government have not been idle in regard to this matter. Possibly because every man cannot get exactly what he requires in the way of land, criticisms have followed, but I assure hon. members that every facility is given to allow those people to enter into farming occupations, and every facility will be given in the future. I do not think there is very much in the motion that one can object to. The question of repatriation is now in the hands of the Lands Department, the Industries

Assistance Board, and the Agricultural Bank, and so many departments are mixed up in it that it is difficult to arrange for the sole control by one Minister. Still, we have now a scheme formulated and I will be able to submit it to hon. members before the session closes. This provides for the appointment of a Board before whom the applicants for land will have to appear, and before land is granted to them they will have to satisfy the board that they are suitable for the occupation of farming, and that they are likely to make a success of it. Under the scheme we have formulated, I think we are likely to bring the matter to a successful issue, but the time may come when we may be able to place the matter under one Minister and call him the Minister for Repatriation, just as we call the Minister who is in charge of the Industries Assistance Board the Minister for Industries. I think, however, it would be better to wait until we see what the Federal scheme is which is to be established under the measure now before the Federal Parliament and its regulations. As time goes on and we have the opportunity, it will be my desire to see that this question of repatriation is placed under the one Minister. If the House will give the Government the opportunity of considering the matter I think I will be able to satisfy hon. members, at any rate in that regard, because I think it is well that one Minister should be appointed, and this Minister could be approached by the men who desire to settle on the land. I think we could possibly satisfy the member for Coolgardie before long, and appoint a Minister who will be able to strictly administer repatriation matters. At the same time I think it would be well to wait a little while until we see exactly the lines on which the Federal Government are going to proceed under the measure they are now considering. The Government have every desire to do what is possible for the assistance of our returned soldiers, and I do not think the House will have any reason to complain when those men return and the Government have had an opportunity of helping them.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [S.13]: The object the member for Coolgardie has in view is that it should be definitely known

who the Minister is that is in charge of the repatriation of our soldiers, that is to say, insofar as the operations of the State Government apply to repatriation. The Premier has acknowledged that up to date there has been divided authority, so much so in fact, that one may gather from reports in the newspapers a month or two ago that that divided authority led to a considerable amount of friction between the late Minister for Lands and the late Minister for Industries. It appeared day after day in the newspapers that one Minister was waiting for the other to make land available to settle these soldiers upon, all of which indicated that there did not seem to be any definite or carefully thought out scheme for the placing of our soldiers on the land. That is the only aspect of it that concerns the State Government. I understand the State Governments have undertaken, in co-operation with the Commonwealth Government, to place on the land those men who desire to go on it, and who are considered suitable for that avocation. I do not know what has been done, and the public do not know, but the fact is that these men have been coming back for two years past, and while one does not wish to be censorious as far as the Commonwealth is concerned, the time has certainly arrived when straight-out criticism ought to be indulged in. There are more than 30,000 returned soldiers, and nowhere in Australia has anything been done for these men. Reading the Eastern exchanges, one may see that in Victoria and in New South Wales, and in the different centres of population in the Eastern States, there is a considerable unemployed problem created by the fact that nothing has been done to place the men who have come back, in their former occupations in life. Let us take the position in Western Australia. If we do all it is possible to do in regard to settling soldiers on the land, even then we will not have more than 10 per cent. of our returned men who will care to go on the land and be willing to take it up. That will leave us with from 24,000 to 25,000 returned men, taking the number who have gone to the war up to the present, whom we will have to provide with some other walk in life. What the public has a right to complain about with regard to the Commonwealth authorities is this: first of

all, we were told the other night that the Government of this State has not been able to get any of the money promised by the Commonwealth Government for repatriation purposes. Many months ago, as far back as the general elections in May last, Mr. Hughes informed the people of Australia that a certain sum of money would be made available to each State. Notwithstanding that promise, solemnly made to the States, we have had the spectacle of a Minister of the Crown informing the people of the State through this House that he has been unable not only to obtain that money, but unable to obtain a reply to his communications in regard to it. That is the position to-day, and the result is that a large number of men will be thrown upon charitable or other resources in order to obtain a living. The direction in which the Commonwealth authorities have been neglectful of their duty is that nothing at all, so far as I have been able to learn, has been done in Australia to train men maimed, crippled, or otherwise injured at the war to such an extent as to prevent them taking up their former occupations in life—men who have lost one hand, who are crippled in one leg, but who otherwise are able-bodied men. Is such a man to sit down and live on his pension for the rest of his life? If so, it is a crying shame and a disgrace to the authorities responsible. It is no good either for the individual himself nor for the State. It is not a good thing for any young man, even if his pension the Commonwealth would provide for him would be sufficient to provide the bare necessities of life, that he should do nothing. One reads that in the Old Country they have established institutions for the training of men who have lost their sight, or who have lost, say, one arm, in some useful occupation; but in Australia to-day nothing has been done. One can go to the base hospital, the hospital at Fremantle, and there one will see men crippled in one leg. Many of those men who are in the base hospital have been there for months—some of them I know have been there 12 months—and they are walking about the streets of Perth and Fremantle with the aid of a stick or a crutch day after day. No attempt is being made to train them in useful occupations, although it is well known to the authorities that when

those men ultimately leave the hospital it will be in such a state of health as will prevent their taking up their former occupation. Yet 12 months is being wasted instead of their being trained in some useful occupation. Are these men, on being turned out from the hospital, to live on the 15s. per week, or whatever the pension will be which will be allowed them? To that extent I say the Commonwealth authorities have been absolutely neglectful of their duty in allowing men to walk about the streets contracting habits which will not be to their future benefit when they have to go back into the world. These men comprise the majority to be considered, for, as I have already said, not 10 per cent. of the returned soldiers will be settled on the land. What is being done to induce those men who left the gold mining industry to go back to the goldfields? Somewhere about 5,000 men have enlisted from Kalgoorlie and Boulder alone, with the result that there is a considerable shortage of labour in the goldfields district, and that shortage is reflected in the gold yield which has been declining month by month. Those men will not be anxious to go back into that industry unless the Government do something to induce them to do so—not to go back to deep mining, but prospecting. Some such scheme as that would be of advantage to the men themselves and also to the State, as it would probably give new life to the mining industry. Most of these questions are, I admit, questions for the Commonwealth. The State can only do its best to provide land for those returned soldiers who are anxious to settle on the land, and in this connection there is another question upon which I do not know whether I should be in order in discussing on this motion—that is the question of the land to be set apart in the south-western district.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member would be quite in order in discussing that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know whether I should be quite in order; but it is an important question. It is well known that there are widely different opinions regarding the land towards Nornalup.

Hon. W. L. Thomas (Honorary Minister) interjected.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have heard the Honorary Minister was eloquent in this Chamber—

Hon. W. D. Johnson: On the Labour platform.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have heard the Honorary Minister eloquently explaining the possibilities of the South-West. I may here remark that the Honorary Minister in his present position may be able to do something towards developing the resources of the South-West, and unless he makes good in this respect, I am afraid he will not make good with the electors later on. Every phase of this repatriation question is of the utmost importance to the people of the State. I do think it is desirable, as has been suggested by the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) that the Government should nominate one Minister who might, in addition to his other titles, be designated the Minister for Repatriation. As has been pointed out by the member for Coolgardie, one does not at present know who is the particular Minister concerned in this question. One has first to go to the Minister for Industries in order to reach a certain point with regard to the land settlement scheme; then one has to go to the Minister for Lands, and thus backwards and forwards from one to the other. It might aid those interested in this question if one Minister were specially named as being responsible for assisting those seeking to go on to the land. I realise that the Commonwealth Government are taking up this matter in theory. We have had men coming back from the war for the last two years and yet to-day nothing has been done except that we have reached the stage in the Commonwealth Parliament that a Bill was introduced last week; but we have not yet had the details of that Bill. The Bill, however, will be a tangible starting point, and it is to be hoped that we shall not much longer have the spectacle of men maimed and crippled drifting about the streets of the cities in an endeavour to find suitable occupation.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [8.24]: It has already been pointed out that not many of our returned soldiers will, in the future, be engaged on the land. The majority will take up the occupation which they left before going to the war. It might possibly be an advantage to have one Minister control-

ling all the operations of our returned soldiers, but it is doubtful for the reason that some will be engaged on the land, some in other occupations. To my mind the question of repatriation is essentially the function of the Minister for Industries. All the returned soldiers will be engaged in one or other of our industries and I hope that largely they will be engaged in industries that will lead to increased production. If a new Minister is to be appointed, I hope he will have a good knowledge of his work. I realise that we in Australia must give every assistance possible to the returned soldier, to compensate him for the sacrifices he has made; but I urge here that the State Parliament should not be too ready to accept a responsibility which is properly the responsibility of the Commonwealth Parliament and not of the State. The State is hard up, and is not in a position to accept responsibility, be it ever so willing. The Federal Government should accept the responsibility of finding the necessary money and of assisting returned soldiers into occupations. To my mind it would be unwise of the State Parliament to seek responsibility not properly belonging to it. The Commonwealth Parliament has opportunities for obtaining revenue and has powers of taxation and powers of customs which the State has not got. I think it would be wrong to insist upon the State accepting full responsibility in the matter of repatriation. That responsibility belongs to the Commonwealth Government. There is no use in our making promises we cannot fulfil, and I am not going to do so. It has been the curse of this Parliament during the past 10 years. Men have been told that if they will but go on the land they will be given this or that, and we have one Minister vying with another in seeing how much he could promise. There is a feeling in the minds of some hon. members that a majority of the returned soldiers will go on the land. I am satisfied they will not. I am satisfied that those who followed mining will go back to mining, except in the case of a few who will probably have an inclination to seek a more settled form of life and to secure a more permanent home than is possible on the goldfields. But when the soldier has settled on the land his

troubles are only beginning. I can see numerous difficulties. I have no intention of discussing fully what the policy of the Government should be in regard to the South-West; but if the Government proposes to send men down to the heavily timbered areas of the South-West country, then there is going to be a huge exodus of returned soldiers later on. We shall have a worse experience than we had in the case of the wheat belt, because the difficulties will be greater. The man who goes on the land in this or any other country must have great perseverance and considerable determination and grit; otherwise he cannot pull through. The functions of this Government will come only when the man is on the land, because it will be years before he is able to make good, and this Government will have to carry him all the time. The Commonwealth Government, once the returned soldier is off their hands, will wash their hands of further responsibility. I am convinced that there is a necessity for a Minister, not only to attend to the welfare of the repatriated soldiers when repatriated, but also to promote the welfare of those already engaged in industries. The present Government put it forward that they were out for increased production, that by increasing production they are going to maintain and develop the prosperity of the country. But may I say that the urgent work for any Government now and for any Minister controlling the repatriation of soldiers, is to take from off the back of the producer that burden which is now preventing production in Western Australia, and in Australia too? There is no question about it. So far as the producer here is concerned—and the returned soldiers will be in the same position when they go on the land—the merchants of this country in the large towns are absolutely crushing the life out of the producer. They are taking nine-tenths of the production from the producer before he gets a return at all. And no country can survive where that state of affairs exists, and no country has a right to put any man on the land until that state of affairs has been removed. I hope I may be permitted to give one instance. To-day all our energies are directed towards producing as much food-stuff as we possibly can. The Government

reduced the railway freights on superphosphate, and immediately the superphosphate companies raised the price of their product. Machinery and machinery parts have risen in price 200 per cent. To-day I made inquiry regarding bags for storing wheat in this country, and I found those bags would cost me 10s. per dozen on rail at Fremantle, whereas I know for a fact that those same bags are purchased for 7s. 1d. per dozen by the merchants of the country. In Heaven's name, how can any producer operate under those conditions? And while members of Parliament are talking about assisting production, they are neglecting, and shutting their eyes to, those very essential things in this country which are proving a hardship to the settler already on the land and will also prove the greatest possible hardship to the successful settlement of the soldier. My view is, create a Minister by all means, and let him be the Minister for Industries, and let this Parliament tackle seriously the problem of the person already on the land, with the object of making his position so prosperous and so successful that when the soldier comes back he will see a well-to-do neighbour alongside him, a man who can assist him and encourage him. And no Government can do that unless they remove from the producer of this country the incubus which I think is stifling production—the large merchants in the city. There is no getting away from that; it is an absolute fact. If a producer goes to the merchant in the city, the merchant wants cash and war profit also. If the producer goes to any business man, the business man wants his cash and war profit as well. The producer must wait 12 months or two years, and pay heavy rates of interest in order to carry on his operations. That sort of thing cannot continue in this country. While that state of affairs exists we cannot settle soldiers on the land successfully, and are not justified in asking them to go on the land. I object to glowing promises being held out to soldiers here in Western Australia. Let the Government get to work and remove the burdens from the people who are already carrying on our industries; let the Government tackle the problem seriously; and, when the soldier comes back to Western Australia, let the Federal Government take

the responsibility of finding the money, while we find the land and the occupation. And, when we put the soldier into the occupation, let us give him a fair opportunity. That is our business in this country, and no proposition of this or any similar character will receive my support unless I find a Government prepared to take the matter up seriously and to operate it on the lines I have indicated. I sympathise with the mover's intention; but, as I have already said, let us compel the Commonwealth Government to accept their responsibility, let us insist that they shall accept it. We have too many burdens here. We have no possible hope, without the assistance of their Federal Government, of fulfilling any promises made. Let the Federal Government accept the responsibility; let us compel them to accept it; and then let the State Government act in the best interests of the people of this country by increasing production and by removing the obstacles, which I have referred to this evening, standing in the way of production.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [S.34]: I have listened with much interest to the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Troy) making a speech for the first time on the floor of the House. It was a good and thoughtful speech, and many of the points made by the hon. member are well worthy of the serious consideration of all of us. The question of business interference with farmers can be largely got over by the formation of farmers' co-operative societies, which have already been inaugurated to some extent in the country districts. In my opinion, co-operation is going to be a very successful institution among the farmers of Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The merchants tried to squash the farmers' co-operative societies.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The co-operative societies will be strong enough to hold themselves up; and, if they cannot do it themselves, other people will hold them up. I quite agree with the member for Mount Magnet in his remarks about the South-West, and I may say that the present Government have no intention of plunging the soldiers who may come here

seeking to be repatriated in Western Australia, into the uncharted and unsurveyed lands of the South-West. Before those lands can ever be operated, they must be properly examined, surveyed, and classified, and facilities for transport must be provided, and generally the lands must be placed in such a condition that a settler on them, instead of having to battle unaided against Nature, will have all those aids to development which the Government can afford. My views on this subject are probably well known; and they are the views, I know, too of the Premier and Minister for Lands. No harm, therefore, will come upon any soldiers who may be settled under such conditions. There are, of course, at the present time lands in the South-West quite fit for occupation by soldiers; but the subjugation of the forests by soldiers placed on the land is a policy I will never support. The motion really asks for something that is to be designated "the Minister for Repatriation." Our difficulty, as I think hon. members will realise, is one of not knowing exactly or definitely what the Commonwealth Government are going to do. I have had, in my hand for the first time this afternoon the draft Bill on this subject introduced into the Senate, and I have barely had time to read it. It was referred to by the Premier in the course of this debate. However, all hon. members have had before them the telegraphed report of Senator Millen's speech, which contains one phrase that, although it does not actually appear in the Bill, appears there by inference. Senator Millen makes the matter quite positive by the remark in his speech—

Land settlement is left to the States.

The Bill seems to deal generally with the methods of getting the returned soldier settled into the industries of the country. It does not refer to settling him on the land. Therefore, I think the Minister's explanatory speech shows conclusively that land settlement is left to the States. As hon. members know, it will be part of the policy of the Government to co-operate to the fullest extent with the Commonwealth Government, not only in settling soldiers on the land, but in settling them in every possible industry that they may wish to take part in here. That is one of the first functions of the

present Government. Now, the Commonwealth Government, as the Premier has said, will be instituting in Western Australia and in each of the other States a board for this purpose. The Act does not just say who is to be represented on that board. Those details will come along later, I suppose. But a board will be established here.

Mr. Lambert: I hope the Government will see that our party is represented on it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Various conferences have taken place between the Ministers for Lands of the various States on this subject, and the Premiers' conferences have urged that representation should be given to all sections of the community, and particularly to returned soldiers, on those boards; and I have no doubt the Commonwealth Government will give effect to those wishes in the constitution of the boards which they appoint. I am hardly in a position to criticise that matter until we know definitely that the Commonwealth Government are going to form a board in Western Australia, and that the board is to consist of certain individuals. It will be the duty of this Government, of course, to co-operate with the board in the settlement of the soldiers. But our own duty, the duty of Western Australia pure and simple, and one which we must discharge to the best of our ability, is the settlement of the soldier on the land. Then we come to the crux of the motion—who is to take charge of that? We have two or three, possibly four, Government departments involved. As the Premier has said, first of all he, as Minister for Lands, provides the land. It might be said that then he is the proper Minister to take charge of the whole matter. That would be so, possibly, if the matter ended there, and the Lands Department had the money to deal further with the soldier and carry him right along, granting the necessary advances to make his farm a successful one. But in Western Australia our system is a little different. The Lands Department find the land, survey it, provide it, and classify it. Then, if the soldier wants money, that money is provided through either the Agricultural Bank or the Industries Assistance Board.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What about the amount from the Commonwealth?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That will come along; but again we are tied for the moment by the Premiers' conference, one of the resolutions of which was that each of the States was to expend through its ordinary channels the money so provided by the Commonwealth, expend it through Agricultural Departments or Industries Assistance Boards. If the Lands Department have the function of finding the land, the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board make the necessary advances; and I always hold—I think it is a right principle—that the people who make the advances should have the control of the expenditure. If one department controls the expenditure while another finds the money, there is immediate possibility of friction. And it does not end there. In the case of our South-Western lands, to which the member for Mt. Magnet referred, there will be questions of drainage and irrigation cropping up. Those questions, under our present form of administration, come under the Water Supply Department. In every case, too, we have the further complication of yet another department coming in, since the houses which will require to be erected and the work which will need to be done on soldiers' settlements will presumably fall within the purview of the Department of Public Works. At all events, in connection with a proper standard of plans and specifications, and the method and building which should be adopted, the Works Department have already taken considerable trouble. I am only showing the activities of at least four departments of our State which will be called into play in connection with this land settlement scheme, and I almost think the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) is right in that at the present time we cannot select any particular Minister and say to him "You are to have charge of this scheme." We cannot do this, because certain functions of a department will overlap others, but it is the duty of this or any other Government which may be in power, to see that everything it is possible to do is done to give the best we have to the soldiers. I am also inclined to agree with the hon.

member's motion in this way: that one person having control is much more likely to give satisfaction than three or four persons who may be called upon to help from time to time. At the present time, however, it is a little premature to think of forming a scheme and saying which particular Minister or department shall exercise control and be responsible to Parliament for carrying out that scheme. Just now there are four Ministers responsible. The House will shortly be in possession of the scheme of the Government in relation to returned soldiers. As a matter of fact that scheme is ready now, and the Premier will present it to Parliament shortly. Hon. members will then have an opportunity of perusing it and they will be in a better position to judge. Even then, when they are aware of the full details of the scheme it would still be premature to affirm the principle laid down or to come to any settled conclusion in regard to it. It is only after the matter has been thoroughly thought out, and the scheme subjected to the criticism of the House, and of members, and the people of Western Australia generally, that we will gradually focus those schemes into such a path that will lead safely to the successful settlement of our returned men. Therefore, to try and mould anything in this or that way at the present time is not right. Let each of us bring all the talents we possess into play in the direction of building up and not breaking down, and by carefully building up and by criticism, we shall help the scheme along so that when Western Australia eventually has launched on her soldier settlement scheme, she may, in respect to that scheme, occupy that proud position she does in respect to her other soldier settlement schemes on the frontiers of France.

Mr. CARPENTER (Fremantle) [8.50]: This matter has been discussed on more than one occasion by members of the House on different motions having relation to the same subject, and on each occasion someone has emphasised the point that the matter was one rather for the Federal Government than for the State Government to deal with. I have always contended that this is a matter for both Commonwealth and State and that the obligation rests on both



to do the best that can possibly be done for the men who have returned and who will return.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have brought it forward twice and on each occasion you were told that it was premature.

Mr. CARPENTER: In a sense, that is correct. I should say that the need for the big scheme will not arise until the men begin to come back in large numbers. They are dribbling back now, mostly maimed, wounded, and broken men, who have to be found occupations as soon as they become fit to work. The greater duty, however, will devolve upon us all when the war is over and when the men come back by thousands. Where we are dealing now with twos and threes and tens, we shall then have to deal with hundreds and thousands, and I take it that what the Federal Government have in view in passing the Bill now before the Commonwealth Parliament and preparing the scheme they are engaged upon, is to cope with the large number of men when they come back after the war. It has been said to-night that nothing has been done for the men who have returned here. May I say that is hardly correct. Perhaps all that could have been done has not yet been done, but I am bound to say that the State War Council, as the only public body so far charged with this duty, has done good work, not so much perhaps in creating as in finding occupations for returned soldiers who have been seeking them. They have placed a very large number of these men in different occupations, but while they have done that and deserve thanks for having done so, we are just beginning to realise that they are putting returned soldiers into any vacancy that may arise in existing industries, and to that extent preventing other men who are not soldiers from finding work in those particular occupations. One result is that we find upon our streets to-day an increasing number of men, and particularly elderly men, who tell us that they cannot find work because wherever they go the employers say "Yes, we have a job here, but we must give it to a returned soldier." I am bound to say that so far as I have met these men they have, as a rule, borne this kind of thing without complaint. They recognise that is a fair thing, but we have to bear in

mind that we cannot accept as final or satisfactory any scheme which simply puts the returned soldier into an existing vacancy and keeps somebody else out of work. The State War Council has filled a gap, if I may say so, between the present and the future which we hope and believe will be provided for by the bigger preparations now being made by the Federal Government, and I think we must give due credit also to our employers generally who have responded to the call made by this House, and by the patriotic support of the people that wherever there is a vacancy and where they advertise for a man, they shall make it known that they will give preference to a returned soldier. That has been done and is being done, and some hundreds of men who have come back have taken up their former occupations and filled positions, the duties of which they were able to discharge. These returned men have also settled down to work in a way that it has been gratifying to see. We do hear complaints that men cannot get suitable work, and one of the difficulties will be to deal with those men who followed particular avocations, and for which they are now no longer fitted owing perhaps to the loss of a limb or some injury received at the war. We shall possibly have to create some new industries of a light character so that these men may be placed at work, though not with the idea that they shall produce goods to be sold in competition with other goods in the ordinary way. I understand that the Returned Soldiers' Association have been discussing this aspect of the question, and they want to know what is to be done with the men who are able and willing to work, yet who are unable to go into a workshop and turn out the same quantity of work that another man in full health and strength would do. I would suggest to the State War Council that they should make some preparation for a scheme by which they would ask the men who control our present industries, or a body like the Chamber of Manufactures, to find places for those men who cannot any longer go into a workshop in the ordinary way. One speaker has stated that nothing has been done in the direction of assisting returned men from an educational point of view. That is hardly correct, because the State Education De-

partment, through its technical school at Fremantle some months ago, opened a class for returned soldiers at which they could learn bookkeeping, type-writing, and work of that character, and it is gratifying to know that a good number of soldiers are at present receiving instruction at that school. That brings me to the matter that I discussed here before, and that is the larger question of settling returned soldiers upon the land in some way, whether for wheat-growing or sheep farming, or even timber cutting or any of the ordinary outdoor occupations. It has been said that comparatively few men who come back have had experience as farmers. But are we going to confine the settlement upon the land to those men who have had previous experience of farming? If so, then we are not going to fulfil the obligations resting upon us. There will be a number of men who, before they enlisted followed indoor occupations, and the outdoor life they have been leading will have given them a distaste for an indoor occupation. To expect them to go back to the workshop or office will be like expecting them to go back to a prison. I have myself conversed with some of them, and they say, "We do not want to go back to office work or to a workshop; we have been living in open air and we do not wish to return indoors."

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know that the hon. member is entitled to discuss the subject in all its ramifications.

Mr. CARPENTER: I am only discussing what any repatriation committee will have to discuss.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is in order in discussing the question of whether the matter should be under the control of a Minister, but not in discussing the ramifications of a proposed scheme.

Mr. CARPENTER: I have been following where other speakers have been allowed to tread. If I am offending it is in good company. I merely wish to say that whoever has charge should consider the question of whether men who, without previous experience, have a desire to go upon the land should not be put upon one of our State farms, and there given the necessary training. Just as we may take a man and train him to be a soldier, and take a soldier and

give him some training in a technical school to fit him for a special trade, so the Agricultural Department, or the repatriation board, ought to consider the question of training men to be farmers. We have the Yandanooka estate, where 100 men could be trained and given an insight into the details of farming; afterwards to be drafted off to farms either as individual farmers or into community settlements where they may work together on co-operative lines. That is a matter some of the soldiers themselves have been discussing. They would like to go on the land, but they say, "You cannot expect a man with no experience to be planted down by himself and make a do of it; but if a dozen or 20 of us could be put together, with a man to direct us, we could work together and our profits could be pooled." We want if possible to make the return of these men the occasion of a big and profitable scheme of settlement to the State. If we can induce a large population of strong, able-bodied adult men to go on the land and do their share in developing our huge public estate, then we shall be doing something not only for the men themselves but for the State as well. I am glad the hon. member has given the House one more opportunity for discussing this subject. It has been said that there has been too much talk upon it, and no practical outcome. Those of us who have had experience of life know that when new problems are attacked there can scarcely be too much discussion. Very often we have entered upon problems without full discussion and knowing little of what they involve. All the talk in this Parliament and elsewhere will not have been too much if it produces some scheme or schemes by which we can say, not only to the men who went from Western Australia, but to those from other States, "Here are openings for you. We have broad acres and every facility. Come here and we will give you a chance to make a home for yourselves." Still, I do not agree with the motion to the extent of creating a new department, especially in view of the fact that the Federal Parliament is dealing with the whole matter. I commend the hon. member for having brought the motion forward, and I suggest that, for the time being, he withdraw it. If, during the next few

months, the Federal scheme now being hatched proves less than satisfactory, the hon. member might again bring forward his motion, when if he still thinks there is necessity for the creation of a new department, I for one will look on his motion with some sympathy. At present I do not think he has quite made out a case for the creation of a new department, but I am willing to do all that is possible for the men who have done so much for us.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.8]: I support the motion. I think it is necessary that some one Minister should be in charge of repatriation. Just now, according to the Attorney General, it appears to be the work of four or five Ministers. The hon. member by his motion does not intend that there should be a new department brought into existence.

Mr. Carpenter: He asks for a special department.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But not a new department. His object is that one Minister should be held responsible. Under the proposed system a returned soldier could go to one office and get all the necessary information, relying on the department to put him on the proper road. At present a soldier has to go to four or five different departments. There is overlapping. The Attorney General pointed out that even if one particular Minister were put in control there would still be overlapping.

Mr. Carpenter: Of course there would be separate departments to deal with.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: A firm like Boan's, with an immense store of many departments, is controlled by one manager. What is costing Western Australia thousands and thousands of pounds is that the various departments fail to realise that they are carrying on one big business.

The Attorney General: That is quite true.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They spend large sums of money fighting one another when they ought to be trying to assist themselves out of any difficulty they might be in. That is a fault with all the departments. The Works Department may want something, but it is under the control of the Lands Department, and so the Works Department cannot get it. The same thing obtains in all departments. If one Minister had control of

repatriation he would be able to deal with the various departments, and the soldier would need to go to only one department to get everything he required. I was very pleased to hear the optimistic remarks of the Premier in regard to the necessary money. Then it appears from the remarks which have just fallen from the Attorney General in reference to the Bill before the Federal Parliament, and the statement by Senator Millen, that it is the intention of the Federal Government to throw on the State the whole responsibility of settling the soldiers on the land, and to find the money for this purpose also. They intend themselves to deal with everything else outside of land settlement, and leave land settlement to fall on the State alone. In that case there is just the possibility that the half a million or so required for the settlement of these men may not be forthcoming. That might account for the Colonial Treasurer being unable to get any reply to his letters to Melbourne. It is all very well to go on saying that this matter is premature. It is now over two years since our men started to return, and nothing whatever has been done by either the State or the Federal Parliament for the purpose of providing for those men. It is necessary that some Minister should have entire control of this and should urge on the Federal Government the necessity for making provision for these men. The responsibility would then fall on the shoulders of one man. While it is split up among three or four I am afraid nothing whatever will be done. The Honorary Minister (Hon. F. E. S. Willmott) referred to the good work done by the War Council. The instance I am about to quote might have had a very different ending had there been a Minister in charge. One returned soldier requested that he be set up in business again. The War Council promptly assisted him in every way possible and stocked his shop for him again that he might carry on his old line of business. But they did not make any inquiries as to whether he had left any creditors, and within 48 hours his creditors had seized and carried off his new stock. If a Minister had been in charge he would have seen that this man was protected for a certain time at least, seen to it that he was in a position to carry on his little business. But when left

to a board with no responsibility for the raising of money or the payment of interest, it is not to be expected that the same care will be exercised as would have been exercised in similar circumstances by a Minister. That is one of the reasons why I think the Premier should put on the shoulders of one Minister the responsibility of dealing with this question.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie—in reply) [9.15]: I will not deal with the remarks which have been made that have no bearing on the motion whatever. The member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) said that the resolution had his sympathy, but his sympathy is about as valuable as his irrelevant speech. I did not desire, either, to cover the whole of the ramifications of repatriation, nor to discuss the merits or demerits of the different schemes. The only thing I desire to do is to urge that in any scheme of land settlement which we may undertake we should have a responsible Minister at its head, who would be directly responsible to Parliament. The Attorney General called attention to the fact that the Federal Government were putting through a Repatriation Bill, which would create a board of repatriation in this State. If they do create such a board, it is absolutely necessary that the hon. member representing the Government on that board should be a Minister directly responsible to Parliament and the people of the State, otherwise the representation of the State would be very inadequate.

The Attorney General: There would not be one of our Ministers on the board.

Mr. LAMBERT: Then who would be on the board? Are the Government going to allow it to be left to outside irresponsibles?

The Attorney General: They say it is their function, and that they are taking charge of it.

Mr. LAMBERT: Admittedly it is their function. We own and control the lands in this State, but in other matters it is purely a Federal function. If we had a Minister for repatriation he would be deserving of a seat on that board. I do not suppose any man could assist a large and comprehensive scheme of repatriation in all its bearings and phases so much as the Minister who would be responsible to Par-

liament and the people. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Carpenter) said that this motion was premature. This has been said consistently since I have been in the House, but, considering that we have nearly a tenth of our population away, and considering that when our men return they will have to be settled in some calling or avocation, it is nearly time the Government were seized of their responsibilities, and not only put forth every effort so far as their own activities in regard to land settlement are concerned, but impressed upon the Federal Government the necessity for making an early start in some scheme. The Premier said he was not opposed to the motion, and I do not think anyone can reasonably oppose it. The excellent speech made by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) pretty well covered the ground. The Honorary Minister (Hon. F. E. S. Willmott) referred to the fact that the repatriation scheme was controlled by three or four Ministers. It appears to me that it is at present necessary for a returned soldier in search of information or assistance to go through all the subterranean passages of the different State departments.

The Attorney General: Oh no.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know if the Honorary Minister makes any responsible statements, but I take it that he made a responsible statement when he said that the first thing that was done was to pass a man over to a doctor for examination.

The Attorney General: He was only talking of the War Council.

Mr. LAMBERT: The same thing would ascerttain if such a man was applying direct to the State, if the functions are separated in the manner in which they are. If a man wants land he has to apply to the Minister for Lands, and if he wants money, to the Minister for Industries, and so it goes on from one thing to another. Possibly the next European war will be here before the soldier will get the assistance he is asking for. It is undesirable that such a state of things should continue. We should have a Minister directly controlling such a department who would be responsible to Parliament, and whom we, as members, could fire at if he did not do his duty. Such a Minister would be more likely to be

efficient, and to give more assistance to returned soldiers than would the departments split up as they are to-day. If a returned soldier applied to the Minister for Industries for assistance that Minister could very well say that the matter was one for the Minister for Lands and not his business, and the Minister for Lands could say the same thing regarding the Minister for Industries if the returned soldier applied to him. Our returned men require a Minister who would give them all the information that they are applying for, and all the assistance that they want. They should be able to go to that department and, before leaving it, receive all the information there was to be had about repatriation of any description without having to go to any other department. Such a set of machinery would meet with the satisfaction of the returned soldiers and do a considerable amount of good. It is dangerous to keep on saying in this House that it is premature to bring this forward. The whole of the inefficiency of the British army in its earlier stages was due to people saying, "There is plenty of time to do this or that." If the present National Ministry are desirous of assisting returned soldiers, as part of their bargain to do what they can to win the war, they should immediately create a department from which a returned soldier could get any information whatsoever regarding his future employment, and if the Federal Government do create a board of repatriation by enactment, the State Parliament should seek to get representation upon it as a necessary corollary to their functions of State. I hope at all events the Government will make the necessary representations to that end. If the board is going to be one of a political nature, I hope it will not be forgotten there are other elements in the House than that of a National character. It is not my desire to create a separate department, but a special department under the direct control of a Minister. That will not involve any additional expense. Possibly it is desirable that the Minister for Lands should be the Minister in question, as we shall control the land only for the time being, but the department should be one which will have available for the returned soldier or sailor all information

necessary to give to applicants, and each applicant should be told at once to what extent he can be helped, or assisted back to the life and industry of his country.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 9.24 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 1st August, 1917.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Returned Soldiers' and Sailors' Settlement Scheme. 2, Report of the Royal Commission on the Mallee Belt and Esperance Lands. 3, Health Act, 1911-15—Peppermint Grove Road Board: Amendment of By-laws. 4, Pearling Act, 1912—Useless Inlet, Sharks Bay: Prohibition of removal of Pearls or Pearl-shell. 5, Municipal Corporations Act, 1904—By-laws of Municipalities of (a) Fremantle, (b) Claremont, (c) City of Perth. 6, Vermin Boards Act, 1909—Regulations. 7, Plant Diseases Act, 1914—Regulations.